

**College of Arts and Sciences  
Dean's Council of Department Chairs  
Wednesday, May 2, 2012**

**Attended:**

Steve Bayne, Chair of Philosophy  
Ceceila Bucki, Chair of History  
Matt Coleman, Chair of Mathematics & Computer Science  
David Crawford, Chair of Sociology & Anthropology  
Nancy Dallavalle, Chair of Religious Studies  
Manyul Im, Associate Dean of College of Arts and Sciences  
Jerelyn Johnson, Representing Modern Languages and Literatures  
Janie Leatherman, Director of International Studies  
Mark LeClair, Chair of Economics  
Marcie Patton, Chair of Politics  
Lynne Porter, Chair of VPA  
Ronald Salafia, Chair of Psychology  
James Simon, Chair of English  
Kraig Steffen, Chair of Chemistry & Bio-Chemistry  
Brian Walker, Chair of Biology  
Yohuru Williams, Associate Professor of History  
Maggie Wills, Chair of Communication  
David Winn, Chair of Physics

**Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Nancy Dallavalle moved to approve the minutes from the April 4 Dean's Council meeting.  
Dr. Kraig Steffen seconded the motion. All were in favor of the minutes with two abstentions.

**Goals of the Dean's Council**

The Dean listed the goals of the Dean's Council to share with President Jeffrey von Arx, so he could see what the Dean's Council is about. The President was on the agenda for later discussion.

1. Enhancing Chairs' abilities to manage their departments, facilitate faculty development and productivity, and advance student success
2. Connecting Chairs to information and other resources that sustain their efforts to advance Department, College, and University initiatives
3. Providing a venue for collegiality and camaraderie, for sharing best practices and troubleshooting issues
4. Supporting individual chair's professional development as teachers, scholars, and administrators
5. Building leadership capacity to advance University, College, and Department goals

**Announcements and Reminders**

- The Dean congratulated Dr. Walker for receiving the Robert Wall Award, as well as a Fulbright Award for FY'13. Walker will engage in research in Brazil during the academic year 2013.
- CAS Student Awards Event Recap:
  - The Dean commented that it was very heartening to hear about the many accomplishments of our students during the annual CAS Student Awards Ceremony.
  - Department Chairs and Program Directors should focus on selecting only one award and one student recipient. If departments have multiple named awards with funding associated with them, they could present these awards, but all awards should then be

- presented by one faculty representative. All other awards should be listed on the supplemental insert.
  - The Dean encouraged department and programs to purchase gifts, books, and gift certificates from the Downtown University Bookstore.
  - The Ceremony this year lasted a half-hour longer than previous years. There are still departments who are not staying within the expected timeframe to highlight their student recipient(s). The time limit per award is one minute.
- Down Town Fairfield University Bookstore—The Dean asked that chairs encourage faculty to hold meetings at the downtown bookstore venue. There are a lot of wonderful events at the bookstore, but there is low faculty participation, even for events facilitated or presented by their colleagues within their departments.
- Annual Faculty Performance Reviews
    - Pre-Tenured faculty automatically qualify for Standard Merit in their first three years; however, the Faculty Salary Committee never ruled whether it was first three years at Fairfield or first three years on the clock. The Dean's sense is that it should be their first three years on the clock. She suggested that the Faculty Salary Committee rule that all untenured faculty qualify for standard merit if their contract is renewed as a continuing contract. The Dean recommended that pre-tenured faculty still submit their essays. This is an opportunity for them to have two faculty outside of the department view their essay, building visibility.
    - Deadline for submission is May 7.
    - Formative reviews should occur throughout the month of May. Some departments did this in pairs and the Dean thought the paired idea of formative feedback across the rank was terrific. This offered an opportunity for faculty to share their CVs and their IDEA summary sheets, giving them a sense on how to use their IDEA evaluations better. They could chat about what is going well and what is not.
    - The Dean commended the chairs on their improvements assessing junior faculty in terms of thoroughness, rigor, and quality of letters. Dean letters have been completed and a copy should be in campus mailboxes by Monday.
    - Some junior faculty mentioned that they never received written feedback from peer review of teaching observations from their senior colleagues. The Dean suggested that faculty be engaged across the ranks in PRoT.
    - It seems that mentoring drops off once faculty receive tenure. This is not the kind of community we are trying to develop. Maintenance of CVs, group discussion of IDEA summary sheets, etc. are all activities that support continued faculty development.
    - Note that PoPs are eligible to apply for Merit (but not visiting faculty).

