

Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning Task Force

Executive Summary

I. The Charge:

- A. One of the priorities identified at the spring 2005 Campus Conversations was the re-establishment of a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).
- B. Develop a purpose/mission/vision for such a center and a job description for a center director, should the task force decide that the CETL should be pursued.

II. Approach to Task:

- A. Consideration of the CETL was assigned to the Faculty Senate.
- B. In April 2005, a Senate-appointed task force was convened to determine whether or not a center should indeed be re-established at this time.

III. Findings & Recommendation:

- A. CETL should not be developed at this time. (See the full report at <http://www.uni.edu/senate/misc/index.pdf>)
- B. Recommendations:
 1. Faculty Senate should revisit the question of creating a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in three to four years, once the new president and the new provost are established and familiar with UNI.
 2. Initiate (and sustain over at least the next three years) an ongoing interdisciplinary faculty discussion about student learning and effective teaching.
 - a. Discuss/define just what quality teaching is and how it is assessed, beyond the basic tenure and promotion process.
 3. Faculty and the administration need to engage in the process of determining clearly to what degree teaching excellence truly matters here at UNI.
 4. Assuming that true teaching excellence is indeed still of central importance, then the faculty and administration need to develop mechanisms of genuine support and reward that communicate in a concomitant manner the actual importance of teaching excellence.
 5. The University should develop a systemic and systematic approach to mentoring and ongoing improvement in teaching and professional development. This approach could grow out of:

- a. The faculty discussions suggested in Recommendation 2.
 - b. The process described in the conclusions of this report.
 - c. Some other appropriate mechanism.
- 6. This report should be made available no later than January 15, 2006, to all faculty either through electronic distribution or an announced posting on the Faculty Senate Website.
- 7. This Task Force should be disbanded.
- C. On January 23, 2006, the Faculty Senate accepted the Task Force report and agreed to begin operationalizing these recommendations.