

Committee on Teaching and Learning (CoTL)
Annual Report
2023-2024 Academic year

Committee Membership

Lumina Albert (Chair, COB), Cayla Bellamy (co-chair, CLA), Shawn Archibeque (COAS), Dan Baker (COE), Will Bromley (CNS), Matt Moulton (CHHS), *TBD Director of Academics (ASCSU), Kristy Lueshen (CSU Libraries) Robin Rothfeder (WCNR), Sean Bryan (NTTF), John Michael (CVMBBS), Susan James (VPFA, ex officio), Jody Donovan (Dean of Students, ex officio), Sue Doe (TILT Director, ex officio), Katie Risheill (Registrar's Office, ex officio) Thomas Siller (VPUA, ex officio), Kimi Conro (Graduate Student Council)

Meeting times and duration

Meetings occur every other Monday evening for one hour.

Major CoTL Activities:

1. Discussion of AI Toolkit and accessibility captioning provided by TILT

- TILT is providing resources to help faculty navigate the challenges that AI poses to courses this term. <https://tilt.colostate.edu/your-fall-semester-ai-survival-toolkit/>
- There were discussions about resources to add, i.e., articles, guides, etc.
- This page is expected to evolve as more becomes available (or as more are shared with the Academic Integrity Program).

2. Discussion of the course survey

- Survey management conducted by TILT:
 - Is this the appropriate “home?”
 - Who should manage the data?
 - How is the course survey perceived?
- Very few responses, tend to be the ones who are not happy with the course, difficult to modify questions to be specific to the course
- Is there a logical alternative to TILT if it were moved? Institutional Research? Qualtrics?
- Doesn't work for small sections (ie. woodwind quintet) or large sections; ability to customize how students are grouped would be helpful; What is the primary purpose of the course surveys—are they for faculty evaluation/annual evaluation or for something else?
- TILT is the right place if the course survey is tied to the areas in which TILT engages faculty
- Course survey is not about evaluating faculty, they are about evaluating courses; lots of research around bias against faculty with minoritized identities in course surveys
- Students perceive course surveys as the evaluation of their faculty; only chance to give feedback on the faculty
- Would be good for different surveys (or options for questions) for different types of courses

- History of the process of course survey redesign – thoughtful, engaged experts in numerous fields, questions that emerged reflect the desire to do no harm, but not sure if they do any good either
- Was there a particular course in mind when the course survey was designed? Doesn't seem to fit any course
- Major Issue: TILT has limited resources and this requires significant work
- Can we find out if other universities are doing something better?
- Do we move this responsibility to the new Provost?
- Difficulty of timing for releasing the course survey per course: Faculty Council voted to one date to release the course survey rather than allow faculty to open the survey themselves (faculty either forgot or struggled to open the surveys at the end of the semester). Faculty don't want survey to remain open after their finals.
- Can customize dates but not days of the week the survey is open
- Faculty do not have access to turning on the survey themselves. This can only be done manually by Operations Manager at TILT. She can set the survey release for inclusive dates but cannot turn it on for a specific day or days of the week. Please use discretion when asking for this as such customization is time consuming. When the topic was discussed at Faculty Council in 2022-23, the majority of the representative body voted to support the turning on of the survey at the central level so that the individual faculty member doesn't have to remember to do so.

3. Assignment extensions by the SDC

- There was a conversation regarding this process and the “ramp up” in assignment extensions by SDC since 2020.
- It appears that the extensions have been getting longer. Members of CoTL had students with 6-day extensions currently.
- It was pointed out that it is not the instructor's place to decipher if the late completion is due to the disability or if they are just late.
- This creates additional issues with the scaffolded nature associated with many of the assignments that exist in a course. Through the use of extensions, there is the potential for the students to be placed in a deficit.
- Is there a reason for the increase in these extensions. These accommodations are focused on equity and not equality, which makes it difficult to have a blanket policy. These individual accommodations will require individual responses.
- There were concerns with the potential for the need to individualize the education process while still providing effective teaching for the larger groups. There are instances where accommodations are not being met due to the undue burden associated with the request.
- Students would need to inform instructors within the first 6 weeks of the semester if they have accommodations. The issue is usually not about knowing about accommodations in general, but rather when a student wants to use one specifically for a given assignment.
- In the medium to small classes that the optional attendance can be particularly disruptive.

