

I would like to address the Senate as well as the representatives of the DE Committee. Thank you for the hard work that you all do especially in these difficult and uncertain times.

My comment has to do with the possibility, brought up last week at the Faculty Association Forum, that faculty teaching courses that were never meant to be (and will never be in normal conditions) taught online, be given a *streamlined, provisional certification* to teach online only when face to face teaching is not possible: now and during future times of natural disasters and pandemics. I believe I speak for at least some of many fellow biologists.

So why ask now? At the end of last semester, we were told that certification would require completion of 2 classes, the submission of a DE Addendum for each course, and the submission of ¼ of a shell aligned with the OEI Rubric. It all seemed acceptable and doable, until:

A) we came back to teach a very “broken” group of students: now tasked with teaching their children, no longer to get through the end of a semester, but for a whole academic year; affected by the fires; with long-term job uncertainty... and many faculty members sharing the same difficulties. And until:

B) we discovered that the submitting an OEI rubric-aligned shell was a local decision and not a specific requirement of the State.

We recognize that the intentions of the committee have been not to just comply with requirements, but to help all faculty craft a product that will be not only adequate but excellent; but we also now see struggling faculty as well as an overwhelmed committee faced with the task of helping with, supporting and reviewing hundreds of shells in limited time.

Perhaps not requiring a shell submission of those who need only provisional “wartime” certification will ease the burden on faculty faced with the daunting task of developing online strategies for what is not meant to be online, while having synchronous meetings at class time, a strategy incidentally not well encompassed by the Rubric; a provisional certification process will also ease the burden on the DE Committee itself.

Thank you for listening!