

College of Arts & Sciences

Fairfield University

Faculty Meeting
13 December 2013
Alumni House
3:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Chair called the meeting called to order at 3:33 p.m. with 44 colleagues in attendance. Eight colleagues submitted proxies.

I. Approval of October 2013 Minutes

Prof. Bowen moved to accept the October 2013 minutes; seconded by Prof. Boryczka.

With a clear majority in favor, the motion **PASSED**.

II. Elections

1. Merit Committee representatives (at-large)

The Chair instructed faculty to vote via paper ballot for at-large committee members.

- Nominees for the humanities (select two): Professors Rajan, McFadden, Campos, Gordon, and LoMonaco. The faculty **ELECTED** Professors Gordon and McFadden as at-large members of the merit review committee for the humanities.
- Nominees for natural sciences and mathematics (select one): Professors Harriot, Miecznikowski, Demers, and Biselli. The faculty **ELECTED** Prof. Miecznikowski.
- Nominees for the social and behavioral sciences (select one): Professors Willis, Vasquez, Boryczka, Henkel, and Crawford. The faculty **ELECTED** Prof. Henkel.

2. Planning Committee member (sabbatical replacement, Humanities)

The Chair opened the floor for nominations. Prof. SHANNON nominated Prof. Yarrington, who accepted the nomination.

With no further nominations from the floor, Prof. Yarrington was elected as the sabbatical replacement member of the ASPC (humanities) for Spring 2014.

III. Announcements & Reports

1. CAS student advising

Assoc. Dean Simone reported on recent changes to the College advising process. The changes, which grew out of last year's SWOT analysis of CAS advising, were implemented to help students better understand the advising process and to help them prepare for the advising process before arriving for their individual advising sessions. The changes were also generated to increase the mentoring dimensions of the student advising experience.

Assoc. Dean Simon said that he sought feedback on the process from department chairs, who reported (by a 3 to 1 margin) that the new process had a positive impact on advising in Fall 2013. Chairs reported that freshmen and sophomore students were more compliant with printing degree evaluations prior to their advising session; Dean Simon attributed the underclassmen's increased compliance to FYE programming that specifically discussed the degree evaluations and advising process. He also explained that many students did not print their degree evaluations, and instead they brought digital copies on their computers. The Assoc. Dean also announced that a new "degree works" web-feature is in the works; this tool will help faculty with easy access to advising information.

2. University "water" theme 2014-16, Prof. Yarrington

Prof. Pearson reported on the university-wide "cities" theme and the events and courses associated with it. He urged colleagues to contact him with either positive or negative feedback out the "cities" programs, and reminded them that there are still cities events on the calendar for the next semester.

Prof. Yarrington presented the following report:

Dear Colleagues,

Following is a rationale and curricular sequence initiative (Items I, II) for the upcoming "WATER" Academic and Events Focus planned for Fall 2014 – Spring 2016. As we finish up the excellent "Cities" this Spring Semester (many thanks to Nels Pearson and Gary Wood for their two years as Focus Facilitators), please think about planning or developing any existing or potential courses, events, initiatives that would tie into the theme.

If you have or are interested in submitting a class or event for 2014 - 2015, or if you have questions about the Water Focus please email the following information to Jo Yarrington lyarrington@fairfield.edu with a cc to Lori Jones at ljones@fairfield.edu. Information for submitted classes should include the course title, type, number, date, contact person and department.

"Water" Theme Rationale

"Water" is an ideal match for the objectives of the biennial academic and events focus because:

- it follows logically from "Cities," which are connected globally by water and maritime routes and are the focus of water resource and treatment issues*
- it is broad enough to engage all disciplines (and, more extensively than perhaps ever before, the*

- sciences) while specific enough to promote substantial dialogue and reflection and action
- many faculty are actively engaged in research and service projects involving oceans, Atlantic and Pacific migrations, water conservation and access, hydraulic engineering, etc., while many program directors in the arts were among the top proponents of the “Water” topic.

