

Effective Teaching

As Cottey recruits, hires, retains, tenures, and promotes faculty, the focus is on the primary responsibility as outlined in the Faculty Handbook--classroom teaching. While scholarly vitality and service contributions are of significance, the College places its major emphasis on the faculty member's contributions as a teacher and an academic advisor (Section Six, VII.A-D. of the Faculty Handbook). This chapter presents evidence of effective teaching and analyzes the processes that support the development of faculty.

Evaluations of Teaching

While individual faculty members used their own locally developed teaching evaluation instruments in the past, more recently, in response to a request from the trustees, the faculty engaged in a lengthy process of testing and evaluating a variety of standardized instruments designed for that purpose.

The Instruction and Course Evaluation System (ICES), administered through Measurement and Evaluation at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, was tested at the end of the fall 2001 and spring 2002 semesters with two core items that were on every form--"rate the instructor" and "rate the course." Each faculty member was required to distribute the forms in two courses; however, most faculty did so in all the courses they teach. Ultimately, in spring semester 2002, the faculty voted to adopt the ICES instrument.

ICES provides a cafeteria system for developing student evaluation forms. A catalog of 600 questions allows faculty members great latitude in selecting 25 items designed to provide data for formative purposes. ICES uses a five-point scale with one being exceptionally low and five being exceptionally high. The following tables summarize the mean responses to the two core items and demonstrate that Cottey students perceive the faculty to be professionally competent and the courses to be effective.

Table 11.1 - ICES Summary of Instructor Ratings

Responses to Rate the Instructor				
Semester	Courses	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Fall 2001	138	4.23	2.20	5.0
Spring 2002	141	4.21	2.0	5.0

Table 11.2 - ICES Summary of Course Ratings

Responses to Rate the Course				
Semester	Courses	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
Fall 2001	138	4.21	2.83	5.0
Spring 2002	141	4.22	2.0	5.0

When an individual faculty member receives results, he or she is able to compare his or her global ratings to the results of over 11,000 other course administrations of the instrument. The standardized evaluation form will continue to be administered in each classroom at the close of the semester and global information gathered and analyzed. In fall 2002, the process was taken one step further, and the faculty reached consensus on ten additional core questions. The core questions identify characteristics of teaching effectiveness in a learning-centered classroom, and the information collected

will help define future faculty development activities, both for individual members and the group.

Concerns remain among the faculty regarding standardized instructor and course evaluation. There is a perception on the part of some faculty that ICES administration requires an additional time commitment. Other concerns of the faculty include questions about the validity of the data in a small class, how the instrument is administered and by whom, and that the information will be used by the administration and the trustees in a summative manner. It is true that the Rank and Tenure Committee uses the data in its deliberations, but the administration seeks to use it for faculty development and mentoring purposes. The trustees receive information only about the faculty as a whole, not about individual faculty members.

Data from the SOS also provides evidence that Cottey students are satisfied with the quality of teaching at Cottey.

Table 11.3 - Student Satisfaction With Aspects of Teaching

Student Opinion Survey Item	1999	2000	2001	2002	Avg.
III 1. Testing/grading system	3.93	3.91	3.79	4.04	3.92
III 4. Out-of-class availability of your instructors	4.30	4.41	4.25	4.23	4.30
III 5. Attitude of the faculty toward students	4.36	4.56	4.31	4.31	4.39

Faculty Development

As fiscal resources are regularly allocated for faculty development purposes, additional strategic planning is underway to provide a firm rationale for the manner in which the funds are distributed and used. Currently, each faculty member reports professional development activities to the VPAA in an annual Faculty Activities Summary. The form is under review since it does not include a section where the faculty member may articulate his or her personal and professional goals for the year ahead.

Faculty professional development is supported by annual funding that can be applied to professional organization memberships, course reimbursement, and attendance at conferences. Faculty requests for reimbursement are routinely approved. Funds are available from three accounts: faculty development, faculty enrichment and continuing education, and faculty improvement. Guidelines and procedures for using these funds are explained in the Faculty Handbook (Section Seven). Each faculty may draw a \$500 allotment from the faculty development fund; an ad hoc committee (chair of the Faculty Senate, chair of Rank and Tenure Committee, and the VPAA) approves requests to use enrichment and continuing education money, and faculty improvement funds are approved at the discretion of the VPAA. Some faculty believe that the basic faculty development allotment should be increased to encourage further participation in national meetings, but for the past few years the VPAA has been able to fund all requests to attend such meetings using a combination of faculty development and faculty improvement resources. In fact, for the past few years, not all of the resources available in the total of the three accounts have been used.

In addition, a form to assist the faculty in planning for peer review was developed in fall 2002 by the division chairs and the members of the Rank and Tenure Committee. In the last ten years, peer review (classroom observation) has occurred only for those faculty pursuing tenure or promotion because it is a requirement of that process. The VPAA, division chairs, and chair of the Rank and Tenure Committee are looking at a more systematic and better-defined manner in which to pursue this aspect of faculty development. The goal of this project is the formation of a stronger, institutionalized faculty development program that integrates a coherent and structured pattern of student, peer, and administrative evaluation with an individual faculty member's goals and plans.

A mentoring program, under the leadership of the assistant dean of the faculty, seeks to provide additional support to first- and second-year faculty. Periodic luncheon meetings intend to support and enhance the experience of the new faculty, and each new faculty member is assigned a more experienced faculty member as a mentor. The VPAA has asked the first- and second-year faculty members to consider the development of teaching portfolios.

Finally, planning is underway for a Faculty Development Seminar to be held during the first two days of the fall semester 2003. A group of faculty, including the division chairs, the chair of the Faculty Senate, and the chair of the Academic Committee will work with the VPAA to develop the seminar which will be based around a discussion of the recent Association of American Colleges and Universities publication, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (2002). Particular emphasis will be placed on Chapter 3: "The Learning Students Need for the 21st Century."

