Resolution #1, 1983-84

TO:   President John E. Van de Watering

FROM: The Faculty Senate

RE:   I. Formal Resolution (Act of Determination)
       X II. Recommendation (Urging the fitness of)
       ___ III. Other (Notice, Request, Report, etc.)

SUBJECT: Report to the Faculty Senate by the Joint Committee of Faculty Environment and Appointments, Promotion & Tenure on the Report of the Task Force on Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

(see attached)

Signed: [Signature]
Date: 9/21/83

TO:   The Faculty Senate

FROM: President John E. Van de Watering

RE:   I. Decision and Action Taken on Formal Resolution
       a. Accepted. Effective Date
       b. Deferred for discussion with the Faculty Senate on
       c. Unacceptable for the reasons contained in the attached explanation

II., III. a. Received and acknowledged
         b. Comment: More discussion is needed between the members of the committee so that the boldest of the committee's conclusions are firm enough to support the sentiment of the majority of the faculty.

DISTRIBUTION: Vice Presidents: [Signature]
Others: [Signature]

Distribution Date: 10/24/83

Date Received by the Senate: [Signature] (President of the College)
Faculty Senate Meeting 9/19/83
Agenda Item V. A.

REPORT TO THE FACULTY SENATE
BY THE JOINT COMMITTEE OF FACULTY ENVIRONMENT AND APPOINTMENTS, PROMOTION, & TENURE
ON THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON EVALUATION OF TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

History of Actions Taken by the Joint Committee of Faculty Environment and APT

The Report of the Task Force on Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness was submitted to the President of the College who, in turn, requested a response from the Faculty Senate. The Executive Committee of the Senate turned the Report over to the Senate Committees on Faculty Environment and Appointments, Promotions and Tenure because the Report dealt with faculty actions under the purview of both committees. After some discussion of the Report the Joint Committee decided that there should be college-wide consultation on the findings and recommendations of the Report. Since the Committee received the Report the last third of the Spring 1983 semester, it was felt that hearings on the Report would be best held at the beginning of the Fall 1983 semester with a response to the Senate to be forwarded to the President of the College by the end of the Fall Semester.

Then-President of the Senate, Bill Reed, mentioned this to President Van de Watering at one of their meetings. The President replied that the timetable would be too late and requested that the Joint Committee submit the response to him by the end of September, thus requiring the Joint Committee to submit a report to the Senate at the first Fall 1983 meeting. The Joint Committee, in revising its plans, solicited responses to the Task Force Report from all units, asking for input by May 31. Eleven of the thirty-three departments responded (2 of the 6 from the School of Arts & Performance, 5 of the 16 from the School of Letters and Sciences, and 4 of the 11 from the School of Professions) for a 33 1/3% return.

The Joint Committee reviewed the Report and the letters from the departments and after considerable discussion came to the recommendations presented in this report. A summary of the points raised in the reaction letters from the departments will be found in Appendix A.

Summary of the Task Force's Report

The purpose of the Report of the Task Force on Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness is to (1) provide faculty with essential guidelines to follow in respect to overall improvement of instruction and (2) assist department Chairs, Deans, Faculty Committees in facilitating the process of review requiring personnel action. It is intended that the information provided by this document be used as guidelines or a framework for departmental efforts in developing guidelines more specific to the needs of the respective departments.
The document proposed that the College actively work toward encouraging faculty to use available support services which could prove instrumental in improving instruction. The document recommends that the College offer workshops and seminars for the discussion of instructional techniques and effective evaluation of data collected for the evaluation of teaching effectiveness. It also suggests a means by which faculty may develop and present the strongest reflection of their instructional contributions, thus providing for a more equitable sharing of such materials requiring personnel action. It suggests a practical, coherent and meaningful method in attempting to broaden easily retrievable data by use of instructional dossiers. The dossier is to be developed and maintained by individual faculty members and is to be used only as a basis for the Summary Report, which is then forwarded to appropriate administrative bodies. A suggested worksheet format is provided in the document which could aid in the development of the Summary Report letter. The Summary Reports provide a more focused, detailed description of the data, based on the evaluation and interpretation of what is submitted by the individual faculty member.

There has clearly been an over-emphasis on student questionnaires. It is suggested that the questionnaire format and implementation procedures be revised in order to increase the credibility of this evaluative method. The document recommends improvement of peer observation, if and when it is to be used, to include observations by several observers on several separate occasions during the academic year. If not done well, the Committee highly discourages its use.
Recommendations

After consideration of the Report of the Task Force on Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness and the reaction letters from the departments, the Joint Committee of the Senate Committees on Faculty Environment and Appointments, Promotions and Tenure proposes the following recommendations:

1. During the Fall 1983 term each department of the College should develop specific procedures and evaluative guidelines within the framework of the Task Force Report based on their individual needs.

2. The use of Summary Report Letters reflecting an application of the Task Force Report recommendations for DSI or personnel decisions should not be implemented until the academic year 1984-85 to give sufficient time for faculty members to assemble dossier materials. Data should be gathered in 1983-84 for the review process that takes place during the 1984-85 academic year.

3. The improvement of instruction is the concern of individual faculty members. Certain data collected are more appropriate and valid for use in improvement of instruction and should be kept separate from data used in personnel decision making.

4. The individual instructor who wishes teaching effectiveness to be considered for DSI or who must undergo personnel review should be responsible for collecting the materials for the dossier.

5. The members of the Task Force on Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness are to be commended for their diligence, professionalism and sustained effort in producing a report which shows breadth of perspective and depth of research on the nature and evaluation of teaching.
Appendix A: Summary of Reactions from the Departments

a. General positive statements regarding the Report (useful, workable, realistic) -5

b. Appreciation that support services are recommended but concern that adequate resources be available -3 (suggestion that administrative personnel involved in decisions also attend all workshops/seminars for common agreement of terms, etc.)

c. Underscored need for non-reliance on student evaluations only -1

d. Concern that diagnostic elements for faculty development should be completely separate from any data used for personnel decisions -3

e. Indication that other data/criteria are more appropriate to the particular department (i.e., course enrollment numbers, student exit competencies, measures of student outcomes, etc.) -5

f. Desire to initiate or continue peer observation of teaching with understanding of number of observations needed for validity -3

g. Concern that some of the data to be used in the dossier are not appropriate to the particular department -4 (note: different departments responded in this fashion than responded in item e)

h. Need to define such terms as 'appropriate,' 'adequate' on a campus-wide basis -1

i. Questioning need and appropriateness of an evaluation of teaching under present campus climate and conditions -3

j. Concern that best evaluation will go to best record keepers, not best teachers -2

k. Suggestions that individuals, not departments, keep dossier files by only those who are requesting personnel action or evaluation -4

l. Indication that each department set up own system of evaluation separate from any recommendations of the Task Force -2 (one department would "resist if enforced from outside")

m. Indication that the Report's recommendation of rotation of student evaluation is too cumbersome and time consuming -3