Water covers over 70% of the Earth’s surface, and this fact is becoming increasingly salient to the vision and mission of the academy. As a site of travel, trade, precious resource, scientific study, and artistic imagination, water is a crucial focus for researchers across all disciplines. It is also the basis of many new global paradigms of study, as we shift from thinking about territory to thinking about the history of maritime travel, trade, and migrations that created the modern world. In the humanities, Oceanic Studies and studies of the Atlantic Rim and Pacific Rim are transforming how we categorize socio-economic life, as we move from thinking about nation and continent, farm and factory, urban and rural to thinking about the trade routes, sea-dependent immigration/emigration patterns, trade-linked port cities, and forced transoceanic migrations that created the modern world. Politically, control over water resources has become a source of geopolitical power, as in disputes between Israel and Palestine or Argentina and Uruguay. In the sciences, “Water” presents a crucial, international focus on such issues as health and clean water access, sustainability, ecological and environmental study, and numerous emergent challenges in engineering. The biological and chemical sciences are, of course, central in the effort to think about human life as dependent on and defined by water and aquatic life. The possibilities in fields from religion to communication, to business are exciting, too, as we begin to think about “fluidity” as a creative principle, organizational structure, natural/physical condition, communicational strategy, and spiritual disposition. Indeed, the possibilities are many, and the points of connection numerous.

Water Focus Curricular Sequence of classes for 2014 - 2015 (9 credit hours):

1. Call for classes involving/focused on Water theme, with deadline submission of March 1, 2014
2. A list of water-related classes, marked as such, would be available to students for Fall 2014 registration (followed by another call in Fall 2014 for Spring 2015)
3. From this listing students would embark on a two semester immersion involving 9 credit hours

Fall 2014: 3 credit course selected from Water list (3 Water events attended)

Spring 2015: 3 credit course selected from Water list (3 Water events attended)

3 credit interdisciplinary “Super” course (ID/TBD) with:

- discipline-based advising on a Water-focused research project
- 4 seminar style meetings for the semester
- involving a 3 – person faculty “team” (course limited to 12 – 15 students).

After presenting the above report, Prof. Yarrington thanked Prof. Pearson for his assistance with the transition from the “Cities” to “Water” program. Prof. Pearson encouraged colleagues to send him feedback about “Cities” events or programming. He added that faculty still have time to submit “Cities” events for next semester.

3. Update on University strategic planning by Dean Crabtree

The Dean shared several PowerPoint slides from a recent university meeting about the rationale and

structure of university-wide strategic planning (a.k.a. Fairfield 2020). Prof. Epstein noted that the Academic Council is currently developing a response to the aforementioned presentation. The Dean explained that the university-wide strategic vision process is in development, and she noted that the CAS must seriously consider a parallel process to develop and articulate a strategic vision for the College. The presentation follows:

SLIDE 1: THE CONTEXT

Losing the Ability to raise prices

- Economic Conditions
- Weakening Value proposition
- Significant Competition

Disruptive Innovation

- MOOCS
- Distance Learning
- Competency Based Programs

Demographics

- Number of High School Graduates Declining
- Northeast States experiencing largest decline/greatest overcapacity

Clock speed

- Higher Education market is changing at a pace faster than decision making process

SLIDE 2: BEST PRACTICES

Increasingly Competitive Market Places a Premium on Universities that:

- Understand their market and its needs
- Have a limited defined mission
- Articulate a strong Value Proposition
- Leverage pedagogical innovation
- Measure success based on outcomes
- React quickly to changing conditions; have a “change capable culture”
- Are sufficiently disciplined to jettison extraneous costs and programs

