

To: Jayne Harvie (Faculty Senate Office)
From: Josef Glowa, Chair
Re. FDAI Committee Year-end Report
Date: May 8, 2010

We had an active and successful year on the Faculty Development, Assessment and Improvement Committee. Attendance at FDAI meetings was good, and most meetings were held with working quorums. Our committee's Recorder this year was C.P. Price with help from Kelly Houlton, who volunteered to keep minutes when C.P. was unable to attend meetings. We are grateful to both for thorough and timely processing of the meeting minutes. All members worked hard to achieve the following accomplishments:

Joy Morrison of the Faculty Development Office provided monthly updates on her work. She reported on her travels to EDUCAUSE and POD, and the AAC&U conference in Washington DC. The Office of Faculty Development (OFD) Office of Faculty Development [OFD] sponsored several events during the academic year, such as Introduction to Grant Writing with Bob Lucas and a webstream workshop on curriculum design. She encouraged faculty to submit proposals for the Alaska Society for Technology in Education (ASTE) conference in Anchorage, Feb 20-23; brought ten faculty members to the Annual Lilly-West Conference on College and University Teaching in California; and organized first-year faculty orientation. She organized a well-attended mentoring luncheon, and met face-to-face with the entire new Fairbanks faculty, and conferenced by phone with the rural faculty.

Roy Roehl came to visit our committee, sharing his experiences with his ongoing faculty observations. Generally, everything has been going well, but there is some ambiguity about the observation process and the establishment of observation protocol. Some departments or school (CRDC) have moved to do their own observations. The committee expressed interest in determining where independent observation programs have been established, and what standard is followed in those observations.

The 2010 Lilly Conference on Adult Learning in Valdez, March 3-5, was an overall success. There were approximately fifty participants, including several from outside the state. The sessions, done using a presentation/engagement motif, were well received. For the first time this year, several annual awards were created. The *Gretchen Bersch Award* was presented to Susan Hermans, and the *Alaska Native Elders Award* was presented to several participants. Next year's Lilly Conference on Adult Learning will return to Fairbanks and is scheduled for March 2-4, 2011; the theme will be "Transformative Learning."

The committee developed and distributed a peer teaching observation worksheet for seminar style teaching. The form was met with enthusiasm by the Faculty Administrative Committee and approved by the Executive Council of the Faculty Senate.

The committee organized a 1-hour Faculty Forum on “Academic Duty/Academic Freedom” with former Provost Paul Reichardt in the Spring semester. The Forum (March 26, 2010) was well attended. There were about nine people in person, and eight to ten more who participated via audio conference. The forum was audio-conferenced.

A new subcommittee was formed to look into the issue of electronic student evaluations. Kelly Houlton accepted the position as point person. Sarah Lewis was invited by the committee to discuss the thinking and plans within the Provost's Office about the use of electronic methods of collecting student evaluations of instruction. They feel that such use is not only absolutely inevitable but also essential to be able to satisfy the present requirements of institutional accreditation. The low response rate of electronic evaluations (29% vs. 70% paper-based) is the committee’s main concern. Melanie Arthur presented research that clearly indicates that student response rates are reduced when electronic instruments are used. It was suggested that Melanie’s previous email summary with attached articles be amended and sent to members of the Faculty Administrative Committee. Both Melanie and Kelly deserve special credit for exploring this complex issue and helping the rest of the committee to become familiar with.

The committee plans to continue work in all the areas above, further exploring the issues involving the possible introduction of electronic student evaluations, organizing more forums under an umbrella topic of “Academic Duty/Academic Freedom,” helping to organize a strong adult learning conference in Fairbanks, and developing resources for mentoring and peer teaching observation. We are working on strengthening a culture of faculty development at UAF, and we thank the members of the FDAI Committee for their dynamic input.