College of Engineering Teaching Committee Report
28 April 2014

Members: Colby Swan (chair), Er-wei Bai, Ed Sander.

General Charge:
The Teaching Committee shall be responsible for all matters relating to evaluation and improvement of the quality of instruction in the college, and for making appropriate recommendations to the dean and the faculty.

Specific Charges

1. Consider means to assess adequacy of TA support for all College of Engineering courses, especially 59-labeled courses, and propose means to meet the College’s requirements.

   In AY 2012-13 the committee collected data on all TA appointments for 59- and 57-labeled courses, over the past five years. In AY 2013-14, the committee collected data from all academic departments on the TA appointments for all courses taught by their faculty within the College of Engineering during academic year 2013-14. The data itself has not yet been analyzed for adequacy, and it will be recommended that the data gathered by analyzed by next year’s Teaching Committee.

2. Review nominations from the College of Engineering faculty, and make recommendations to the administrations for both College and Provost teaching awards.

   In doing background work on this charge, the committee found that up until the past year or so, there was a cash prize of a few thousand dollars given by the College of Engineering to the winner of the College Teaching Award. This cash prize is no longer being provided by the College. Some committee members (Bai) noted that the Teaching Committee used to be very actively involved in reviewing the nomination files and in picking the winners of the award, but that at some point over the past decade, the process changed, and the committee no longer played an active role.

   Starting in AY2014-15, it is proposed that each spring semester, the EFC announce a call for nominations with a due date of mid March. The Dean’s office can handle receiving of the nominations, and then transfer the files to the Teaching Committee. The committee will then have approximately two weeks to review the nominations and make their recommendations to the EFC.

   The award should be open to all faculty and adjunct faculty teaching courses in the College. Criteria for selection of the award winner that should be addressed in nominations include the following:
   - sustained excellence in teaching;
   - evidence of strong commitment to student success;
   - creativity and innovation in pedagogy and/or course content development;
Winners of the Collegiate Teaching Award will automatically be forwarded to the next level for consideration of the Provost’s Teaching Award.

3. Consider possibility of spill-over\(^1\) classrooms to handle large class sizes. Work with the ITC to study the feasibility of such classroom use, and the possibility of implementing such use.

   This issue was discussed by the committee with Professor Bai leading the discussion. This is really an issue in courses that require classrooms with specialized computing technology. There is a sense that this issue is already receiving considerable attention from ECS and will be resolved within a year or two.

4. Monitor the progress of the College’s system to check for satisfactory completion of pre-requisites for each course in a timely manner.

   Students are now being flagged during registration when they sign up for courses for which they do not have the pre-requisites.

5. Recommend specific charges for the 2014-2015 College of Engineering Teaching Committee

   The Teaching Committee for AY 2014-15 should be charged with continuing to study adequacy of TA support for all College of Engineering courses, especially 59-labeled courses, and propose means to meet the College’s requirements.

   The committee should also be charged with revamping the system for administration of ACE (Assessments of the Classroom Environment). The response rate with the current system is too low to be meaningful. When paper assessments were done in class periods, the response rates were significantly higher.

\(^1\) Spill-over classrooms are classrooms that are electronically connected such students in more than one classroom can simultaneously interact with only one instructor; one instructor effectively teaches simultaneously in more than one classroom.