SLIDE 3: STRATEGIC PLAN RE-FRESH

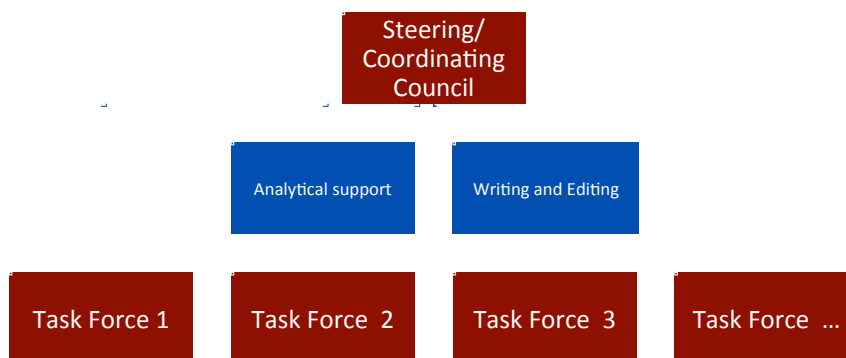
- Presidential Charter
- Oversight by a steering or coordinating council
- Structured interrelated task forces
- Standard set of formats, ground rules, and challenges
- Supporting “Town Hall” and other forums as needed
- Representation from all constituencies
- Common web site

SLIDE 4: CROSS-CUTTING AFFIRMATIONS

We will...

- Be centered on teaching, mentoring, and learning
- Be guided by our mission, identity, and core values
- Focus on improving our competitiveness and sustainability
- Lead in transformational learning models
- Leverage technology
- Know our unique value proposition
- Provide a powerful student experience
- Encourage and support community engagement
- Foster collegial and collaborative communities
- Be guided by outcomes and competency-based metrics for all areas of the university

SLIDE 5: STEERING/COORDINATING COUNCIL



SLIDE 6: PROCESS LEADING TO LAUNCH, OVERVIEW

1. Select Steering/Coordinating Council and Agree on Process Framework
2. Staff Task Forces and Agree on Charters and Problem Statements
3. Finalize Timeline, Communication Strategy, and Logistics
4. Launch!

SLIDE 7: PROCESS LEADING TO LAUNCH, CURRENT STATUS

Currently the process is working on steps 2 & 3:

1. Agreement forged among Vice Presidents and with the President
2. Consult and dialogue with Academic Council
3. Discuss with Deans and school leadership teams
4. Finalize the topics for task forces
5. Work with Handbook Committees on faculty representation
6. Generate staff and student representation
7. Finalize timeline
8. Build communications plan

SLIDE 8: ESSENTIALS - GOALS

- A new, more broadly-based business model

- A more flexible, more focused cost structure
- Real competence and infrastructure to support online learning
- A reconstituted and revitalized part-time learning emphasis
- A recognition system that rewards innovative learning models
- Strong and distinct School identities

SLIDE 9: WHAT THE CAS SHOULD DO IN TANDEM

- Develop a clear mission statement affirming the centrality of the liberal arts and of the College at Fairfield University
- Ensure strong representation from across CAS on Steering Committee and Task Forces
- Be proactive and forward looking in our engagement in the strategic planning process; promote participation and nurture optimism
- Begin to innovate *within the College* in ways that map to our mission and enduring values – be leaders in creating appropriate change as well as affirming our strengths and distinctiveness

IV. College Discussion: Planning for a strategic vision for the College

The Chair prefaced the discussion with some background on why the Planning Committee called for an open discussion about a strategic vision for the College. The ASPC set time aside in the meeting agenda for a discussion, comments, and questions about the strategic mission initiatives at-work at the university and college levels. Based on recent meetings of the ASPC, the Chair outlines the rationale, key issues, and a timeline for developing a mission statement for the College.

