Faculty Evaluation Task Force Minutes for July 13, 2016
Meeting at Meramec Campus, BA 219L, 2:30 pm

Attendance: Emily Neal, David Shields, Doug Hurst, Dennis White, Rita Pernik, Lonetta Oliver, Scott Gevaert, Deborah Char, Dustin Sweet, Syed Chowdhury, Bob Thumith, Andrew Langrehr (co-chair), Jeff Papier (co-chair)

1. **Ground Rules - Review**
   Jeff reviewed the ground rules which the task force established for itself at its first meeting.

2. **Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Information**
   Dennis discussed HLC’s past findings and current expectations regarding the College’s faculty evaluation system. Per Criterion Three of HLC’s final 2008 report to the College, Student Learning and Effective Teaching, faculty and administrators alike expressed dissatisfaction with the system now in place. The report concluded that we therefore need to implement a revised evaluation system. Dennis also noted that per one of our current, very experienced HLC consultants, if we don’t revise the system, HLC will mark us as “not met” in this area. Dennis explained that HLC is not prescriptive as to the kind of system we adopt. He shared his HLC-related information on our Blackboard shell prior to today’s meeting for our review.

3. **Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) / Total Quality Management (TQM)**
   Emily led a discussion on CQI/TQM and its origins, along with its possible impacts on how we think about faculty evaluation as well as our students. Her discussion drew from a research paper on CQI/TQM which she authored, and previously shared on our Blackboard shell. Emily explained that CQI/TQM management evolved from neoliberal ideologies, which view not only businesses, but also government and education, as suitable for consumerist, free-market models. This view may have real drawbacks for higher education, including viewing students merely as “consumers.” The group agreed that the continuous improvement parts of CQI/TQM are beneficial, and wondered whether just that part could be retained. It also agreed to keep Emily’s paper in mind as it proceeds with its work.

4. **Best Practices in Faculty Evaluation Systems / Systems at Other Schools**
   Task force members researched best practices in faculty evaluation, as well as systems in place at other schools. This research was shared on Blackboard, and formed the basis of today’s wide-ranging discussion, which considered best practices and other systems together. Some examples of themes and observations which emerged:
Our system already includes components found in best practices (student input, classroom visitation, etc.).

A number of schools include peer-input in their systems.

A number of schools use a rating system which includes “excellent.”

Evaluation systems at a number of schools provide built-in opportunities for formative feedback.

A number of schools robustly tie personal goal-setting and professional development to their evaluation outcomes.

The percentage of schools relying on classroom visits has increased greatly over the past decade.

Some schools link continuing status to evaluation outcomes.

Many schools use a standardized template for classroom visitations, but this could include a customizable section for faculty who want feedback on specific aspects of their teaching.

5. STLC’s Current Faculty Evaluation System

Andrew led a discussion about our current faculty evaluation system. He reviewed the components of the system, and solicited feedback on its pluses and minuses. Pluses include flexibility (e.g. faculty choice indicators), simplicity, use of student input, as well as consistency in requiring classroom visitations and reviewing probationary faculty on an annual basis. Minuses include inconsistency in how other parts of the system are applied throughout the College, the potential use of the Division Dean’s section as a “hammer,” the rating system, the use of only one year’s worth of student input, and questions on the student input form. The math used in faculty scoring is also not very helpful. Task force members pointed out the need for more robust formative and goal-setting elements, the need for defining meaningful visits for online classes, and for linking our system to the College’s Mission and Strategic Objectives. Also raised was the importance of evaluating student/faculty interaction on Blackboard, even for face-to-face classes, given the increasing importance of online interaction in all types of courses.

6. Topics for Next Meeting

   a. Design “architecture” / big picture of proposed faculty evaluation system. CQI/TQM aspect?
   b. Discuss the current evaluation systems which the College uses for other employee groups.
   c. Discuss ways to capture faculty input: survey? focus groups?
   d. Discuss what/when to report out to faculty on current progress of task force.

7. Schedule Next Meeting

   Our next meeting will be held on Thursday August 4, on the Meramec Campus, BA 219L, from 2 – 4 pm.
8. **Adjournment**

   The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

   --Submitted by J. Papier