

**College of Arts and Sciences  
Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 30, 2020  
Meeting Held Using Zoom  
3:30 p.m. to 4:04 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by CAS Faculty Chair, Amanda Harper-Leatherman.

Proxy for Prof. Martha S. LoMonaco was held by Prof. John Miecznikowski

There were 105 faculty members present.

### **1. Announcements from the Chair**

#### **Remaining Zoom CAS Faculty Meeting for Spring 2020**

- April 24 (Friday)

Please nominate a colleague for the College of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Teaching Award and the College of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Advising and Mentoring Award

*See email call for details and submit nominations by*

**Tuesday April 14 at 4:30 p.m.** to Jean Daniele at ([jdaniele@fairfield.edu](mailto:jdaniele@fairfield.edu))

#### **Changes to Magis Core Upcoming Events...**

May 18 & 19: WAC/WID Course Development Institute **POSTPONED**

May 19 & 21: ID Course Development Institute **may be via ZOOM or POSTPONED**

Faculty receive \$500 for participation and \$500 upon submission of courses

### **2. Elections: CAS Chair and ASPC Representatives (Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences)**

Prof. Harper-Leatherman thanked Professors William Abbott (Humanities) and Michael Andreychik (Behavioral and Social Sciences) for serving on the Arts and Sciences Planning Committee from 2018-2020.

Associate Dean Scott Lacy ran this part of the meeting. He thanked Prof. Harper-Leatherman for serving as interim Chair of CAS during the Spring 2020 term. He asked if there were any nominations from the floor for CAS Chair and Arts and Sciences Committee membership. There were none.

Prof. Amanda Harper-Leatherman was elected Chair of the CAS Faculty from 2020 through 2022 by acclamation.

Professors Elizabeth Boquet (Humanities) and Gwen Alphonso (Behavioral and Social Sciences) were elected to the Arts and Sciences Planning Committee by acclamation.

### **3. Dean's Remarks**

I want to take this time to address you. I know you are all struggling right now.

We are living in a moment of great uncertainty and actual fear. You have been juggling so much trying to balance your families, students, colleagues, and your own sanity. This virus has shaken up our society. You have adjusted to the totality of on-line teaching without the benefit of full preparation. You have met the challenges with your classes.

With style and empathy, you are focused on your students and their well-being. Your commitment to them speaks to our strengths and values. It also speaks to your professionalism and absolute dedication. You have no idea of how proud I am of each and every one of you.

From stepping up in big and small ways, you have been a source of daily inspiration to me and your students. The students have communicated this to me. I thank you from the absolute bottom of my heart.

It warms me to be your Dean at this moment and to be inspired by you. I want to remind you that what you do and what you have always done in the College of Arts and Sciences matters.

It is clear in the current situation that the ability to think, connect deeply with others, communicate, and empathize matters more than ever. As well, the world needs to mobilize data in science more than ever.

It is clear that when we come out of this crisis, and we will come out of this, our culture will be forever changed. We will need to find connections to the community and cherish all of the relationships that have been put on pause.

What will matter more than ever, is a liberal arts education that will equip students with the tools to live their best and meaningful life, and that is something you have dedicated your entire life to. We will get back to that as evidence in what we are doing right now.

The Dean's office has been meeting daily via Zoom. In addition, there is an Academic Affairs Covid-19 task force that has been meeting daily for almost three weeks. Senior leadership has been meeting as well. There is continuity in leadership and we are working together on behalf of the institution. We are always mindful of being there to support you.

The Center of Academic Excellence (CAE) has done tremendous work to support the faculty to teach classes on-line. In a short period of time, we have gotten our entire educational operation on-line. It has been rocky, but the CAE has been there to support the Faculty.

I also want to speak a little bit on the health of our university. If you're like me and you read the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and various other outlets on a religious basis, you will notice that 20 percent of colleges are in financial trouble. Private institutions are cutting salaries and benefits, and laying off faculty and staff as well as closing programs. Public institutions report that state budget cuts could be as high as 30 percent. I want to state that we are not that 20 percent.

