Notes (Recommendations?) from the October 19 TLRC Panel on Student Evaluations of Teaching

The recording of the event is available at

https://oldwestbury.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=344f476d-f3a4-4632-93c6-b0a0014b12e7

Here are some of the ideas that were discussed (I've just started the list, PLEASE ADD, EDIT, REWORD)

- better/more supportive mentoring for faculty - and what does that look like?
    - Faculty should be able to go to a TL center and get information about best practices within their specific discipline.   Classroom activity ideas, example assignments from other courses within my discipline, and day-to-day strategies that will work in specific types of courses.
    - Faculty should be able to have a professional from the TL center observe their class in order to suggest impactful strategies they can employ.
    - Professionals in a TL center should have expertise in instructional strategies and how they differ between sciences and non-science courses.

- midterm evaluations
    - SALG survey that some Bio faculty adapted for use as mid mid-semester review: https://www.salgsite.org/about
    - https://teaching.pitt.edu/resources/midterm-course-survey-question-categories-and-examples/
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- the free-response questions are helpful in gleaning actionable insights and identifying red flags, the numerical questions not so much (but may serve a different purpose)

- One person commented that junior faculty believe that ARPT weighs the SETs more than is actually the case. Can ARPT can provide guidance on the topic?
    - The ARPT manual lists (on page 10) as follows. "Evidence of teaching performance is based on:" (a) Student evaluations (b) Peer observations (c) Self-evaluations (d) Program related evaluations. Without ARPT providing any further guidance about the meaning of the manual, it may appear that (a) is weighted higher than (b), (c), (d). ARPT could provide guidance about how (a), (b), (c), (d) are weighted or whether they are listed in order.

- clarity from admin on the nature of student responses that would be grounds for denying reappointment, promotion, tenure. Previous admin encouraged faculty to challenge students, and faculty felt confident admin would support them
  - Clarity from admin on the nature of research and service to the college or to the profession and how that weighs or balances with teaching
- in discussing or evaluating a candidate teaching, some departments center the SETs and issues like improving response rates instead of other topics that may better promote improved teaching such as source material, etc.
- students are a poor judge of effective pedagogy
- from ARPT: faculty need to show growth and improvement, however, under the current system of SET at end-of-semester there is no opportunity to show the growth and improvement within the semester (midterm surveys would give faculty opportunity to show improvement during the semester)
- Faculty need support for maintaining rigor in content and assessment that is suitable for a course. There should be no coercion by the department or Admin to facilitate pass grade for students.

- Peer evaluations in the department should review the syllabus, resources used, exams, and assignments in the course. There may be academic freedom in the way content is covered, but certain benchmarks and Learning outcomes have to be met.
- A faculty member from outside the department can get feedback from students.
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Please add to the list!