

College of Arts & Sciences Planning Committee

Tuesday, November 19, 2013

CNS 8 Conference Room

3:30-4:45pm

Present: Professors Crawford, Epstein, Lacy (Secretary), LoMonaco, O'Driscoll (Chair), and Rosivach; Dean Crabtree and Associate Deans Im, Perkus, and Simon.

MINUTES

I. Discussion of communication from Dr. Betsy Bowen to ASPC

The Dean initiated a discussion based on a recent message Prof. Bowen wrote and sent to ASPC members and CAS Deans. The letter asked the Committee to consider strategies to incorporate discussions and/or interactive presentations on critical challenges facing the College and our shared future.

Before opening the floor for discussion, the Dean expressed several ideas:

- The Dean noted the importance of disseminating agendas and minutes for College Meetings
- The Dean encouraged ASPC members to speak up at future meetings to address questions and discussions from the floor.
- The Dean encouraged the ASPC to exercise more control of agenda setting for College Meetings

Committee Discussion

Prof. Crawford suggested that, from his POV, the purpose of meetings is to assemble and make decisions that cannot be made elsewhere. He noted that for CAS meetings, we've seen a trajectory toward more information dissemination and less decision making.

The Dean agreed with Prof. Crawford, and added that the informal discussions which follow College meetings typically include informal discussions about College issues and presentations. Members agreed to further discuss existing and alternative strategies for CAS agendas and meetings.

Prof. O'Driscoll added that when we identify an issue to discuss, the ASPC could recruit several colleagues with opposing/alternative opinions to present (no powerpoint) the issue-at-hand prior to a moderated discussion with all CAS colleagues in attendance.

The Dean noted that the social dimension of College meetings is as crucial and beneficial as the business side of our meetings.

Prof. Rosivach and several other members expressed discontent over unrelated and/or unnecessary presentations and reports at College meetings. They asserted that CAS agendas should focus exclusively on CAS issues. Prof. Rosivach explained that as a planning committee we should do more than create agendas for CAS meetings. We should, he said, be thinking about the College from 5-, 10-, and 20-years out; such discussions would better position us to bring truly consequential discussions and votes to College meetings.

The Dean discussed strategic planning and noted that schools such as the School of Business and Engineering are more focused on their strategic objectives (DSB = national reputation of the program; Engineering = establish a viable, comprehensive program).

Assoc. Dean Im agreed with Prof. Rosivach's previous comments, and he identified Prof. Bowen's letter, noting that colleagues are indeed concerned with why faculty are not more involved in strategic planning for the University and College. He concluded that the College could be well-served by inviting more colleagues to participate in strategic planning processes.

Prof. Crawford encouraged the Committee to return to Prof. O'Driscoll's idea to invite people to speak about the critical initiative/priorities they are working on, and invite discussion afterward—formal or informal. He added that the rhetoric is flying about the direction of the College, yet simultaneously there is widespread concern that higher education is collapsing around us.

Prof. O'Driscoll expressed concern that exclusively focusing on internal, CAS issues would preclude faculty from engaging in critical issues like serving our part time students and developing on-line learning initiatives. She added that some departments or programs do discuss issues such as part-time students, but that larger cross-departmental discussions are elusive because there is not a dedicated venue for such discussions.

The Committee agreed to organize some discussions and a strategy to address the concerns expressed within the above discussion. The Committee proceeded to Agenda Item 2 because the agenda item calls for a strategy discussion to identify key issues for discussion with CAS faculty, and to develop a strategy to present and moderate an open and productive, college-wide discussion.

II. Potential topics for focused attention in upcoming CAS faculty meetings

The Dean presented a brief list of possible topics for the ASPC and CAS faculty to discuss as part of our regular meetings. Then the Committee initiated an discussion to consider these ideas and to determine strategies for future agendas for CAS meetings. The list of topics raised (by the Dean and Committee members) included:

- Reviewing the Pathways and moving toward Core Revision
- Advising
- Using IDEA forms and summary data
- Challenges of disruptive technologies to and for the Liberal Arts
- Core revisions (is the Core we have the Core we need?)

The discussion focused on Core revisions and on how to initiate a general discussion at the next CAS meeting. Key elements of the discussion follow.

The Dean suggested the College should have a college-level task force or position paper on a revised Core for the 21st century.

Prof. Rosivach identified two key issues related to the discussions of a revised Core: the shape and the delivery of the Core. He agreed that the UCC is an appropriate body for a discussion on the "shape" of the Core, but that the "delivery" issue is much broader (e.g. Pathways as the way forward?). He added that the UCC is not

presently structured to initiate a discussion of a Core revision. Core revision, according to Prof. Rosivach must go through due process; Core revision is not a matter for committee work). In considering future revisions of the Core, he emphasized the importance of building support from the ground up.

The Dean noted that a “smaller core” would likely receive broad support, to which Prof. Rosivach responded that the Core is our distinguishing curricular trait, and that we should consider carefully any suggestions for reorganizing or reducing it. The Dean agreed and said that the new Provost will need to provide inspiration and leadership to the issue of the Core’s future.

Associate Dean Simon asked about previous approaches to revise or modify the core. Prof. Rosivach explained that the previous attempt to revise the core worked to develop a comprehensive rationale for the core including its component parts. He added that this effort was undermined by changes in College and university leadership; the subcommittee produced a proposal that focused the core on the theme of social justice, but it was replaced by the core pathways initiative.

Prof. Epstein suggested that a new effort to discuss and possibly revise the core should come from below, and once organized faculty could recruit upper leadership by demonstrating how our efforts and plans could help resolve problems and concerns shared by faculty and administration alike. Prof. Crawford agreed, and added that the ASPC could work with colleagues to articulate the value proposition of our vision for a liberal arts education, and then facilitate a means to communicate this message upward. Prof. LoMonaco said that we should begin this discussion with colleagues at the next CAS meeting.

The committee proceeded to plan how to facilitate such a discussion. Members added to the December CAS agenda a presentation followed by an open discussion about developing a strategic vision for the College. The Chair recruited several committee members as presenters; remarks from Professors Rosivach and LoMonoco, and Associate Dean Im will precede the open discussion on developing a renewed strategic vision for the College. The committee agreed to further articulate a specific plan via email for the presentations and discussion.

III. Create agenda for first CAS Faculty Meeting

- A. Approval of [October 2013 Minutes](#)
- B. Elections / At-Large merit reps
- C. Report On CAS Student Advising, Associate Dean Simon
- D. College Discussion: Planning for a strategic vision for the College
*ASPC Members
- E. Dean’s remarks

IV. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

CAS Faculty Meetings

Friday, December 13, 3:30-5:00 (Alumni House)
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)
Vin Rosivach, At-large (2013-15)
Brian Walker, Natural Sciences & Mathematics (2013-15)