We are in a strong financial situation because we have had great fiscal leadership over the past several years. We have to appreciate that we run the institution conservatively. We have not borrowed money. We end every year with a surplus that Kevin Lawlor refers to our "Rainy Day" fund. The reality is that "Rainy Day" is here. We are tapping into the "Rainy Day" fund. So unlike other institutions who don't have any reserves, we are in a much stronger position.

As we move forward, the Institution will be affected by the Coronavirus. All institutions will be affected by the virus to some extent. We are in a strong financial position to get through this and keep our core mission moving forward. The Board of Trustees recently met to rearticulate and support our strategic initiatives. They believe in the institution's direction. They believe in the work that the Faculty are doing. They believe in the power of a Fairfield education.

Please know that as scary as the world is right now, Fairfield is strong. It remains committed to its core educational mission, it remains committed to supporting you, who are the lifeblood of the institution, who are providing the education to our students.

#### **4. Question and Answer Period**

Prof. Brunn-Bevel: will the CAS Awards ceremony be a virtual meeting or postponed?

Dean Greenwald answered that we expect to hold a ceremony. If things clear up and the world comes back to normal sooner rather than later, we will be able to do it face to face. But right now, it is looking like it will be a virtual meeting of some kind.

Prof. Mielants asked when will faculty be able to come back to their offices and access their belongings. Prof. Slotemaker asked this as well.

Dean Greenwald answered that the campus is not closed. We want you to be safe and taken care of. If you need important things in your office to perform your work, you can make arrangements to pick up these things. You will need to come in and show your ID to campus safety to gain access to the campus.

Prof. Davidson asked how will you foresee circumstances in the fall. Dean Greenwald answered that we are unsure of how the crisis will hit its apex and then start to decline. Our expectation is that we will be open for business in the fall. We certainly want to plan for that.

Prof. McClure asked can you please update us on where the College is in the process of publishing our rank and tenure procedures.

Dean Greenwald commented that is something we are working on. The Provost has asked each of the Colleges and Schools to develop and publish their own Rank and Tenure Guidelines. We are creating a memo that memorialized the practice as it has existed in the College for some time. We have a draft of the memo that will be submitted to the Chairs at the next Dean's Council for Discussion. Again, it will not change any of the practices in the College of Arts and Sciences. It will allow things to exist as they always have existed.

Prof. Steffen commented that anecdotal reports from friends at nearby institutions have made it clear to me that our roll out of on-line education is in much better shape.

Prof. Gunter asked if a student is diagnosed with the virus, what do we do? The Dean answered that we should let the student health center and the Dean of Student's office know about this student.

Prof. Epstein asked about the status of the renovations and construction this summer. The Dean answered that the renovations have been postponed for one year.

Prof. Tomlin asked about summer classes. The Dean responded that most likely Summer Session 1 will be on-line. Depending on where we end up in terms of what happens to the apex of the virus, Summer Session 2 would be a normal summer session.

Prof. Sealy asked if there will be any changes to promotion and tenure schedules for next academic year. Dean Greenwald answered that Faculty have the right to request an extension with the Provost. If the current virus situation has created an undue hardship for a particular faculty member who is on the tenure clock, then that faculty member can request an extension. We are mindful that some faculty will be in very good shape and will not have any issues. But, there may be one or two that would be negatively impacted because what is going on, or what they have suffered themselves or to a family member. Therefore, we want to be mindful of that.

A clarification question came from the audience. Will the CAS Awards be held on campus this semester? The Dean answered right now, we are making decisions every couple of weeks. Right now, I do not want to rule out an on-campus Awards ceremony but I think that it will be a virtual meeting.

Prof. Petrino asked if we can have a small committee address this disruption in teaching. The Dean answered that this is more of a faculty governance issue. The faculty should bring this through the committees.

Prof. Xiao asked when will summer orientations happen. The Dean responded that most likely, the orientations will be held at the beginning of the fall semester.

