

Instruction Committee Meeting
April 15, 2020

Members present: Jean Amaral, Andres Colapinto, Jun Liang, Jennifer Longley, Michael McGee, Lisa H. Rose, Nicholas Smith, Kibrewossen Tesfagiorgis

1. Meeting convened on Zoom at 2:07 p.m.
2. Approved meeting minutes from the prior meeting of March 4, 2020.
3. Agenda was approved with one addition.
4. It was noted that during the next senate meeting, a vote is scheduled on the committee's proposed guidelines for online observation. Members agreed that the vote should take place as scheduled.
5. Discussed whether faculty members should be observed and whether student evaluations of teaching (SETs) should be done in the Fall 2020 semester given that half of BMCC courses will be delivered in an online format and the realistic possibility that all remaining courses will be delivered in a distance learning format.
 - a. Discussed the implications of observations and SETs for tenure-track faculty.
 - b. Discussed whether the Instruction Committee's proposed guidelines for online observation will be possible to follow given that only online-certified faculty can observe online courses. It was noted that distance learning courses are distinct from online courses.
 - c. Discussed whether the Instruction Committee should make a statement regarding observations and SETs in Fall 2020. It was noted that it's not clear whether the Committee can get the required information from the BMCC administration and from the union before the next Senate meeting. Volunteers (Colapinto, Rose, and McGee) agreed to work on getting clear about the important questions that the Committee should seek out answers to.
6. The Committee's plans for the beta-testing of our new student experience survey were discussed
 - a. It was asked whether we should push for the student experience survey pilot in the Fall given current circumstances. It may conflict with the Committee's possible recommendation to not give SETs next semester.
 - b. It was suggested that beta-testing of the student experience survey could still work as a *voluntary* survey this semester and next semester.

7. Synchronous online teaching and faculty development/training was discussed. Is the online training adequate and will it continue? Are all departments giving the same information about what Fall classes will be like and how faculty should prepare?
 - a. Members agreed that E-learning has been doing a great job.
 - b. It was noted that much of the training is focused on tools (Blackboard, Zoom, etc.) rather than on pedagogy. Possible resources for online pedagogy were suggested, including trauma-informed pedagogy and how the trauma of the pandemic bears on or should bear on instruction and assessment.
 - c. Concerns were raised about how the Instruction Committee can distribute information about pedagogy, about whether it will get lost in the mix, and about whether it will be helpful given all that E-learning has already done.
 - d. Concern was raised about missing (non-participating) students.
8. Issues of concern were recounted or raised:
 - a. Should the Committee recommend or provide resources for training/faculty development tailored for synchronous online teaching? Issues discussed centered on equity, length of online meetings and its relation to student attention, possibilities of using technology for group work, and how to gauge student comprehension and interest when they cannot be seen.
 - b. Should the Committee recommend or provide resources for training/faculty development tailored for trauma-informed pedagogy? Volunteers (Longley and McGee) will look into whether a workshop on this topic is possible.
 - c. Should the Committee recommend or provide resources for dealing with equity issues (relating to both students and adjunct instructors) arising from the switch to distance learning courses? Equity issues and information for adjuncts were discussed. It was agreed that the Committee should follow up with the union about this matter.
 - d. If non-online courses are switched to distance learning in the Fall, should such courses be *required* to be delivered in a *synchronous* format? It was noted that academic freedom bears on this but so do student expectations about how the courses they sign up for will be delivered.
9. Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicholas Smith, Department of Academic Literacy and Linguistics