

## 2007-2008 Annual Report: Contemporary Ethical Issues (E) Focus Board Roger Babcock, Chair

The Board members included Roger Babcock (Chair), Dian Dooley, Zoe Hammatt, Jonathan Okamura, and John Zuern. Carolyn Stephenson served as GEC liaison.

The CEI Board reviewed 66 course proposals and had discussions regarding the intent of the E focus hallmarks and how to clarify proposal requirements so as to improve quality and reduce requests for clarification. The Board also held a workshop to help instructors meet proposal requirements, at the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester.

As my third year on the Board concludes and after serving as Chair all three years, it is with pleasure that I submit this final report and turn the reins over to someone else. I have truly enjoyed working with all my faculty colleagues on this Board and with the helpful, friendly, and capable staff at the Gen Ed office. I especially note the highly capable Elaine Nakao; thanks for putting up with me and us!

### Policies and Hallmarks

The CEI Board had changed the proposal questions two years ago in order to clarify the requirements for successfully obtaining an E designation and began requiring all proposals to include a syllabus. This was a somewhat controversial issue. In addition to the syllabus requirement, some instructors have said that the Board interpretation of the Hallmarks may be too prescriptive. Based on these concerns, some minor changes were made to the proposal application form. We will now allow a “detailed course description” for new courses that do not already have a syllabus. For renewals, an actual syllabus is still required. In addition, we changed the wording in question #3 to remove the perceived idea that a specific “framework” must be identified. We hope these changes will result in less confusion and less requests for additional information next year.

This year there remained quite a few proposals (38%) that had to be returned to the applicants for revisions. The reasons for this seemed to be mainly a lack of thoroughness; which is really just a nice way of saying a lazy proposer. Very few instructors seemed unable to understand the proposal requirements; rather they just chose to not answer the questions or to provide irrelevant/incomplete answers. Hopefully, the modifications made to the proposal for Spring 2009 will be helpful.

The E focus Board supported the change to make renewals good for 5 years and leave new approvals at 3 years.

The E focus Board continued its policy instated last year for Staff Proposals to have the Gen Ed staff automatically accept them without Board review.

The E focus Board conducted a workshop for new applicants at the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester (January 23, 2008, 1:30-3:00) to help clarify proposal requirements

and share examples of integrating ethics into curriculum in different disciplines. The workshop was a success with approximately 10 attendees.

The E focus Board was a big promoter of on-line review of pending proposals and was delighted that the GE office initiated the WebCT review program. This worked very well and made service on the board much easier. The Board hopes that soon all proposals will be encouraged to be submitted on-line to reduce the need for GE office staff to scan documents into WebCT.

#### Proposal Review Statistics

Proposals	Spring 2008	Summer 2008	Fall 2008	Total
Approved	30	6	19	55
Pending	0	0	1	1
Denied	0	0	3	3
Withdrawn	2	1	4	7
Total	32	7	27	66
Notes	1 course proposal approved			

Note: Additional information was requested from approximately 25 applicants.

#### Other Issues and Goals

No changes were found necessary for the end-of-semester survey. And it was noted that such changes should be very carefully considered and only made for well-defined reasons since surveys are most useful for comparative purposes.

The E Board plans to repeat the workshop for new applicants at the beginning of the Fall 2008 or Spring 2009 semester to help clarify proposal requirements and share examples of integrating ethics into curriculum in different disciplines.