ROMS Faculty Meeting

April 19, 2023 @3:30

Discussion about post-pandemic impacts on teaching

* Research by Jo Lindquist and Valérie Pruvost
  + Challenges identified on the survey include 1) requests for extensions on work that has increased teacher labor and 2) mental health problems resulting in disappearing students (a new communication system is in the works to address this)
* Sharing coping strategies
  + Kristine announces a single make-up day/time for tests to consolidate proctoring; Rosa gave a whole-class extension to a single new due date to reduce the work associated with fielding multiple requests
  + Hélène suggests lower-stakes assignments and breaking up big projects into small pieces to reduce student stress and reduce the need for extensions
  + Dorothea gives students the option to choose from a number of assignments, and includes sliding deadlines;
  + Grace pointed out that the university testing center (<https://testingcenter.web.unc.edu/> ) provides proctoring services for make-up exams
  + Michelle noted that it’s difficult to convey expectations in long, legalistic syllabi that students don’t read
  + Chloe and Michelle have tried a syllabus quiz to make sure students read the syllabus – mixed results
  + Rosa includes a short version of her key expectations in her syllabus
  + Maggie asked if we should have a common department supplement to add to syllabi (note that the College provides a 1-page insert of policies/resources here: <https://curricula.unc.edu/syllabus-guidelines/> )
  + Amy puts the policies and resources into an appendix along with assignment rubrics
  + If student stress is prompting requests for extensions, is there a way to de-escalate the stress to encourage students to submit work on time? Valérie pointed out that the College thriving course (IDEAs) is meant to address some of all this; Amy has a conversation with students at the beginning of the semester
* What kinds of resources or support from other units (College, CFE) would be helpful?
  + Leaders in the College are acknowledging in small meetings that we may have swung too far toward flexibility and that more boundaries might serve students better
  + It would be helpful to have College-level guidance about expectations for flexibility at the current moment;
  + Potential issues with Wellbeing Days: These small breaks and the expectation that no work will be due/tests be scheduled right after them have the effect of concentrating students’ deadlines for all their courses in limited windows of time. This seems to be driving extension requests;
  + Pedagogical trend toward more, lower stakes assignments across disciplines has also created a bottleneck in students’ academic calendars; “midterms are the new finals”

Discussion about goals and plans for next year

* DEI
  + News about department awards : the announcement of the recipients will be made soon
  + ROMS successfully requested a $6,000 grant from Dean’s Diversity Advisory Committee to fund a workshop or speaker series on social justice pedagogy in global languages in the coming year
* Curriculum development areas of focus
  + Introducing Hispanic Studies major – opportunity for interdisciplinary course development
    - Will be active beginning in the Fall;
    - We are encouraged to create courses that appeal to those pursuing the major;
    - Students are very interested in the upgrade from a minor to a major;
    - More majors = more hires
  + You can still add IDEAs Focus Capacities to your courses! This will help with enrollment. See <https://ideasinaction.unc.edu/focus-capacities/> and [ROMS resources](https://adminliveunc.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/romlangfac/Shared%20Documents/IDEAs%20in%20Action%20Proposals?csf=1&web=1&e=RKAlak)
    - Amy and the UGAC have been leading efforts to add Focus Capacities and other IDEAs attributes to our courses
    - If you teach a course that does not yet have IDEAs attributes, please submit a revision in the Fall to add some Focus Capacities or other attributes. These are important to students when they make registration decisions
    - Amy is serving on a College committee examining the COMM BEYOND requirement. ROMS has the potential to contribute more to this requirement. See resources from March faculty meeting
  + How can we contribute more to General Education?
    - Larger courses taught in English?: Please consider proposing courses of general interest to non-majors so other students from across UNC can benefit from your teaching
    - Triple-I courses (very large courses team-taught across humanities, social sciences and natural sciences)
      * Required for first-year students;
      * Grad students can TA for these in a grading capacity;
      * For fixed-term faculty, it is important to establish that this course is not an additional one to the 3 taught
* Hiring
  + Cluster hire ideas?
    - The College plans to have one “cluster hire” each year: multiple faculty members in a field or area hired into multiple departments to form a cross-disciplinary research cluster.
    - This year, we can propose to join a cluster by May 5. Suggested areas are Asian American studies; cyber security and ethics; and, sustainable communities; we can propose additional areas in collaboration with other departments for this year and/or future years
      * Laura suggested a linguistics-related cluster
  + Annual position authorization requests
    - We can submit a ranked list of at least four requests
    - Review of draft requests (previously discussed with relevant language sections)
    - Suggestion for someone in translation studies + linguistics (there is definite interest in this one);
      * Laura will help with the language for the request

End-of-year ROMS Events – Please participate!

* TODAY, April 19 at 5:30 in Toy – Talent Show
* April 24-April 28 ([see schedule](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RjVhebQ1M1guxAbGdX8Wp1NNzq14twa68h1h7mME5IU/edit)) -- ROMS Open Doors
* Thursday, April 27 at 4:00 in Toy – ROMS Undergraduate Research Celebration
  + Followed by last ROMS Film Club screening in Mandela Auditorium
* Wednesday, May 3 at 1:00pm in Toy – Graduate Student Appreciation Reception
* Saturday, May 13 at 2:00pm in Genome - Commencement