**CAS Annual Reports** (Due June 4, 2012)—The Dean recommended the following:

- Be brisk and use statistics. The reports should not represent a culmination of faculty annual reports; these are *department* outcomes, such as curricular initiatives, Living and Learning, and peer review of teaching. Stellar outcomes for both faculty and students, such as a Fulbright or Wall Award should be included. With these truly amazing outcomes, give a few sentences to highlight colleagues or students.
- The Dean thought it would be a good idea for departments to cull together and archive faculty CVs in a way that could be searchable. In the past, these were uploaded in Eidos (and may have been transferred to Mentor). The Dean mentioned that Associate Dean Manyul Im might want to think about ways in which CVs could be stored and work with departments.
- Use appendices for additional info, including other intra-departmental program reports.

- There must be a short narrative about assessment (referencing collection and analysis of student learning artifacts and how departments are using findings to improve courses, pedagogy, programs), plus attachments of revised NEASC rubric showing the latest progress in each department/program. The Dean will send the NEASC rubric to all chairs.
- There must be a comment on ways to advance diversity, such as search strategies for developing a diverse applicant pool, work to create the conditions in which faculty and students of color can be successful, curricular and co-curricular contributions, etc.

### **Staff Performance Reviews**

- The Dean will be away from mid-July to mid-August. All staff reviews should be completed before mid-July. This is about one to two weeks sooner than University deadline. Prompting for staff reviews will be sent by the end of May.
- The Dean shared her review process with the CAS Dean's Office *exempt* staff. They are asked to submit a reflection based on 4 or 5 questions, which is followed by a performance review discussion. The Dean encouraged chairs to think about what method they would like to use for their department assistants annual assessments.
- There is a new process, where all ratings other than "Satisfactory" will require commentary (whether complimentary or critical/constructive). The Dean reiterated the importance behind sharing constructive feedback with staff. She finds that staff members welcome feedback, as they move towards professional development. Folks who are underperforming need direction and those who are over-performing also deserve to be recognized.
- Chairs should reach out to the Dean or Ms. Jean Daniele if they experience difficulty with the new process. Ms. Daniele is officially the manager of hourly administrative staff in the College and she can help with this process.

### **Agenda Planning for Summer Retreat**

The Dean will put an email out to Chairs, asking them to rank the different topic ideas she has for the upcoming Chairs' Retreat, as well as ask for additional ideas.

- Diversity – training and consciousness-raising session
- Mentoring / Advising as Teaching / P<sub>RoT</sub>
- Curricular Management / Core Pathways / IDEA / Assessment
- The "Portfolio Review" – prioritizing programs for targeted reductions and/or increases in resources and emphasis
  - August 29<sup>th</sup> (half day, new chairs)
  - August 30<sup>th</sup> (full-day, all chairs)

### **Discussion with President Jeffrey P. von Arx**

The Dean introduced President Jeffrey P. von Arx, SJ, who joined the Dean's Council to discuss strategic priorities and areas of distinction as reflected in the two draft documents prepared by the Dean with the CAS Planning Committee and distributed at the last DC meeting. The initiatives highlighted in this discussion were as follows:

### **Integrated Health Sciences**

- Integrated Health Sciences (the President has asked the CAS Dean to lead a task force on this initiative from which the Bannow/SON building project will draw for inspiration)
- The charge is to develop a new program and that will ensure greater coordination among departments and schools. The task force work will inform the architectural design and help with fundraising for the expansion of the School of Nursing and elements of creating a more integrated health sciences complex.

