

APPLEGATE MEMO TO REGIONAL CAMPUS CHANCELLORS RE: TEACHING INITIATIVES

Nov. 9, 2017

President McRobbie's recent State of the University speech included several initiatives aimed at assuring continued excellence in teaching at IU. Much of the organizing work was assigned to the executive vice presidents, but much of the substantive effort must naturally take place at the campuses and schools. With apologies in advance for the length of this message, I'm writing to seek your assistance with four of these initiatives. (The text of the speech is *in italics* at the beginning of each section.)

1. Review of university-wide and campus teaching & learning programs

I ask Executive Vice Presidents Lauren Robel, Nasser Paydar, and John Applegate to immediately initiate a university-wide review of all of IU's campus and university-wide programs that support teaching and learning. Building on New Directions in Teaching and Learning, this review should examine what we are doing now, what is working well, what can be improved, what opportunities are there for leveraging and restructuring these programs to make them more effective and efficient, and what new resources, including space, might be needed. As well, it should look at what kinds of programs and spaces will be needed in the future, which will undoubtedly be even more dominated by pervasive information technology. The review committee should be comprised of FACET and other faculty members, staff of the centers for teaching and learning, staff from UITS, and students. The committee's report should be submitted to the executive vice presidents no later than May 31, 2018, and after appropriate consultation, they will take appropriate actions in response by September 30, 2018.

The focus of this review should be on identifying all existing programs (including the campus centers for teaching and learning), evaluating them, and enhancing them where indicated, as described in the excerpt above. The initial evaluation should be undertaken by the campus, using whatever mechanism seems best suited to a serious examination of the questions posed by the president. If a program has recently been reviewed by the campus, there is no need to undertake a new review.

A report from each campus should be submitted to the university committee (membership t/b/d) by March 1, 2018, so that the committee can review the reports for themes, gaps, and ideas to share further. The university committee's report is due on May 31, 2018, as above.

Becky Torstrick is coordinating this and the following initiative, and she will be happy to help with any questions you may have about them.

2. Translational research in learning

The leaders of all campuses with schools and departments that conduct research into learning—for example, the IU schools of education, the Department of Psychological and

Brain Sciences at IUB, and the School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering and others—to identify opportunities at IU for translating their excellent research on learning into improved instructional practices at IU. Each campus should compile such material into a report for the ALC by May 31, 2018. The ALC will then consider the feasibility of deployment of some of these practices across IU.

This charge should be seen as an opportunity for faculty members to think creatively and aspirationally about ways in which their programs can contribute directly to the enhancement of teaching and learning at IU. Too often we look past the expertise in our own schools and departments, and this initiative is an effort to engage IU faculty more fully.

To facilitate this process, please identify the relevant schools and departments on your campus, and ask them to report on opportunities to you or your designee by April 1, 2018, so that the reports can be compiled by your campus for submission to the ALC by May 31.

3. P&T teaching criteria

I ask the UFC and other faculty governance organizations to work with campus academic leadership to consider developing new, well-defined, rigorous pathways for tenure and promotion based specifically on excellence in teaching. The pathways should be evidence-based, use multiple types of evidence of excellence, consider evidence of student learning, and peer reviewed. I also ask that they consider changes to the non-tenure-track ranks to provide stronger career paths that recognize the professionalism of these important and growing segments of IU's instructional community. In this connection, UFC might also consider other full-time faculty ranks to recognize long-term commitment to excellence and mentorship in teaching. I would like a report back as to progress on this matter by May 31, 2018.

Lauren, Nasser, and I have discussed this charge the UFC leadership. We agreed that the most efficient way to implement this charge is to ask *existing* school P&T committees to evaluate school standards and procedures, and then to transmit their findings to the *existing* campus P&T committee for further ideas and recommendations. Only after the campus committees have completed their assessments will it be productive to engage university-level policies.

As above, this initiative is an opportunity for us to pause and take a serious look at existing policy and procedure (including informal practices, if appropriate) to determine whether there are that there are opportunities to update or improve, to streamline or ensure greater rigor, or to adopt current best practices in the evaluation of teaching for P&T purposes. The review should cover the standards for evaluating teaching both as excellent and as satisfactory, as those terms are used in P&T standards. In particular, school and campus committees should identify campus and university policies or procedures that obstruct adoption of better, more current standard or otherwise need to be updated.

School-level P&T committees are just about now completing the bulk of their work for this academic year, and so they should begin their consideration with the goal of completing their review by May 31, 2018. At that point, their conclusions and recommendations can be

handed off to the campus committee, which should aim to complete its review by November 1, 2018, just before the bulk of their annual work begins. Any recommendations for changes in university-level policy can then be considered by the UFC.

I ask that you communicate this charge to the relevant committees on your campus.

4. Career paths for non-tenure-track instructional faculty

I ask the UFC and other faculty governance organizations to work with campus academic leadership to consider developing new, well-defined, rigorous pathways for tenure and promotion based specifically on excellence in teaching. The pathways should be evidence-based, use multiple types of evidence of excellence, consider evidence of student learning, and be peer reviewed. I also ask that they consider changes to the non-tenure-track ranks to provide stronger career paths that recognize the professionalism of these important and growing segments of IU's instructional community. In this connection, UFC might also consider other full-time faculty ranks to recognize long-term commitment to excellence and mentorship in teaching. I would like a report back as to progress on this matter by May 31, 2018.

As with the teaching criteria, the sense of the EVPs and UFC is that the consideration called for will be most meaningful if it begins with the campuses, in order to assess most directly the needs and opportunities for supporting this critical group of instructional faculty at IU.

I ask that you and your campus's faculty organization establish an ad hoc committee or task force of faculty and academic administrators who work with NTT faculty to examine the question posed in the president's charge. The committee should make a preliminary report to the UFC and EVPs by May 1, 2018, so that we can make the requested progress report by the end of that month.

There are other initiatives in the president's speech, as well, but they are being handled by others:

- Prototyping or "sandbox" grants: Bill McKinney will put together a proposal for a regional campus program of small grants, which we can discuss at our next Cabinet meeting.
- Consideration of a new, distinguished "master teacher" rank: this will be addressed by an ad hoc UFC committee. The regional faculty will be represented by the RFC and administration by Uric Dufrene.
- Teaching awards review: Kelly Kish and Michael Morrone (director of FACET) are heading this up.

All in all, a lot of work to be done on a very important topic.