**Instructional Evaluation Senate Committee Minutes**

September 21, 2018

Time: 9AM -12 PM

Room: C490

**PRESENT:** Prof. Sherese Mitchell, Ms. Sarata Hydara (student), Mr. Carlos Guevara, Prof. Asrat

Amnie, Mrs. Silvia Reyes, Prof. Jacqueline DiSanto, and Prof. Maria Subert

**ABSENT:** (Excused) Ms. Kaniah Aljamal (student), Prof. Juno Morrow

(On leave) Prof. Allison Franzese

**CALL TO ORDER AND VERIFICATION OF QUORUM 9:15 AM**

Instructional Evaluation came to order at 9:15 AM

**ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

Approved as presented

**CHAIRPERSON’S REMARKS**

Chairperson (Prof. Sherese Mitchell) announced the duty of the committee.

**CONFIRMING FUTURE MEETING DATES** 9:18 AM

**I. Discussing first topic: POINT document updates** (by Prof. Jacqueline DiSanto and Mr. Carlos Guevara) 9:20 AM

It was explained that the new Faculty Observation (FO) form never got to the vote.

The committee discussed the following questions:

**Question #1:** What are some fears regarding the FO form?

**Discussion:**

The following were concerns raised at the Senate and in conversations with faculty after the meeting when this form was presented:

* + The form could be used to point out professional hiatuses
  + The form could be used against non-tenured faculty
  + In 2011 the FO form was used as faculty developmental tool to make recommendations to improve. Unlike the Annual Evaluation, in FO the observer “jots down what he/she have seen” as a snapshot of the observed faculty’s teaching practice. Yet, many adjunct faculty are afraid that a vindictive chair can use it against them.
    - Nothing explains on the form that answering questions is optional.
    - E.g. people don’t have to answer the question of “safe environment” –it does not make sense anymore, especially in online environment.
  + If there is place that the FO form can be misused, this goes beyond the FO form, as it touches upon the purpose of the observation, these issues must be addressed through professional development.

**Question #2**: Which courses should be observed?

**Discussion:**

* It might be possible that not many faculty have been observed in the online environment, as faculty choose which course they will be observed. It is recommended that faculty who teach online is observed online by observers who have been trained in online teaching.
* There are currently a set of guidelines for observing someone in an asynchronous course and a set for observing someone in a hybrid course. We do not know if these are being used.
* Should we have two types of documents, one for face-to-face, another for online teaching?
* The new FO form connects these two, eliminating the need for extra guidelines.

**Question #3**: Who should be observed?

**Discussion:**

* According to the contract, tenured faculty might be observed. But the Provost says, they must be.
* We need to observe both face-to-face and online courses because we need to keep the quality of teaching in all teaching environments.
* Junior faculty cannot observe a tenure-track faculty. We have to double-check this.
* There may not be enough faculty qualified to observe online teaching.

**Question #4**: Should we create an electronic format of the FO form? (9:37AM)

**Discussion:**

* Many faculty want to see this.

**Question #5**: How can we solve issues of distrust surrounding the FO form?

**Discussion:**

* We need to make it more objective and less subjective.
* Departments have to start a conversation about what would work for them. We need to provide training about the FO form, make the modifications if needed, and present to the departments.
* The FO form looked like a non-curricular voting item and perhaps many senators did not read it before the Senate meeting. We need to ask chairs to share the document. FO should be emphasized in department meetings as important tool. Until it happens, we need to continue one-on-one conversation with people.
* The process may be facilitated if we could have all faculty members to look at the document.
* We need to clarify that the FO form is proactive.

**II.** **Move to the second topic: student evaluation and student participation in evaluation process** (9:49AM)

The chairperson (Prof. Sherese Mitchell) explained

* what the previous Instructional Evaluation Committee had done between Fall 2012 and Spring 2016:
  + - discussion of increasing student participation (bring COWS into classroom, encourage students to complete on their phones)
    - developed new documents
    - presented to the Academic Council and the Union
    - review of online evaluation aspect of POINT document
* what the new committee had done in one year:
  + - presented to the Academic Council and the Union –no answer received
    - want to increase student participation

The committee discussed the following questions:

**Question #1**: Why students don’t take this survey? Why students don’t feel it important? (10:02 AM)

**Discussion:**

* We need to
  + reduce different surveys to fill out
  + consider blocking students’ access to their grades if they don’t complete the survey
  + put out posters, posts in campus about the importance of the student feedback
  + explain the survey for students
  + try an online version, as “internal Rate my Professor”
  + discuss with faculty that this survey is important feedback on their teaching practices—has more value that just a portfolio item
* The survey closes too early at the time when students have too many tasks to do. We need to inform faculty and student about the closing date.
  + Should we create also a midterm survey? This would serve as an early direct assessment and build a habit.
  + We could try to build 5% for student feedback into the Syllabus.
* Students need to know this how this survey will be used.
  + We must emphasize the value of the feedback and avoid empowerment issues.
* Some professor promised 5% to students for filling out the feedback
* Students go to Rate my Professor because they feel it more anonymous.
* A mobile version of the survey was developed –we need to make sure it is available through mobile devices.
* Students need to know the impact of the student survey and why it is important
  + We have to invite Mr. Peter Kocik about response rates and how we use the recent data

**Question #2**: Why do we need student survey? How do we apply this information for positive changes?

**Discussion:**

* The fact that we use it for evaluation suggests that it can be used against faculty
* Students and faculty need to know the (positive) impact of student survey.

They need to know the action plan for using the data. The Center for Teaching and Learning can focus on explaining this as professional development activities.

* Faculty is afraid that the data can be used against them—the same problem as with Faculty Observation.
  + Although there is a space to explain bad student evaluation, it still can be frightening. We need to make a positive spin, to see the positive side of the student survey.
* We need to examine
* how we present the survey for students
* how do we use the data to make improvements

We must empower both students and faculty instead of promoting fear.

**Question #3**: How could we improve student participation?

**Discussion:**

* We could add to the survey (or create a questionnaire) asking: “What made you to fill out this survey?” If the norm is not filling out, we need to find the reasons for positive deviance.

**Question #4**: How do students and faculty communicate about the student survey?

**Discussion:**

* Students think that a bad feedback will affect their grade. They need to know that it is not affecting them.
* We need to communicate the purpose of student evaluation more clearly: they are used to improve teaching. What is being done with the data? Is the data given to the department chair/unit coordinator/faculty? Who else sees this? Is anyone asking for these statistics? What are we doing with the data as institution to see the emerging patterns? We need to invite Mr. Peter Kocik and ask these questions.

**DISCUSSION OF THE NEXT STEPS** **(10:58 AM)**

* We should make a research about the current status of student form and why it is not working. We need to show this research to the Senate.
* We will check CUNY website about institutional evaluation research.
* We will open a Google share document.

**Next meeting:** Oct 26 9:30 AM

**DECISION/ACTION:**

* Present at College Senate to gain feedback
* Follow up with POINT regarding document they were developing
* Continue effort to improve participation
* Advertising the positive effects of student survey –video, pamphlets, posters, and representations on the bridge
* Creating a survey and/or organizing student focus groups

**MEETING ADJOURED 11:15 AM**