- Lumina agreed that it would be good to invite SDC to speak with us regarding this issue. Lumina reached out to SDC for discussions about assignment extensions. SDC visited with CoTL to provide more context and clarification regarding their accommodation policies.

4. Consideration of NTF for University Distinguished Teaching Scholars.

- There is interest in understanding why there is a need for tenure to be considered for the award.
- It was pointed out that this is covered in the Faculty Manual and that this committee or CORSAF would be appropriate to address this issue.
- There is precedence with the Board of Governors Teaching Excellence Award.
- It was recommended that the current Distinguished Scholars are consulted as well.
- As part of this process, it was brought up that there would be a need to reassess the requirements for this designation as well.
- There was a question whether there was a parallel CCAF-specific award.
- Some CoTL members indicated that if possible, they would prefer that CCAF would be considered for the same award.

5. UDTS Selection Process and Criteria

Changes being proposed:

- Expanding the number. Certain percentage of faculty should be in this. Significant budget implications.
- Criteria of being a TT faculty? 3% of Ss advised by faculty. Changing of the guard with respect to roles, expectations, a recognition.
- Idea: hold off on sending out the call in November UNTIL have revised expectations and what not.
- Within the purview of CoTL, so why not put forth a proposal/motion?
- Caveat – FC can make those determinations, but if the budget isn't there, we cannot do it. Shouldn't stop us (CoTL) from making the recommendation.
- What is the associated cost with the award position?
- Base budget increase AND financial incentive for specific projects
- Lifetime award, does it make sense for it to be a lifetime award OR would it be better to do a rotation on and off?
- CoTL charge – to initiate/raise these conversations with the appropriate committees.
- Historically, bring in the existing UDTS as part of the convo, have a vote in the final membership. Should be consulted.
- Combine Cayla's and Shawn's suggestions and bring folx into future conversations during CoTL meetings. Lumina will approach UDTS about expanding the number and including different roles.
- Majority of CoTL visibly raised hands in support.

- What impact does adding in parties to this conversation have on delaying application process?
- Will ask Sue (James) about it and get back to CoTL.
- This should all go in front of FC. But 2 tracks. (1) Faculty Manual criteria would need to be changed on a different track from (2) additional folx at the provost office.
- “We want to make this a stronger more equitable program. It will come soon.” State simply “we propose that we release the requirement of being TT.”
- Send them that proposal so they can consider it before the next CoTL meeting happens.
- Draft to Lumina, Lumina will share the draft with CoTL, seek input, and then send to the UDS.

6. Discussions on accessibility requirements, supports, and efforts—CoTL get involved?

- We need to wrap our heads around accessibility requirements and how CoTL will be in front and a part of these conversations. No formal proposal, more of a pre-discussion of a topic that needs to be addressed soon. Where on campus could faculty go to get help?
- Department has gone through trainings provided by the University over the last few years.
- 3-week TILT crash course on accessibility.
- TILT tools are great, finding ways to get departments exposed to those tools so they know they are available.
- Often times reactive. How can this be proactive?
- TILT recruit across the university and slowly reach a critical mass.
- Capacity issue. One issue is faculty legacy materials in canvas that need to be addressed one at a time. The other issue is building faculty ability to do things correctly as they go forward. Sue and Jody will keep CoTL up to date based on the events/topics discussed in their committees. Needs to be university investment in this.

7. UDS Selection Process and Criteria Discussions by UDS

- Following discussions within our committee regarding the possibility of expanding the eligibility criteria of the award to include non-tenure track/continuing contract and adjunct faculty, an invitation letter from the Committee on Teaching and Learning (CoTL) was sent to the University Distinguished Teaching Scholars inviting them to the CoTL meeting to discuss the selection process and criteria for the UDS Award.
- Mike Palmquist represented the UDS and accepted the invitation. A few UDS attended the CoTL meeting.
- The UDS group began talking about how they might update things and what and where things were in terms of eligibility criteria, selection criteria, and selection process. There were concerns that we were starting to see applications that exceeded 250 pages. For the length to be in and by itself competitive seemed to be putting people who were well qualified for the position.

