



May 1, 2016

## **THE COMMITTEE ON TEACHING REPORT OF ACTIVITIES: 2015-2016**

This Committee has at least five Senate members, of which a minimum of two should be past recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Award, and two student members, one undergraduate and one graduate.

### ***Charge of the Committee***

1. Encourage and aid departments to strengthen their efforts to foster, recognize, and reward good teaching;
2. Nominate members of the Faculty for approval by the Divisional Council to receive Distinguished Teaching Awards and other awards as appropriate. Upon request from the Chancellor or members of the Chancellor's cabinet, solicit and submit nominations of faculty members as potential recipients of external awards for teaching.
3. Undertake special activities to improve teaching and learning on campus.
4. Study issues concerning teaching on the campus and make recommendations to the Berkeley Division.

To fulfill these charges, the Committee recognizes excellence in teaching through the Distinguished Teaching Awards, co-hosts and curates events to promote interest in and awareness of good teaching, co-sponsors workshops and discussions on teaching practices, consults on a number of grant programs, and formulates recommendations to campus practices and policies to improve teaching and the climate for teaching on the Berkeley campus.

Once again this year, the committee was divided into two sub-groups to better attend the various tasks and still have a manageable workload on the participants. The DTA sub-group worked solely on the DTA nomination, review and selection process. The non-DTA sub-group explored areas of interest and needs/emerging issues related to teaching on campus. These areas included: (1) Content access and retention of content in bSpace and bCourses, with Jenn Stringer, Associate CIO and Director of Educational Technology Services. COT agreed that a 5-year retention and access standard, with personal opt-out from the instructor to gain continued retention and access (and same process each year thereafter for that course instance), would be best; (2) New services and faculty outreach from the Disabled Students Program, where Assistant Director Mary Lee Vance highlighted services and important information about Universal Design, "reasonable"

accommodation, and working as partners with faculty to find “what’s essential”, (3) Use of technology in the classroom and new capabilities on campus (Academic Innovation Studio)

### ***Distinguished Teaching Award***

Each year, the Committee solicits and reviews nominations for faculty Distinguished Teaching Awards (DTA) for approval by the Divisional Council. Five faculty members were selected: Wendy Brown (Political Science), Georgina Kleege (English), Anne Joseph O’Connell (Law), Lisa Pruitt (Mechanical Engineering), and Irfan Siddiqi (Physics).

The selection of DTA recipients is a two-stage process. In stage one, during the fall semester, departments initiate nominations by submitting a brief nominating letter, a chronological list of courses taught during the last eight semesters of residence, a summary of teaching evaluations, and raw data from student evaluations in representative recent courses. Following a full review by the Committee, approximately 1/3-1/4 of the candidates are then selected for stage two. Additional documentation is required at this stage, and following a pre-arranged schedule, each finalist is observed in a classroom or lab setting by at least two members of the Committee on Teaching. The award recipients are announced later in the spring.

This year, the COT placed particular emphasis in increasing the involvement of the student body in the DTA ceremony. This was reflected in a new style for the short video honoring the award winners in which the “voices” of the students were given a more ‘obvious’ role. The COT and CTL also took special measures to increase student attendance at the ceremony. These efforts were very successful as the new venue of Sibley auditorium was nearly filled to capacity for the DTA award ceremony.

### ***Ceremonies and Events***

On April 21, 2016, the Committee again hosted the campus Distinguished Teaching Award ceremony. This year we had a change in venue (traditionally at the Zellerbach Playhouse) and the event was held at Sibley Auditorium. At that ceremony, recipients of 2016 Distinguished Teaching Award were honored. The Committee hosted the reception that immediately followed the Teaching Award ceremony. The Committee also participated in the Banquet sponsored by Chancellor Dirks and the Academic Senate, and organized by University Development and Alumni Relations. This year the Sibley auditorium was nearly filled to capacity (i.e., 240 seats). Given the financial constraints on campus, the COT decided not to videotape the DTA event itself. The costs saving include the videotaping of the event as well as the post-production costs. This decision should be revisited once the campus is on a better fiscal/financial situation.

