**Teaching and Learning Advisory Council (TLAC)**

2015-2016 Annual Report to the Academic Senate

Submitted – March 30, 2016

**Introduction**

The Academic Senate has charged the Teaching and Learning Advisory Council (TLAC) with stimulating the creation of a campus culture that truly values, promotes, recognizes, and rewards excellence in teaching and learning in proportion to its stated significance in the university mission. TLAC is interested in:

1. Engaging the university community in dialogue about what constitutes excellence in teaching and learning.
2. Serving as a resource to the university concerning teaching and learning information, including philosophy, methodology, technology, science of learning information, etc.
3. Determining the needs of faculty members in their quest to achieve teaching and learning outcomes and assisting them to meet those needs.
4. Recommending policies for promoting and improving the impetus for teaching and learning excellence.
5. Networking with committees (where appropriate) to meet shared goals.
6. Recognizing teaching and learning excellence on campus.
7. Providing faculty with opportunities to encounter varied teaching and learning practices and to share expertise.
8. Supporting faculty in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for teaching and learning in a culturally diverse campus community.

This report contains a summary of TLAC’s activities fall 2015 through winter 2016. Much of the information in this report can be found or will be posted on TLAC’s website: http://www.nmu.edu/tlac/

During the past academic year, TLAC sponsored a peer observation program in conjunction with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), offered a seminar in peer observations to create a pool of peer observers for the peer observation program, and awarded conference grants to faculty members to support their teaching.

**Report of Activities**

1. **Meetings**: The council dealt with some of its business via email, and held face-to-face meetings on the following dates: September 11, 2015, October 23, 2015, January 20, 2016, March 16, 2016, and will be meeting on April 13, 2016.

2. **New Faculty Orientation**: TLAC participated in the New Faculty Orientation on August 17, 2015 providing an informational table with handouts related to our mission, campus teaching resources, and conference grants.

3. **TLAC Conference Grant Awards**: TLAC did not have funding for TLAC grants for the fall 2015 semester; however, awarded four grants during the winter semester, as listed below. Additional details concerning these awards will be posted on the TLAC website.

**Winter 2015 Awardees**

* Dr. Brandon Canfield; (Chemistry)
* Dr. Katie Menard (Nursing)
* Dr. Elisabeth Monske (English)
* Dr. Terry Delpier (Nursing)

5. **TLAC website**: The website has been updated with resources for faculty and was managed by the TLAC chair, Dr. Cale Polkinghorne.

6. **Peer teaching observations**: TLAC has implemented a program, based on a pilot from previous years, whereby faculty members can request a classroom visit from a TLAC member to help faculty improve their instruction. More than 20 faculty members requested peer observations during the fall 2014 semester. TLAC had difficulty following through with the 20 requests. The difficulty led to TLAC re-evaluating the program and enhancing the pool of peer observers. TLAC had a call for peer observer volunteers and 19 people served as peer observers for the 2015-2016 academic year. Mr. Kevin McDonough, Mr. Tom Gillespie, Dr. Jill Leonard, and Dr. Cale Polkinghorne created and delivered a peer observation training session all peer observers in the pool attended. The implemented process will now be a stable program sponsored by TLAC.

The chair of TLAC wishes to recognize the work and active participation of the following council members during the academic year: Dr. Tawni Ferrarini (Secretary), Dr. Josh Sharp, Dr. Abby Cameron-Standerford, Mr. Kevin McDonough, Dr. David Helton, Dr. Amy Barnsley, Mr. Shawn Davis, and Dr. Katie Menard, as well as ex-official members Mr. Tom Gillespie, Ms. Rachel Harris, and Dr. Terry Delipier, and Ms. Beth Roberts for her assistance related to TLAC’s budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Cale Polkinghorne, Chair TLAC