- Two questions were extensively discussed: Should we expand eligibility criteria to non-tenure track faculty and keep it at the top rank? And, are tenured associate professors eligible for the award?
- Shawn made two motions for consideration by this committee for discussion due to time constraints.
- Motion 1: Accept the proposal document presented by Mike Palmquist for a tentative one-year period to allow for a simplified process to maintain our UDTs ranks at 12 in terms of number of members.
- The second motion is to ask Faculty Council for discussion time regarding the eligibility and process for UDTs selection. This would be a necessary step for moving forward with proposed changes in the future to requirements for UDTs.
- Both motions were seconded via email and the committee voted in favor of them via email.
- The UDTs were informed of CoTLs vote and decision.
- The UDTs informed Tom Siller and Sue James in the Provost's Office so they could go ahead with the call for nominations.

8. Discussions on UDTs and faculty council motion for language change regarding eligibility for the status:

- It was moved that the language concerning the UDTs be modified to allow tenure track and CCA teaching faculty to be considered for the position.
- The motion was seconded.
- There were discussions about language that we need to be mindful of, other faculty to be considered (Extension faculty? Assistant professors?)
- Following discussions, CoTL members agreed to propose to faculty council that we open up the eligibility criteria to tenure-track, contract, and continuing faculty in addition to tenured faculty (which is the current eligibility criterion mentioned in the faculty manual).
- The amendment was accepted. The motion was seconded. The committee voted 'YES' unanimously.
- The motion to change the eligibility for UDTs status specified in E.2.2.7.1 Eligibility for University Distinguished Teaching Scholar Status and Title was submitted to ensure that "[Faculty holding tenure track, tenured, continuing and contract appointments](#) at Colorado State University are eligible for the title of University Distinguished Teaching Scholar." This motion was successfully passed.

9. Discussions about Course Surveys

- When the Testing Center closed, TILT became the administrator of the course survey instrument. The amount of labor required to maintain this is extensive and many inquiries are made that require TILT to interpret policy. As such, it's time to consider moving the course survey to a home where there is more bandwidth and resources to manage it or to lay out expectations more clearly, or to have an arm of Faculty Council (CoTL?) that manages the questions so that Faculty Council maintains control of the policy administration.
- Sue specifically requested CoTL be the group that would take questions regarding the course survey so that the language and the interpretation of the policies are being managed by the faculty as opposed to being managed by TILT.
- There are questions such as: -Who should have access to course surveys? Department chairs? Graduate coordinators? Undergraduate coordinators? Right now the FAQ indicates that anyone a department code specifies has access. Meanwhile TILT has [additional resources](#) on understanding evidence of teaching effectiveness.
- Could the Committee on Teaching and Learning take on these questions that come to TILT so that TILT is not left to interpret policy and respond to inquiries?
- The course surveys were intended to be formative feedback for faculty and then the idea was that a whole host of things would be provided as a demonstration of teaching effectiveness. Unfortunately, we still have units that include course surveys for the purpose of evaluating faculty for teaching and then that opens the door to a lot of questions around who all has access to those.
- It's promotion time up in the Provost's Office and we're seeing far less dependency on course surveys which has been a real cultural change for us and a lot more of use of things like the teaching effectiveness framework and peer-review, and other ways of evaluating teaching.
- If the original purpose was for course surveys to be used for formative improvement by instructors, then the kind of proliferation of uses for teaching evaluation is inconsistent with how we imagined the original purpose of these evaluations. So, the question we're tackling is to what extent do you actually want these used in evaluation of teaching? And then we need guiding language that specifies who has access to this.

- If you go to the [TILT FAQ](#) for course surveys, it says that course surveys can be shared with those specified in the department's code. What if the department code says that another department's undergrad coordinator can access a faculty member's course surveys? What if a department code says that ANYONE can view course surveys? Please review this FAQ and consider its potential interpretations/implications.

- Can CoTL draft a policy that can be communicated to department chairs with a request for them to consider updating their department codes to reflect the objectives of [“multifactorial” indications of teaching effectiveness](#), as laid out in the Faculty Manual? (Note also that this important [policy document](#) does not include reference to the Faculty Manual. Shouldn't this be updated to connect to [E12.1](#))? We might well imagine that department chairs and T&P committee go to policy docs such as this so if they don't see the crucial Manual language, they don't know what the Manual has to say on this.

- Perhaps CoTL can put together a draft with recommendations to faculty council for communication with department chairs.