### ***Dialogues: A Colloquium Series on Teaching***

Co-sponsored with the Center for Teaching and Learning, a series of four campus dialogues around important teaching and learning issues were held throughout the year. The theme for the year was “A Smart Evolution of Teaching at Berkeley.” Each Dialogue featured at least one faculty presenter, and a majority of the time devoted to faculty-led discussion of teaching topics related to innovative pedagogies, integrating digital learning, designing uber-large enrollment and active

learning courses, and balancing teaching with increasing research responsibilities. COT Chair Pestana served as one of three faculty curators, helping to guide and shape the discussion across the series.

### ***Evaluation of Teaching***

The Committee continued support of the implementation of teaching dossier elements for interested departments. Primarily, members provided peer observation of classroom instruction feedback for the Department of Statistics as several faculty approached milestone reviews.

### ***Participation/ Interaction with other Committees.***

IT Governance Committee - Committee representative sits on the campus IT Governance Committee that is intended to facilitate collaboration among campus leadership in the prioritization, funding, design and use of IT to ensure cost effective support of UC Berkeley's teaching, learning, research and administrative strategic priorities. Committee meets twice a year for 2 hours each meeting.

Campus Committee on Classroom Policy and Management (CCCPM) – Committee representative sits on CCCPM that oversees and approves policy issues related to classroom use, scheduling, and management. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the long-range plan for classrooms, recovery of classroom facilities following major disasters, summer use, construction and design standards for classrooms, renovation plans, and instructional technology in classrooms. Committee meets three times a year for 2 hours each meeting.

Cal Teach: Cal Teach is a program for undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) majors interested in exploring a career in education. Students learn conceptual teaching skills and practice these methods in local K–12 classrooms. Cal Teach offers Science and Math Education minor as well as a unique opportunity for students to complete both a bachelor's degree and a California teaching credential as an undergraduate. Committee Chair (Pestana) serves on the Cal Teach Faculty Advisory Committee since 2014.

### ***Grant Programs***

In 2015-2016, the Committee on Teaching continued to provide consultation as needed on the campus Instructional Improvement Grant program. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) administers the grant program without deadlines, accepting applications on a rolling basis between August 12 and May 8.

*Instructional Improvement Grants* provide rapid access to modest funds (up to \$3000) for small-scale projects to improve existing courses, develop new courses, evaluate instruction, and assess curricular needs. In 2015-16, 29 applications requesting \$60,183.50 were received from faculty for course and curriculum improvements; 25 of the applicants were awarded full or partial funding, with a total of \$52,834.30 distributed.

### *Other Synergistic Efforts*

In the early spring of 2016, the COT was contacted by former DTA recipient Nezar Al-Sayyad (Architecture) as he was planning a Teaching Excellence Program for a group of 80 faculty at Kuwait University. As part of a large grant Professor Al-Sayyad secured from the Kuwait equivalent of NSF (KFAS), Berkeley's Center for Teaching and Learning led the program, along with Professor Al-Sayyad inviting a faculty member from the COT to deliver some lectures during the program on the topics of teaching values and managing time demands across teaching and research. Chair Juan Pestana accepted the offer, and joined the Berkeley contingent in Kuwait to deliver and facilitate the multi-day program. The program was so successful that it is already being planned again for spring 2017, with the hopes of continued COT faculty engagement as distinguished speakers."

### *Future*

In 2016-2017 the Committee will again select nominees for the Distinguished Teaching Award; it will continue to consult on the administration of the Instructional Improvement Grant program, as requested by the CTL.

The Committee also intends to continue co-sponsoring teaching related events (like Dialogues), as well as work related to the recommendations for a teaching dossier as part of the review process - including representation on the newly formed Senate Task Force examining gender bias in student evaluations of teaching. The Committee continues its interest in designing and conducting research to evaluate the impact of the teaching dossier.

The Committee on Teaching welcomes suggestions about its mission and activities from members of the campus community.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl Britto, French & Comparative Literature

Jenna Burrell, Information

Sally Goldman, South and Southeast Asian Studies

Kristina Hill, Landscape Architecture

Line Mikkelsen, Linguistics

Jagdeep Sekhon, Statistics (Undergraduate student)

Mary Shi, Sociology (Graduate student)

Satish Rao, Computer Science

Peter Vollhardt, Chemistry

Richard Freishtat, Staff Representative (Center for Teaching and Learning)

Juan M. Pestana, CEE (Chair)