- Part of Dean Crabtree's charge is to work closely with the new Dean of the School of Nursing, Lynn Babington and work closely with Interim Dean Jack Beal and his successor. The three critical components of the Health Science addition are the CAS, SON, & SOE, though collaborations with DSB and GSEAP are also possible.
- Dean Crabtree will be a member of the search committee to hire the new SOE dean.
- The President shared the expectation that the SOE will be relocating to Bannow (timing is not yet determined), which will open subsequent discussions about uses for vacated space in McAuliffe.
- The goal is that many of the components of the new complex will create synergy, offering an opportunity to combine the very significant strengths of the institution, in the first instance a very strong undergraduate program, with excellent Graduate and Professional Schools.
- This initiative is seen as a way to establish a particular area of distinction for Fairfield in this area, thriving for a program of closer collaboration and cooperation between the components of our Institution. It will also be attractive to prospective students and their parents, as science preparation is one of important areas of growth in the economy, in addition to great needs nationally and globally.
- This is seen as a companion initiative, with the "21<sup>st</sup> Century Humanities" launched by the Dean and funded by the Humanities Institute (summer fellows to be announced soon).
- The Dean mentioned that the call for participation went out a few weeks ago. She is presently reviewing those and by the end of the week, she will announce a group of 7 to 10 folks to participate. The idea is to map a vision for Humanities at Fairfield in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, modern and innovative, but at the same time grounded in the tradition. The plan is to have several generations of faculty, including one untenured member on the committee. This will be a generative mix, hoping for an outcome of a draft of a vision statement, a set of funding priorities for the current Humanities Institute fund, and ideas for resource enhancement through visiting and permanent faculty, programming, engagement with students and community, etc. The Dean is not going to participate in this group, but the group is advisory to the Dean.
- The Dean suggested having a conversation at the Chairs' Retreat to determine what the group would like to do around the Health Sciences Initiative. Certainly Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology, and to a lesser extent Mathematics, are far along in their collaboration with SON and some with SOE. They are also thinking about Integrative Health Sciences. There are a number of health components in Communication, as well as other disciplines, such as History of Health Care, Health Care Economics, and Applied Ethics courses that work across areas related to health and sustainability. Global health initiatives and Humanitarian crises interface, as well as the program with Lindsey Farrell from Australian Catholic University this past semester around art in hospitals, which was very compelling. The MFA Program had a reading with SON recently around creative writing for healing; also in the literary tradition there is so much focus on health, illness, and disability. She invited chairs to talk to colleagues to see where they are at this point.

The following comments were made:

- Dr. Walker noted that Biology enrollments are growing making it very hard to accommodate students. Some of the biggest ethical questions today cross many paths.
- Dr. Salafia asked if there was some sense of a timeline. He commented that this is a major initiative that will take a lot of building and moving. Fr. von Arx mentioned that the first meeting is next week and several faculty members would serve on the task force.
- Capitalizing on existing strengths and advancing our strategic position in the health sciences and related interdisciplinary curricula, research, and engagement is an important strategic goal.
- Dr. Steffen mentioned that there is a sense of overbuilding and folks are concerned. It is critical as we consider physical space that we make sure there is a need for it, a rationale for it, and that

it will be able to pay for itself. He added that pressures are there to justify the new academic space, but most of the building has been in residence halls.

### **95<sup>th</sup> Percentile**

- Chairs were concerned with abandonment of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile.
- Fr. von Arx mentioned that he is planning to address this issue with the University on Thursday, May 3.
- Dr. James Simon asked if abandoning the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile is necessary to balance the budget during the next couple of years. The President noted that the problem with the current system is that it prevents the University, in the current fiscal year, to effectively budget for salary increases. The present system confronts us with finding additional funding not initially budgeted. The system worked greater when we generated and operated in a surplus. We have to find a new way to do this.
- Dr. Crawford thought that there was a proposal where there was a lag time and faculty would take the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile getting what they received and go to the end of the year. Fr. von Arx mentioned that the Administration is happy to discuss all of these matters with the Faculty Salary Committee to try to work this out. Fr. von Arx shared that determination of compensation for faculty and staff is done in relationship with other University operating expenses.
- Fr. von Arx stated that he has been committed to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile during all his time at the University but he does not think it is sustainable given the financial status in last few years.
- Fr. von Arx mentioned that he would like faculty to know that compensating faculty at the highest level the institution can afford is a high priority.
- The Dean asked, if we exceed our enrollment targets for next year, what would the plan be for the budget surplus? Fr. von Arx mentioned that they would fund compensation at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for the current year.
- The Dean mentioned that, based on the deposit news received today, the situation is encouraging. What if the surplus is substantial? Would it go into the endowment? Fr. von Arx mentioned that typically when dealing with significant surplus that would be something the Board of Trustees would discuss with the Administration.
- The Dean mentioned that we make sure we have no deferred maintenance and we invest in capital progress over the summer, but there are certain needs in the academic division, particularly in the natural sciences, that are large and that we have been holding back. In relationship to the Integrative Health Science initiative, big ideas could come forth that could facilitate a collaborative research agenda, but the funding support will need to be there.
- Father von Arx thanked the chairs and directors for their service and leadership and for engaging in this discussion with him.
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### **Chairs' Open Discussion:**

