

**ANNUAL REPORT  
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING COMMITTEE  
2011-2012**

**Members:** Chair, Mary Collins (English), Dr. Barbara Clark (Teacher Education), Dr. Sarah Stookey (Management & Organization), Dr. Viatcheslav Naoumov (Engineering), Dr. Eric Samson (Geography)

We had a rough start to the year because Tom Seddon from the Music Department was slated to be the chair for 2011-12 but left CCSU for a job at the University of Wisconsin. He did not leave behind any directions or accounting of what had been done to date, where we could find the nominations from students etc. The committee asked me to be chair, which I did, but starting from a cold start was tough. I am so grateful to Cassandra Broadus-Garcia, who spent an entire afternoon with me going through what she had done as chair of the EIT Committee in 2010. I went with her basic framework. Even with her help, I knew we could not keep the schedule and had to restructure the entire process so that we reviewed files in the Fall, did classroom visits in February and had the awards ceremony in March (previously the award was presented in the fall).

I now believe that even though we made this shift in an emergency situation, it actually makes sense and I propose that we stick to that schedule from now on. The EIT Committee would put out a call for nominations from students in October. The nominees could then decide if they want to move forward in the process and submit their materials, including a Teaching Philosophy Statement, recommendations from students and colleagues. The EIT Committee would review those files and select Honor Roll and Semi-finalists by early December. Semi-finalists would come in for interviews in December and the committee would select the THREE finalists for the Full-time award and TWO finalists for the Part-time award. We would drop the request for additional written materials from the Semi-finalists. I don't think it's necessary and it takes a lot of work to process all of it.

In February, the committee members would visit Finalists' classrooms and vote on the winner.  
**The awards ceremony would be held the first Friday of March.**

We followed this basic pattern this year and it worked fine. By waiting until February to observe the Finalists, we gave them time to get in a groove in their classrooms.

**We have just five committee members, but we should have six.**

We should also DIVIDE the responsibilities I handled this year between two people. Some of the things I did include:

- Tracked down all of the nominations and created files for all nominees on Blackboard Vista
- Went for additional training on Blackboard Vista so I could understand how to handle the files

- Took charge of taking in all of the letters of recommendations, Teaching Philosophy Statements and other paper submissions and making sure that each item was filed in the correct Blackboard Vista folder (a VERY time consuming process for 50 plus nominees).
- Arranged meetings for the committee ([www.doodle.com](http://www.doodle.com) was invaluable for that)
- Reserved rooms for the meetings
- Served as the official voice for the committee anytime we had to move a nominee to another step, such as from Honor Roll to Semi-Finalist. Took charge of collecting and filing additional materials from all Semi-Finalists.
- Organized and scheduled the interviews for all 12 Semi-Finalists
- Conducted the interviews (30 minutes each) with the other EIT Committee members
- The committee voted on the Finalists and I officially notified them
- Organized all of the classroom visits for the 7 Finalists (5 committee members, 7 Finalists and just two weeks to get into the classrooms)
- Organized the EIT Award Ceremony, which included:
  - Working with a CCSU Design Class to design a fancy brochure for the ceremony. I went to their classroom for two hours, tracked down photographs from each of the Finalists, wrote up the copy for the brochure, worked with the printer on inks and paper quality
  - Reserved the room, made arrangements for food, tech support, contacted Dr. Miller and Dr. Lovitt to make sure they could attend
  - Worked with Ryan Wark in the Tech Department to make sure EIT Finalists got into his studio for a special video that was aired at the EIT Awards ceremony
  - Emceed the two hour ceremony, which involved making sure we had certificates for Finalists, checks, and a photographer on site.
- I plan to organize a follow-up meeting now that we've handed out the EIT Awards so the current EIT Committee can work with the three incoming new members, including Dr. David Cappella, the winner of the 2011 Award.

### **Some suggested changes:**

Make the chair job a **co-chair** position.

Consider having both the winner of the full-time AND part-time award on the committee. The part-timer could have a one-year appointment and the full-timer a two-year appointment.

Normally the winner sits on the committee for a year and then is chair the following year, but we are out of sync since Tom's departure. But I will not chair the committee again. I am willing to be on the committee, but not as chair or co-chair. Barbara Clark and Sarah Stookey are in their second years on the committee, but they both feel so overcommitted in other areas of the university, they do not want to serve as chair(s). This leaves us in a conundrum, because, once again, we risk having a newcomer as the chair. I also do not feel it's fair to "award" the winner of the EIT Award with such a huge responsibility. **Personally, I think the EIT Award Winner should get three credit hours of leave to be taken at anytime in the next academic year. He or she could also serve as Fellow to the redesigned Center for Teaching and Faculty Development (CTFD) and assist with programming.**

So we need to rethink the bylaws on who should serve, who should co-chair and whether or not the committee could even get a work study student to help with all the secretarial duties.

I do feel that we had a rigorous, fair, successful EIT Award process for the 2011 winners. Each EIT Committee member wrote down their top two choices for the top award on a sheet of paper then we all turned our votes in at the same time so no one influenced anyone else. I think that's a much better process than a voice/hand vote.

I plan to contact Fred Latour, who chairs the Committee on Committees to see what we can do to make some adjustments to the EIT Awards Committee bylaws. For now, I do not see any easy answers to the chair issue. Unless we can convince Dr. Clark and Dr. Stookey to co-chair the committee so we can get back in sync with the allowing for a "training" year for the newcomers, then we must arrive at some other solution. I do not fault either of them for not wanting the job—they both already do so much for the university and chairing the EIT Awards Committee is a time consuming (albeit, very fulfilling) assignment.

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