

**Council of Associate Deans (CAD) Minutes**  
**April 1, 2014**  
**226 Tigert Hall**

**Present:** Sharon Bradley, Peggy Carr, Stephanie Hanson, Chris Janelle, Angela Lindner, Jen Day Shaw, Joe Spillane, Ricky Telg, Horace Tucker, Theresa Vernetson, and Marie Zeglen  
**Absent:** Tammy Aagard, Tom Dana, Bernard Mair, David Pharies, Ed Schaefer, Andrew Wehle, and Michael Weigold  
**Guests:** Cheryl Gater, Adam Heward, Jeanna Mastrodicasa and TJ Summerford

The meeting was called to order by Angela Lindner at 1:30 p.m. and introductions were made.

**1. Minutes of the March Council of Associate Deans' Meeting**

The minutes from the March meeting were approved.

**2. 2013 Student Experience in Research University (SERU) Survey Results – Jeanna Mastrodicasa**

Mastrodicasa gave an overview of the SERU Survey. In 2009, SERU opened up to AAU members outside of California. This is the third time UF has implemented the undergraduate student survey. The SERU report can be found on the Office of Institutional Planning and Research's web page (<http://www.ir.ufl.edu/OIRApps/SERU/reports.aspx>).

**3. Online Teaching Evaluations – Angela Lindner and TJ Summerford**

Lindner explained that back in December, she asked that CAD discuss online teaching evaluations again because the continuing decline in Engineering's response rate. At the December meeting, it was agreed that she, Peggy Carr and Tom Dana would meet with TJ Summerford to address some of the questions of the Council such as if there should be an opt-out option for students, and how to increase student response both from the faculty and student side.

Summerford explained that nationally the major trend has been a drop in response rate. We expected that to happen when the evaluations went online. Some colleges went from a 70-80% response rate down to 40%. Right now most colleges are leveling out at a 40-50% response rate.

Wanda Garfield who works with Summerford participated in a webinar that was called "40 is the new 80." Studies show that with the drop in the response rate, the quality of the evaluation responses do not change.

Two things he feels we need to continue to look at:

- a. How do you explain deviation between colleges and departments within colleges?
- b. How do we address the deviation? How do we try to bring more consistency among the colleges?

### Discussion:

- Zeglen commented that when the graduation survey went from voluntary to mandatory, the response rate increased to 99%. The rates increased due to the ability to hold transcripts. Shaw indicated with faculty evaluations, we cannot hold registration based on completion of evaluations and we are not allowed to hold students' grades.
- According to Summerford, positive and negative incentives were considered. However, they have not been able to find an approach that is functional and that can be implemented.
- Summerford explained there is a way to implement the opt-out feature. From the position of statistical validity, surveys should give the participants the ability to opt out. Our system does not have that with the exception of where the student has the ability to indicate this is not his/her instructor. Therefore, an evaluation will not be submitted. We do not have the option where a student can acknowledge the need to submit an evaluation, but the student chooses not to. Technically, a student can open an evaluation and simply hit submit and it will functionally do it, but it is not explicit. Every student can opt-out by stating this is not my instructor. Summerford believes we can implement something that allows an explicit opt-out to say the student does not want to submit the evaluation.
- It was asked if we do analysis of characteristics of those who are responding such as male versus female. Spillane recommended that the university do an analysis because response rates do impact faculty tenure and promotion. If no difference between 80-40 response rate and the results are consistent with the 80, recommend that UF fund someone to analyze the numbers.
- Hanson feels if the research is showing that 40 is the new 80 that the quality of the responses are good, then there is not really a point to continue all these other things. Spillane's point is good which is are our data fitting within what these other studies have discovered so we know whether we can interpret this as valid data. First, most importantly, is our data valid relative to what other are finding because these are the data that are being used for T&P? Second, what makes a valid response rate?
- Hanson stated we may just need a readjustment of APB and faculty expectations with regards to the data and response rate

### Ways to increase response rate:

- When faculty offer incentives to complete the evaluation then there is an increase in responses. One instructor has a more detailed review for the final that is shared with the entire class if the class reaches a certain response rate.
- The College of Veterinary Medicine explicitly takes class time. They have department staff go to the face-to-face classes to administer the evaluations.
- One institution sent trained groups of students to classes to "proctor" completion of evaluations by students in the class.
- Another institution, selected 30-40% of the student body by lottery to complete the evaluation. The students are told they are representing the rest of the students. The college got a high response rate because the students felt a sense of obligation and group responsibility.

Recommendations to Mair:

- a. Study data more carefully and closely to see if it is comparative to what the national trends are and if they are valid.
- b. Share a document of the best practices such as setting aside class time.
- c. Suggest an opt-out feature in selected colleges.

**4. Other items:**

- Final 4 Basketball Plans – Shaw announced that the O’Connell Center will be open for the community to view the Final 4 basketball game. The doors will open at 7:30pm and the event will be family friendly. Emergency safety zones will also be set up.

Meeting adjourned at 2:35pm.