- The follow-up to this then might be worth us looking into making recommendations to departments about not using course surveys as evaluative materials but to use other forms of observation and evaluation of teaching.

10. Institutional Learning Objectives (ILO) – by Mendy Smith (Chair of Faculty council)

- Mendy received an invitation from the provost to be involved in discussions regarding the ILOs. There's a need to revisit those as they had been created in 2018 and haven't been reviewed since then. COVID happened and other things happened, and we haven't had a chance to revisit them. So, now we are getting together with Stephanie Foster and Tom Siller and others to ask what approaches other universities are taking to develop ILOs? - What frameworks do they apply? It would not be just CoTL coming up with the new ILOs, but it would be CoTL working with other key stakeholders in bringing up the ILOs after consideration of what other universities do. It would be good for us to have a subcommittee to develop ILOs.

- Jody and Shawn mentioned that they had served on a committee appointed by Rick, which came up with the current ILOs, but faculty council never voted on them. This was submitted to

faculty council as a report and they were going to bring it up as a motion in Spring 2020 but COVID happened.

- The ILOs are posted now on the Provost's page.
- Mendy: Such a report would be useful.
- Mendy hopes to speak with Provost Underwood and come back to continue the conversations.

11. Course Survey discussions follow-up at CoTL

- Discussions about the sub-committee on course survey: The idea of a sub-committee of CoTL consisting of faculty for fielding queries about the course survey, was discussed. Sue Doe asked whether anyone was willing to serve on the sub-committee. The process would be to collect these questions, mull over them and see how we want to respond to these questions.
- It would be ideal to have around 2 or 3 faculty. It could just be two people if there were couple of people that were willing to volunteer.
- The course survey administration is likely to be moved to another location besides TILT. There appears to be technical problems with both the eid access promised by ASCSU and the Manual as well as with gaining access to the surveys via a hand-held device.
- ASCSU is no longer contributing fees towards the course surveys.
- Since ASCSU had provided funding for the course surveys, a primary objective of the course surveys had been to make information available for students so they would get qualitative summaries of the nature of the course (delivery, structure, etc.) so that students could review this information and select the ones that matched best with their learning styles. But now, with the absence of funding now, what do we do about the course surveys and how will this change the nature and purpose of the course survey?
- Also, how do we ensure that the course surveys are not punitive but rather 'formative' as there are faculty concerns that course surveys have been given a lot of attention by department chairs in annual evaluations.
- In the Fall, CoTL would likely consider a motion to change manual language regarding the free access of course surveys to anyone with an eid because we are not providing that access, and because ACSU is no longer paying for it.
- One thing we should probably do based on the response that we got that the IT group is saying is that we should submit a change to that language to basically remove that access as it's described currently in the manual. We could probably get a wording change through this

committee and in front of faculty council. It won't be voted on until the Fall as we are probably a little late now. We don't have quorum today so we are not making any official motions.

- Cayla: In the interest of our timelines, we can decide that the first meeting that we have quorum, we could create verbiage change to propose for the manual that removes open access or would remove the phrase.

12. Credit limits for students

- Before the winter break, Tom Siller had brought in a topic concerning the current rules that state that a student can register up to 18 credits on their own. They have to get an advisor override if they want to go from 18 to 21, and they have to get a department head's override if they want to go from 21 to 24. Here is the glitch in that at each of those steps, they can go to different advisors, and they can go to different department heads and keep getting overrides that take them to a lot more credits than should be reasonable. We recently had a case where an engineering student registered for about 40 credits. So, what I'd like a consideration to be for this committee is to look at this so students may not be allowed to register or more than 24 credits without Provost's approval, which would be the VPUA long-term. There are some exceptions where students do things like summer programs, education abroad that count in a different semester. Is there any way we can put a reasonable limit on that? I don't know how many more meetings and when you'll have quorum, but it is something to consider.
- We don't want students flooding into the provost's office asking for overrides so either we let advisors do more like up to 24 credits. We saw that a credit hour is worth 3 hours of work a week, so three credit class is worth 9 hours of work a week so if you start taking forty credit hours, you realize that's not fitting with the way we define a credit hour with education abroad; they can only do one extra course because they're going abroad and they can't go two places at once.

Leadership for the coming year

Lumina Albert was unanimously elected to continue as Chair for the upcoming year. Cayla Bellamy is stepping away from the Co-Chair role and exiting the committee.
