Minutes of the College of Education Faculty Affairs Committee (February 1, 2006)

Present: Heidi Mills (chair), Margaret Burggraf, Panayiotis Doutis, Bud Hult, John Lowery, Mary Styslinger

I. Leonard Maiden Spirit of Service Award—the members discussed the nominations received for the Leonard Maiden Spirit of Service Award and selected the recipient of the 2006 Leonard Maiden Spirit of Service Award. The members of the committee agreed that Heidi Mills would inform the other nominee(s) of the nomination and encourage other nominator(s) to resubmit the nomination next year.

II. The members discussed the issues raised by Dr. Margaret Gredler regarding the College of Education Course Evaluation Instrument. Dr. Gredler raised five main points in her message regarding this issue.

Dr. Gredler asked whether the question on the current College of Education Course Evaluation regard attendance policies (question 6) was required by the university as she had never seen that question on course evaluations in other colleges. Heidi Mills agreed to contact Mike Seaman regarding that question. However, upon further research, it was determined that this question is required to be included in course evaluation under Academic Affairs Policy ACAF 1.04.

Dr. Gredler expressed the concern that some items address more than one concept and provided the example of a question which asked students to evaluate the text and other materials at the same time. However, this was not considered to be a major issue by the members of the committee.

Dr. Gredler expressed concern that the College of Education Course Evaluation does not address key teaching behaviors. However, the members of committee concluded that concern had been addressed in large part by the ability of instructors to add additional question(s).

Dr. Gredler expressed concern about the question regarding office hours. However, upon further research, it was determined that this question is required to be included in course evaluation under Academic Affairs Policy ACAF 1.04. The members of the committee also discussed the issues Dr. Gredler raised regarding the more important issue of responsiveness of the faculty which is addressed by Question 17 [The availability of the instructor outside the classroom was satisfactory. (In selecting your rating, consider the instructor's availability via established office hours, appointments, and other opportunities for face-to-face interaction as well as via telephone, e-mail, fax and other means.)].

Dr. Gredler also expressed concern that there were no opportunity in the evaluation for a student to indicate “extremely poor teaching in the class.” However, the members of committee concluded that concern had been addressed in large part by the ability of instructors to add additional question(s).
After discussing Dr. Gredler’s message, the members of the committee also discussed more broadly issues related to the College of Education Course Evaluation. The members of the committee also agreed that David Michaels be encouraged to enhance the communication with the faculty regarding the course evaluation process. Specifically e-mail messages to faculty should be expanded to clearly state the process for adding questions, the timeline for students to submit their course evaluations (and process for changing the timeline), and sample e-mail messages for communicating with students about the process. This final recommendation had previously been made by this committee when the current system was developed (see minutes from September 30, 2003).

The members of the committee also requested that the instructions for accessing reports for previous semesters be revised. The directions clearly indicate that course evaluations are available on-line back to Spring 2004, but results are not actually available on-line through the current system.

III. The members of the committee agreed that the College of Education should develop support and mentoring systems for associate professors seeming promotion to full professor. As a first step, the members of the committee agreed that the College of Education should offer a panel discussion featuring the dean and a group of full professors to discuss the process of moving from associate to full professor modeled after the session held for new faculty in December. Heidi Mills will discuss this recommendation with the dean’s office.