Faculty Evaluation Task Force Minutes for June 29, 2017
Meramec SC 204, 2- 4 pm

Attendance: Deborah Char, Syed Chowdhury, Scott Gevaert, Ame Mead, Jeff Papier (co-chair), Dustin Sweet, Robert Thumith, Dennis White, Anne Wessely (guest)

1. Approval of Agenda
   The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of Minutes
   The minutes were approved.

3. Still-To-Do List
   a. Online student evaluations
      • Anne Wessely (Interim Director – Online Learning) lent her informed perspective to our conversation regarding online student evaluations. She reminded us that the Higher Learning Commission will be looking at the College’s implementation of online education. She also explained that the College must meet State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) guidelines in order to maintain its SARA membership. Membership in this organization is essential, as it lets the College offer online education to the other 46 SARA states without incurring costly fees. Anne focused on Guideline 5, which discusses evaluation of online learning. This guideline mandates not only student course evaluations, but also analysis of course design, student support services, and other related matters. Our evaluation system is, appropriately enough, focused on faculty, but in general not on these additional issues.

      Given all of the above—and the fact that faculty can choose which courses they evaluate, meaning it’s possible (even if unlikely) that no online courses would ever be evaluated—Anne feels that a second evaluation system should be implemented. This system would address course design and other issues of concern to online learning at STLCC. The system would not look at faculty performance. Decisions resulting from this second system would not impact promotion, evaluation or other HR processes.
Development of this system lies outside the charge of our task force. Anne believes that another task force will be formed to develop this system. Several people observed that the word “evaluation” should be avoided when naming the new system, in order to clearly separate it from faculty evaluation.

- Ame shared her conversation with Michael Hudspeth (IT) regarding online student evaluations. Michael noted that Banner is an excellent system for handling evaluations. For instance, it offers data protection and sorting, and the ability to require students to complete evaluations before seeing their grades. Unfortunately, there is a major hurdle: the Enterprise component of STLCC IT handles Banner. Enterprise is currently tasked with several large, high-priority projects, including the launch of the new Navigate system. Implementation of online course evaluations will likely not happen anytime soon. However, we’re hoping that Andrew can advocate for making this implementation as high a priority as possible. We discussed interim workarounds, and arrived at the following: ask for faculty volunteers willing to use a technology such as Google Docs or MS Forms to evaluate their Fall 2017 online courses. We could target 10% - 15% of the online courses currently offered. Anne will get back to us on how many courses that is. This workaround will give us some idea of the challenges involved in online assessment, and show a good faith effort to HLC.

b. Calendar

At our last meeting, the group agreed on a faculty evaluation calendar. The calendar still needed buy-in from the administration, either via NEA negotiations, at FERC, etc. Jeff noted at today’s meeting that he wasn’t sure where this issue stood. Bob responded that the calendar is a go, and simply needs to be placed in a side-letter to the NEA joint resolution. Jeff will update the faculty evaluation document with the calendar, and send the document to Bob.

c. Faculty and Dean Timelines (Checklists)

Jeff shared the faculty evaluation timeline/checklist which Lonetta created (and Jeff edited). The task force proposed quite a few revisions. Ame will continue work on the timeline; this work will dovetail with her work on a brief handbook for deans. She will share these items with the group for our input.
d. Access to Faculty Evaluation Documents, including Timelines

We agreed that all faculty evaluation materials, including training items, should be in one place. Bob suggested that we house these materials on the SafeColleges system. The group agreed. A link to the SafeColleges system/evaluation materials will be placed on the STLCC HR page. Email reminders to faculty regarding evaluation should also contain this link. We agreed that additional links were not needed.

e. Training

- We agreed that during Service Week, Marketing and Communication should send out an email to all full-time faculty stating that if they are up for evaluation, they will be informed of this by their deans. The email should also let faculty know to be on the lookout for training opportunities. A link to the evaluation materials must be included, too. Jeff will talk with Andrew about this.
- Bob will take the lead on developing training. He will work with Ame, the instructional designers, and others to determine the most effective forms of training; these should be available by the fourth week of the Fall 2017 semester. Several task force members remarked that a live-streamed session should be included. Bob noted that an online module would also be useful.

4. Other Topics

We noted the need to convert the student evaluation document into a Scantron-ready form. Debbie noted that someone should contact the campus Assessment Centers to let them know about the increased number of student evaluations they will be receiving. Some task force members wondered whether the College’s Scantron equipment was up to the task. Ame noted that the open-ended comments on the evaluations could be processed by OCR software. If all of the open-ended comments were placed on a separate page, administrative assistants could also scan these using the copiers.

5. Schedule Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thurs. Aug. 10, from 2 – 4 pm, on the Meramec Campus. Room TBD.

6. Adjournment

We adjourned at 3:15 pm.