Prof. Lakeland asked how the institution is supporting part-time or hourly employees when they may be laid off for a time. The Dean understands that hourly employees are still being paid and the University is honoring those commitments. He is not aware of any layoffs.

Prof. Tullis asked is the media center on schedule and moving forward? The Dean answered that the media center is on schedule and moving forward. The same opening date is being planned.

Prof. Epstein asked if the Dean will be meeting with pre-tenure faculty? The Dean answered that he will be meeting with pre-tenure faculty with Zoom. Faculty are working on adding questions to the IDEA forms using the Faculty Governance mechanisms that are in place. Faculty can use those forms, if they have positive experiences to make the strongest case possible, but we are also aware that these are extraordinary times. Faculty as you know have been forced to adjust and adopt new strategies on a dime and we want to make sure that you know we do no damage to anyone in this process.

Prof. Carol Ann Davis mentioned that FDEC is adding three optional questions that Faculty could put on their IDEA forms. The first was “what would you like your instructor to know about the adjustments he or she made when the course moved on-line.” The second question was “what adjustments did you make to accommodate the on-line learning environment. The third question was “what ways was the move to on-line learning challenging/beneficial to your learning.”

Prof Kapoor asked if there is any remuneration for part-time faculty to move courses on-line. The migration to online teaching was stark. For many of us, but for part-time faculty, it was probably more stark given the amount of hours needed to do this. The Dean answered that there have been initial conversations. I do not know if it carried forward beyond just conversations. The administration understands the amount of work that has gone into moving all courses on-line. The Dean is mindful of the University’s resources. There are lot of unknowns now. You are all aware that we are going to refund room and board to students on campus. That is a sizable outlay of cash resources out the door. We have reserves for that. We are mindful of our resources and want to steward them properly.

Prof. Johnson said the FDEC IDEA question will be addressed in the Academic Council next week.

The Dean stated that it is important that we continue to function as we always have. We need to be mindful of governance. We need to engage with faculty governance leaders. The FDEC IDEA form questions will be dealt with in the proper place. We need to keep a sense of shared governance in a moment like this because it is so easy not to with so many moving parts. I want to thank our shared governance leaders for being true partners and working under extraordinary circumstances to get the work of the University done.

Prof. Horan asked if we are held to the University’s final exam schedule if we are choosing to give an exam versus a final project. The Dean responded that we are staying with the final exam schedule.

The course withdrawal deadline was changed. It was announced in an email message. The course withdrawal will be extended to April 8<sup>th</sup>. By Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, Chairs need to have their Pass/Fail course list to the Registrar. Students will have two extra days after that to decide if they want to add or drop.

Prof. Mielants if faculty paid pre-paid travel expenses for conferences that are now cancelled, can we still file for reimbursements? The Dean answered that we don't want anyone to be on the hook for something that is out of their control. The other thing that we were asking is that some of the conferences are reimbursing the individuals back. If that is the case, then the faculty members have to reimburse the university. So that is something to keep track of and be mindful of.

Prof. Fernandez, is the final grade submission the same as usual. The Exam schedule is as usual and the deadline for final grade submission, is May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Prof. Walker asked if monies were granted for travel for the summer, can they be redirected to other academic related things? The Dean answered that would be a conversation we can have offline.

Prof. Brunn-Bevel mentioned that her understanding is that the pass/fail option is for the entire section of the class. However at least one student has told me that an instructor said individual students have had the option to choose pass/fail. Can you please clarify?

The Dean responded that it is for all students in the section, not individual students.

Prof. Davis stated, if you are giving final exams, especially if they have synchronous components. Please make sure not to change the exam time as that can impact student scheduling.

The Dean asked everyone to be safe and thanked everyone for being so wonderful to our students. Most of you know where I live in terms of email. Most of you have my cell number. If you need to reach me for any reason, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

The CAS Chair thanked everyone for their participation. The next meeting is Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **5. Adjournment**

**The meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

John Miecznikowski  
Secretary of CAS 2017-2021