ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FOCUS BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT
Academic year 2009-2010
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April 22, 2010

This year’s board consisted of Margit Watts (Chair), Amy Hubbard, Jan Sung, Joel Moffett, and Dominic Franchini (Fall 2009 semester only). Carolyn Stephenson was the GEC liaison. The board conducted a good portion of their work using Laulima. Additionally, six meetings were held during the year to address any concerns about proposals or discuss other issues.

Policies, Hallmarks, Issues

- There was discussion about language instructors possibly interpreting “oral communication” in context of the class – in other words, language acquisition. The Board discussed the possibility of designing a workshop, or going directly to the departments, to address this problem.

- The Board discussed the need for departments and/or colleges across campus to work together in order to be more open about requirements for students.

- Most pressing problem that the Board addressed was that of great course proposals being submitted without any indication of how the students were going to be trained in any of the oral communication skills.

Course Proposals

**Spring 2010** – The O Board reviewed 34 proposals (regular & course-based). Thirty-Two were approved, one instructor withdrew his proposal and there was one proposal that was not recommended. There were 130 sections of O Focus Courses offered.

**Summer 2010** -- The O Board reviewed 10 proposals (One was not valid due to the fact it was a 200 level course). Nine courses were approved.

**Fall 2010** -- The O Board reviewed 17 proposals, including one course-based and one staff-based course. All proposals have been approved.

Status of Offerings

Information on the oral communication focus class offerings is not presently available.
Faculty Development -- Language Acquisition vs. Oral Communication

- Four meetings were set up with language departments to help them discern the difference between language acquisition and oral communication skills. These meetings were held in October and November of 2009 at the following departments: East Asian Languages and Literatures, Indo Pacific Languages and Literature, Kawaihuelani Center for Hawaiian Language, and Languages and Literature of Europe and the Americas.

- There was discussion as to whether the word “rhetoric” would be helpful in the clarifying the concept of training.

- The language course instructors often state fluency or acquisition as the goal of the course. The O Board tried to convey the significance of “how to” – do an interview, inform or provide new information, persuade or change attitudes, and/or entertain and influence the emotions of others. These “how to” components better address the oral communication hallmarks.

Faculty Development – Workshop on Training Component

- A workshop was held on March 30th specifically to address the training component of the Oral Communication Hallmarks. An overview of the Hallmarks was presented and then four faculty members talked about their particular strategies to include training in their O designated courses.

- The presenters were Amy Hubbard and Joel Moffett, members of the O Board, and Ida Yoshinaga from English and Kuulei Serna from the Institute of Teacher Education. The audience was composed of instructors from 11 disciplines. Amy Hubbard arranged for a few publishers to send speech textbooks, which were offered to the participants. Overall, the evaluation of the workshop was excellent.

Assessment

We sent student evaluations to instructors who requested them and an email with instructions for those who might want to print them out on their own. A report has not yet been generated, but responses were received from 42 classes for Fall 2009 and 41 responses for Spring 2010.
Future Plans

The Board believes that more workshops should be offered to help faculty members with the various components of their proposals. Additionally, there is a need to continually encourage under-represented departments to offer more oral communication classes.