

Instruction Committee Meeting
October 3, 2021

Present: Carlos Chapparo, Andres Colapinto, Miguel Fiolhais, Monica Foust, Michael McGee, Owen Roberts, Lisa Rose, Scott Tulloch, Demi Zheng

Guest: Musa Elbulok

Chairperson Monica Foust brought the meeting to order. The minutes of the October 6 meeting were approved.

Musa Elbulok was present to discuss with the committee the implementation of a survey and/or other means of getting feedback, targeting faculty whose courses showed a higher rate of passing relative to other courses within their departments, specifically among demographics of students who have been shown to have higher DFWI rates than other demographics, as detailed in the President's report to the College Council on October 27, 2021. After meeting with department chairs, a survey of faculty was suggested. We discussed the potential issues and variables that might complicate the distribution and findings of such a survey. A possibility of interviews of focus groups was brought up. Many questions and concerns were raised by the committee, like using DFWI and grades in general as an indicator of helpful or good pedagogy and methodologies among faculty. There were also concerns about what questions would be included in a survey, how DFWI rates in courses among specific demographics compared to the performance of those demographics overall. There were concerns of the general approach of identifying specific instructors without a better understanding of what led their students to have high passing rates in general. It was agreed that a focus group with faculty may be a better way to identify topics and questions that could be summarized in a later survey.

The committee also spoke with Musa Elbulok about progress on the technical implementation of a pilot of the new student experience survey developed by the committee, and learned that he is in the process of using simulated data to test the survey using available software or a new solution from IRT. The committee will wait for the results of the simulation before moving forward with a technical implementation of the survey. The limitations of the software used to implement the survey are due to budget restrictions from the Academic Affairs office, which did not renew licenses to the previously used software after 2020. Professor Colapinto pointed out that the student evaluations are contractually mandated and should be done up to a professional standard.

The committee discussed the new draft of the student experience survey, and agreed to remove the section on course format, which referred to a section that is no longer in the survey. We also agreed to discuss adding a new question to capture the student participation level in the course. We discussed recruiting faculty for the pilot. At BMCC, all faculty are evaluated in the Fall semester, while in the Spring only faculty meeting certain designations are evaluated, so we agreed to focus on recruiting faculty in the Spring through chairs who are not being evaluated and/or may be interested in testing the new surveys in their courses.

Members from the E-Learning advisory board Professor Rose and Professor McGee reported on a recent meeting, which raised concerns about differences among departments in how online and hybrid courses are assigned to faculty, some using seniority as the criteria while others use attendance at training. Further concerns about the HyFlex course modality/attribute were discussed, such as the technical limitations on innovation and pedagogy. Professor Rose proposed a subcommittee of the IC should be formed to meet with VP Spadaro and Dean Zummo composed of faculty with experience teaching online and in different modalities and called for discussion in a follow up meeting.

Professor Rose brought up CUNY policy regarding use of student cameras during synchronous courses which requires faculty to notify students of camera use requirements prior to registration and agreed to disseminate the policy at the next AS.

The committee agreed to meet again on December 15th at 2pm, with December 14th as a backup date in the case of a PSC Chapter meeting being scheduled for the 15th.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40pm.

Respectfully submitted
Owen Roberts