RATIONALE

- CAS is the only college that does not yet have a mission statement
- A mission statement is a guiding document that can play an important role in strategic planning:
 - At department level
 - At Core level
 - At University level
- A mission statement “can provide guidance on the issues of concern on a particular campus, from allocating resources and planning for the future to holding administrators accountable ...” –J. Meacham, “What’s the Use of a Mission Statement?” www.aaup.org (Jan-Feb 2008)
- The process initiates a widespread and engaged discussion among faculty colleagues (drafting of a mission statement involves a ALL College faculty)
- The discussion and ratification of a mission statement involves ALL College faculty, thus leading to a fuller engagement of faculty in the work of the College

KEY ISSUES

- We are the College of Arts & Sciences: it is important for us to articulate the crucial links between arts and humanities, and the sciences (what is our unified mission?).
- We need to articulate why the Core, which resides in the College, is central to the University’s mission (The College justifies the Core, just as the Core justifies the College).

- A committee to draft a CAS mission statement will consist of ASPC members plus one representative of each department in the College (chosen by the departments themselves). This group will then divide into smaller working groups.

TIMELINE

Jan 3, 2014	Each CAS department nominates a representative (submit via e-mail to CAS Faculty Chair Sally O'Driscoll)
Late January	The ad hoc working group will convene and establish working groups
January 31	The working group will present a plan to colleagues at the regularly scheduled CAS meeting
March 7	The working group will circulate and present a draft of the CAS mission statement at the regularly scheduled CAS meeting
May 1	The working group will present a final draft for ratification by the college faculty at the regularly scheduled CAS meeting *accelerated timeline is necessary in order for the College to engage productively in larger strategic planning processes at the University

The Chair opened the floor for discussion.

Prof. McFadden explained that the History Department had a discussion about the development of a College mission statement. He expressed concern regarding the justification for the initiative. He noted that liberal arts and Core values are central components of the university-wide mission statement. He asserted that the development of a CAS mission statement is unnecessarily redundant in light of the centrality of CAS values in the university mission statement, as well as significant and recent assessments of the Core Pathways.

Prof. Rosivach stated that the mission statement of the university is not the mission statement of the College. He explained that the development and launch of a College mission statement provides us with an opportunity to think about and identify who we are and what we do as a college, and how the College fits into the greater university.

Prof. Crawford stated he was sympathetic to our History Department colleagues, but given the uncertainties about the future of higher education, he is not fully convinced that the College is in a strong position for a secure future. He described the initiative to develop a College mission statement as a defense tactic.

Assoc. Dean Im added that the Core is a frequent topic of conversation in our campus community. He said we (the College) contribute to the Core, perhaps exclusively, but the College does so much more than servicing the core. He asserted that the sciences and the humanities are equally at-risk in terms of growth and transition towards professional schools/programs.

Prof. Boryczka said that like Prof. Crawford, she is sympathetic to concerns voiced by colleagues from the History Department. She underscored Prof. Crawford's concern for the uncertain future of

the College. She noted a recent trend in eliminating programs like history and philosophy (as near as Sacred Heart). Boryczka added that today's presentation by Dean was different from what she observed during a similar discussion at Dean's Council. She explained that when the idea that Fairfield University does not value highly faculty research programs, College faculty responded in disagreement with that characterization. Boryczka concluded that drafting a College mission statement would be a vehicle for asserting and promoting our work beyond our significant contributions to the core.

Prof. Pearson agreed with Prof. Boryczka and added that drafting a College mission statement is an opportunity to articulate what we do in the Core as well as what we do as producers of knowledge, research, and other professional pursuits.

Prof. McFadden agreed with what colleagues said about asserting research and non-Core contributions of the College, but he questioned the accelerated timeline. In light of other responsibilities and service obligations of colleagues across the College, McFadden argued that the proposed timeline was too fast.

Prof. Lane responded that university-wide strategic planning is already in process, and that it will go on with or without the contribution/voices from the College.

Prof. Nash mentioned that colleagues could draft a mission statement in one or two meetings. She encouraged colleagues to support the process and volunteered to work on the committee. Nash hopes that the College will be "at the front of the train driving, not pushing behind."