- Dr. Salafia argued that faculty are not going to buy into dropping the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile; they have to find an alternative now, rather than in another year.
- Dr. LeClair asserted that we got our self into this trouble by over building and that we need a rainy day fund rather than dip into the endowments.
- Dr. Steffen commented that to make the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, as he understands it, we are close for next year; there is not a huge amount of money needed. There is not much logic to the situation at hand.
- Dr. Bucki suggested that the university revisit the entire budget for reconfiguring. The Dean mentioned that on Budget Committee there is conversation about these scenarios. The Dean asked the Budget Committee if the University is looking at changing tuition structure. Some schools are already experimenting with this, but the data is not in as of yet.

- The Dean also noted that the dorm projects were already drawn up and ready to go when the economic crisis hit, so the question at that time was should we move forward or not. The belief was that new residence halls and how they look played a huge role in the ability to recruit students. Academics matter at two times during the admissions process, once before students decide on their school, because they go for an academic tier, and once they show up on campus. Between these two points it is not about academic quality, but more about the facilities (residence hall, recplex, commons, etc.). Their encounter with faculty does play an important role throughout the recruitment process, because it is part of how it feels to be part of the University.
- Regardless of institutional financial issues, there is a percentage of the budget that has to be spent on facilities, otherwise you build a deferred maintenance problem, create long term budget crisis, and affect the ability to recruit. This is known across all academic institutions.
- Dr. Crawford mentioned that another compelling argument about the reduction of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile, among faculty, is that the type of laborers we are. There is too much time spent on thinking about these compensation questions, instead of thinking about all of the work they could be doing if they were not angry about small amounts of money. From a management perspective, the Administration should realize faculty are relatively inexpensive and if faculty are not provoked they are much more productive. This is why external benchmarks are so significant.
- Dr. Bucki is worried about humanities becoming less emphasized at Fairfield. The Dean ensured her that she shares this concern, which is why she developed the companion Humanities Institute initiative. The Dean was asked to lead the building project, which the College should see as good news, and also because the vision is an integrative vision. The College will be well represented at the table.
- Dr. Bucki mentioned that History faculty were very upset relative to wasting hours on student recruitment efforts. There were two faculty at last Sunday's Admission's event, and they only engaged with two students. The Dean noted that the sciences banded together to do this in concert. This has worked well. Some students begin their freshman year attached to a program, but in very few cases this is traditional in the humanities. Students find their way after the core. It might work better if the College is represented with two people from the Humanities and they could speak across programs. This will allow faculty to rotate this commitment, as they generously promote each other's programs with prospective students. This is a better use of efforts. The Dean suggested that a better use of faculty time would be to leverage them in other programming, whenever there is no one to talk to in intensive specific venues. Bucki agreed and mentioned that was what her colleagues suggested.
- Dr. Leatherman noted that Fr. von Arx mentioned that there was a Strategic Plan that was largely implemented. What do we do now? Leatherman commented that she did not see any sense of larger mission that the University is moving towards. There is a gap. The entire six years Leatherman was at the University the Strategic Plan deeply engaged the faculty and the Institution was moving forward on so many fronts at the same time. There is no recognition about what that achievement has been.
- The Dean mentioned that we are in the less glamorous phases of implementing the Strategic Plan. We are a little before the next strategic planning process, but there is some gearing up for that. They are pushing some of this work into the schools, where each school will push to the next iteration. The Dean said that she will share Leatherman's feedback.
- Leatherman replied that the University does not seem to have a sense of how to brand the University. The Dean mentioned that the most strategic conversations have been around the problem of Higher Ed today and how we are going to survive in it. It is a much less exciting project to be involved with. This includes portfolio review of programs, to see where we should be scaling back, where we should be augmenting, and how we are going to position ourselves in the market, because we are a tuition driven institution.

## **CAS Areas of Distinction and Re-envisioning the Humanities Institute Handouts**

The Dean shared these handouts and mentioned that these documents are under revision, but the Arts & Sciences Planning Committee would like to bring them to the CAS faculty for discussion in the fall so all feedback should be incorporated prior to that time. Please send your feedback and suggestions to the Dean soon.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:30 p.m. to annual Dean's dinner at Southport Brewery