Faculty Development Committee 4.24.26

Attendance

Present: Karen Benckenstein, Melissa Eder, Brandon Fansler, Victor Favela, Robert Fulton, Maria Johnson, Stephen Malley, Will Ratliff, Greg Rohloff, Kara Starkweather, and Chelsea Thurman

Absent: Chris Hudson, Lynne Kenney, Lori Petty, Anna Rodriguez, and Frank Sobey

Professional Development

- CTL website links are not always current.
- Faculty who plan their semester early need the event information as soon as possible, so setting ACES plans earlier was helpful.
- A few requested that ACES fall earlier in the week, but no perfect day for ACES exists. Thursday replaced Wednesday based on faculty feedback saying Wednesday was too early.
- There's an interest in returning to cohorts to build community, but past participation was very low (2–3 people). A faculty needs survey of 300+ yielded only 17 responses, with feedback favoring shorter, bite-sized sessions.
- Cohorts are being considered, however; Lori is seeking feedback about her rank and tenure cohorts, which some have requested to be reinstated.
- Active personal recruitment by those leading the cohorts has improved participation: personally invite individual faculty members to attend.
- The Committee discussed requiring a minimum of one professional development activity per year. This was taken to Faculty Senate last year but lost momentum. Sending Frank these minutes with this item highlighted was suggested.
- The Committee discussed what counts as professional development and where the line between service and development should be drawn. Curriculum redesign, conference attendance, and doctoral coursework all qualify. Faculty contributing heavily to department work may not be attending CTL events but are still developing professionally.
- There was a suggestion to create a tracking mechanism for non-CTL professional development with chair/dean sign-off, which would also help this Committee identify focus areas.
- Some deans and chairs (and faculty) may not know that faculty can receive credit for conference attendance. Turnover has created knowledge gaps.
- Program chairs could help by identifying faculty for cohorts and doing targeted outreach to those specific individuals.
- Faculty could request CTL to come to them (including at other campuses), at a convenient time, with a minimum group of 4.
- AI training feedback was mixed: some feel they have had enough; others want more tied directly to their assignments. The state now requires AI training and CTL and HR are developing it. AI changes faster than formal courses can be built.
- Short, focused sessions are well received. Customized team training is available through CTL.

- The Committee would like for CTL to add an option for faculty to indicate they are interested in a training session but cannot attend at that particular time. They can provide alternate days/times that work for them. CTL can then track topic interest.
- Wednesday morning sessions (7 a.m. with coffee and donuts) have not been tried, but that time of day might conflict with taking kids to school.
- Tovuti-based software training (such as for using Outlook) was discontinued due to cost. Victor and HR are working on building into Tovuti microcredentials for attending professional development sessions. The target is a fall launch, and the system will include icons, stickers, and points. HR also provides training for departments/teams, such as the DiSC training. They will travel where needed – Dumas, Hereford, West, East. Fierce trainings are also offered.
- A project-based cohort model was proposed, with scheduled blocks a few times per semester, working with a partner or team for built-in accountability.
- Providing more training and assigning mentors to assist adjunct instructors is in the works. Sessions with adjuncts will need to be scheduled far in advance, since so many of them work other jobs.
- Faculty need more training on running effective online courses. Students sometimes feel disconnected from online instructors and the online content is often lacking.
- Soft skills development is a growing need. Post-COVID students and businesses alike identify this gap. CTL recently offered a session on soft skills, and Career Services has a presentation available for faculty or students.
- Generational differences in learning styles and motivation warrant proactive attention, particularly for the “Chromebook generation” students.
- Dual credit enrollment is growing and will increase significantly with Badger Bound. Students as young as 14 or 15 are now in college courses. Faculty need strategies for these mixed-age groups, shorter attention spans, and instructional pacing. Outreach at earlier transition points (e.g., fifth grade) was suggested.
- Teaching for Transformation is very beneficial.
- Bringing faculty from different disciplines together for more open conversations was suggested.

ACES Planning

- The location was perfect. The end-of-day workshop to apply what was learned will be built into the schedule again. It could be optional, from 3-4:00 for those who have the time and interest.
- If we keep the session count at 3, that would allow for a fourth session to be added, as it was this year, in cases of emergencies or last-minute priorities.
- Keynote: we will again invite Rich Gagnon (the Amarillo Assistant City Manager), who is familiar with AC’s workforce context and is an advocate for the college. Beth Duke (Center City) is an alternative; although her work might not be as good of a fit for ACES. Due to the loss of HSI funding, local speakers are preferred unless we pursue a grant or crowdfunding. The Committee agreed that inviting a local speaker would provide a break from the AI focus, and individual presentations will likely continue to focus on AI. Participants can choose to attend or avoid those sessions as they wish.
- Before deciding if we will again have two keynotes scheduled, we will check with Dr. Conner, who could potentially provide a morning session.
- The goal will be to make the afternoon sessions more interactive rather than primarily presentation-based. Divisional meetings are a possibility for a fourth session slot.
- Members leaving a subcommittee should provide a replacement name to Robert and written documentation of the role for continuity.

- Faculty have expressed interest in ACES involvement. If you hear of interested faculty, send names to Robert.

ACES 2027 Timeline

- **Week Fall classes begin**: this Committee will meet to set the official timeline and communicate it with all Committee members
- **September 1:** Call for proposals opens
- **October 2:** Early proposal deadline
- **October 27:** Final proposal deadline; keynotes confirmed
- **November 20:** First Responders building is booked, rooms are set, and catering is finalized
- **December 11:** Close-out meeting before the break

Other Business

- A new co-chair needs to be identified and trained. Contact Robert if interested.
- No additional meetings planned until fall.