Prof. Yarrington agreed with Prof. Nash and others in support of the initiative. She noted that the process will bring us together as a College, and it will promote interdisciplinary discussions on our collective identity.

Assoc. Dean Simon reported that the College is in a strong position, and that with a new provost coming, a clear College mission statement will put us in an even stronger position after the new provost arrives.

Prof. Lane **MOVED** to accept the proposed timeline and launch the initiative to draft a College mission statement. Prof. Yarrington **SECONDED** the motion.

The motion **PASSED** (47-6-3, including 6 proxy votes in favor and 2 proxies in opposition)

The Chair reminded Chairs that each department should select a representative to join the ad hoc working group that will draft a College mission statement. Departments should notify the Chair of their representatives no later than January 3, 2014.

V. Dean's remarks

Before offering her remarks, the Dean responded to Prof. Boryczka's observation that the Dean's presentation on Fairfield 2020 (university-wide strategic vision work) differed somewhat from university leadership presented to the Dean's Council. The Dean said that today's presentation (above) incorporated important revisions that benefit the College.

The Dean thanked the Planning Committee for organizing and initiating a strategy to build a College mission statement.

The Dean thanked department chairs for their recent budget work.

The Dean thanked all faculty members who engaged in this year's rank and tenure review. She remarked on the thoughtful and discerning engagement that committee members gave to their colleagues.

The Dean announced that, with the case statement for the Humanities Institute in-hand, Advancement already received its first \$50,000 pledge. A call for nominations for the Director of the Humanities Institute will go out in Spring. A kick-off event for the "Reimaging the Humanities Lecture" is slated for next term.

The Dean discouraged faculty members from reacting prematurely to rumors about establishing a School of Communications. She noted that following a recent program review, Communications is discussing alternative structures for its program, and that the process is still in progress.

Regarding program review discussions in Communications, Prof. Bowen expressed concern that some colleagues and departments may feel left out of the process in terms of discussions about potential alternative structures for program.

The Dean said that she is an agnostic on the question of a School of Communications, but she added that the present structure of the Communications Department is not necessarily the ideal structure for our students today. She reminded faculty that Communications is still assessing and discussing alternative program structures.

In response to the question of where this discussion is at the moment, the Dean responded, "Nowhere."

Prof. Bowen noted that the idea of a merger between Communication, English, and VPA was a recommendation from the recent Communications program review. As such, she asked if English could bring in a consultant to assess the question of whether the model of a combined school would be appropriate and productive. Prof. Petrino added that the use of the term "school" at Fairfield raises questions about the proposed relationship of the School with the CAS.

The Dean agreed.

Prof. Boquet spoke of initiative fatigue. She said that initiative fatigue and feelings of exclusion (vis-a-vis the discussion above) make it difficult to determine where to productively devote our service and time.

The Dean responded that nothing has happened and no decisions have been made; she said the conversation in Communications about alternative program structures have been ongoing for years.

VI. Prof. Rakowitz MOVED to adjourn. Prof. Miecznikowski SECONDED the motion.

With a clear majority voting in favor of the motion, the Chair ADJOURNED the meeting at 5:06 pm.

Future CAS Faculty Meetings

Friday, January 31, 3:30-5:00 (Alumni House)

Friday, March 7, 3:30-5:00 (Alumni House)

Thursday, May 1, 3:30-5:00 (Alumni House, Annual CAS Celebration)

Arts & Sciences Planning Committee

Ex officio

Robbin Crabtree, Dean

Sally O'Driscoll, Chair of CAS (2012-2014, second term)

Scott Lacy, Secretary of CAS (2013-2015, second term)

Elected

Bob Epstein, Humanities (2012-14)

Dave Crawford, Behavioral & Social Sciences (2012-14)

Marty Lomonaco, Interdisciplinary Programs (2013-15)

Brian Walker, Natural Sciences & Mathematics (2013-15)