Academic Council Meeting  
Monday, April 28, 2014  
CNS 200  
Minutes of Meeting

Members Present: Professors Joe Dennin, David Downie, Donald Greenberg, Shannon Harding, James He, Alison Kris, Irene Mulvey (Executive Secretary), Martin Nguyen, Elizabeth Petrino, Shawn Rafalski (Chair), Susan Rakowitz (Secretary of the General Faculty), L. Kraig Steffen, Stephanie Storms, John Thiel, Jo Yarrington

Administrators: Dean Don Gibson, SVPAA Paul Fitzgerald, S.J.

Student Representative: Sarah Woods

Regrets: Professors Chris Huntley, Ginny Kelly, Nikki Lee-Wingate; Deans Lynn Babington, Bruce Berdanier, Robbin Crabtree

Invited Presenters: David Sapp, Heather Petraglia, Mike Pagano

1. Presidential Courtesy

SVPAA Fitzgerald provides an update on the incoming freshmen class. We budgeted for a freshmen class of 975 and, as of Friday, we are 10% ahead of last year. With respect to Engineering Masters students, we have jumped from 50 international applicants to 500 applicants. We are also presently in the middle of an accreditation review by NCATE (The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education), which will end at noon of April 29th, 2014.

Prof Kris asks about the numbers for the School of Nursing.

SVPAA Fitzgerald responds that we are 11-12% over target. We are over 100% over last year’s numbers for the School of Engineering, 11% for the School of Business, while CAS is slightly down. The engineering population will likely double next year.

2. Report from the Secretary of the General Faculty

Professor Rakowitz related that the election slate is out and that any outstanding feedback from the SVPAA interviews needs to be submitted immediately.

3. Report from the Executive Secretary

Professor Mulvey presented the draft minutes from April 7, 2014.

MOTION [Harding/Steffen] to approve  
MOTION PASSED 13-0-1

Professor Mulvey reported that the Executive Council suggests the summer dates of May 21 and July 31 for emergency Academic Council meetings (per the Journal of Record), and possibly during senior week (May 12-16) to reconvene today’s meeting, if needed.
For the Executive Committee, Professor Mulvey suggests postponing discussion of agenda item 4g. until the next meeting and moving agenda item 7c. to the end of today’s agenda. No objections to either change.

4. Council Subcommittee Reports

4d. Subcommittee on Maternity Leave
SVPAA Fitzgerald presents the recommendations drafted by the subcommittee, which consisted of Professors Patricia Behre, Ryan Drake, Dina Franceschi, and himself (see memo on pp. 10-11 of packet)

The changes propose allowing a mother to decide if a return year will count or not towards tenure clock. If not counted, this would amount to one academic year of clock stoppage. SVPAA notes the suggestion to consider paternity leave in the future.

Professor Dennin asks for clarification on the clock stoppage.

SVPAA Fitzgerald clarifies the timing of declaration.

Professor Mulvey moves to approve the memo (p. 12 of the packet) from the Executive Committee concerning the language on Maternity Leave in the Journal of Record.

MOTION. [Mulvey/Greenberg] to recommend that the General Faculty approve amending the Faculty Handbook [II.A.3.c] as shown on page 12 of the packet for today’s meeting [new language underlined and bold; items following insertion to be renumbered]:
c. Other Matters
(1) The normal maximum probationary period shall be…
(2) Time spent on leave from Fairfield University will not …
(3) Upon return from an approved maternity leave, an untenured faculty member may choose that the time of her probationary period toward tenure not include the academic year in which the maternity leave was taken. This declaration will be made in writing to the SVPAA by the 15th of October subsequent to a spring maternity leave or the 1st of March subsequent to a fall maternity leave. The faculty member will send copies of this letter to her department chair and Dean.
(4) A candidate may be required to spend up to …”

SVPAA Fitzgerald speaks in favor, noting that the language of “declaration” removes the possibility of denial.

MOTION PASSES 15-0-0

Professor Mulvey states that there is a need for the language to be consistent and that while the recommendation for the Journal of Record is good, the Executive Committee notes that everything is already in the Faculty Handbook. She suggests that the redundant language be removed from the Journal of Record.
MOTION [Mulvey/Thiel] to remove the entry on Maternity Policy from the Journal of Record
MOTION PASSES 14-0-1

MOTION [Mulvey/Downie] that the Faculty Handbook language on page 29 be amended to match the committee recommendation made for the change to the Journal of Record. I.e., amend the HB with the changes proposed for the JoR shown on page 10 of the packet for today’s meeting.

SVPAA Fitzgerald speaks in favor, noting that the language reflects not simply a release from teaching but from service as well.

Professor Rakowitz speaks against, stating that the Faculty Handbook language does not reflect the current University policy and that the language needs to be more fully revised. She expresses reluctance to amend only a part while not addressing the larger whole.

Professor Mulvey speaks against, agreeing with Prof. Rakowitz, but notes that such a revision is not presently possible and expresses a desire to withdraw the current motion.

Professor Thiel suggests amending the JOR language now and revising the Handbook language later.

It is suggested that the appropriate plan would be to withdraw the pending motion and rescind the motion deleting the entry on Maternity Policy from the Journal of Record. The pending motion is withdrawn.

MOTION [Downie/Yarrington] to rescind, for procedural reasons, the motion on removing the entry on Maternity Policy from the Journal of Record. 
MOTION PASSES 14-0-1

MOTION [Mulvey/Yarrington] to table the topic until the next meeting.
MOTION PASSES 15-0-0

6. Old Business

6a. JoR language for Council-approved default options for IDEA evaluations
Professor Rakowitz explains that there is a need to solidify the official language with respect to the IDEA form. She refers to the memo from the Executive Committee (p. 13 of packet)

MOTION [Rakowitz/Dennin] to approve the language for the Journal of Record shown on page 13 of the packet for today’s meeting for the previously approved Council action on defaults for IDEA [new language underlined and bold]:
Student Evaluation of Teaching:
Every faculty member in every class shall administer the IDEA teaching evaluation form. All faculty have the option of using the long form or the short form. For individuals who do not specify which form they wish to use in a class, tenured Full Professors and
part-time faculty will default to the short form and all other faculty members will default to the long form.

SVPAA Fitzgerald speaks in favor noting that this will allow students to give better attention to the IDEA evaluations if appropriate distinctions are made between the short and long forms.

MOTION PASSES 15-0-0

6b. Response from Academic Planning Committee to AC action taken 4/7/14 on credit for courses taken in high school.
Professor Sapp and Ms. Petraglia report that the Academic Planning Committee revisited their proposal. Ms. Petraglia states that it was not mentioned at the first meeting that students are coming in with core requirements already completed, especially in the Social Sciences, Foreign Languages, and Mathematics. Recalling that UConn’s program was mentioned as a possible exception, she nevertheless notes that the comparable programs at UConn, LIU and Syracuse all demonstrate inconsistencies within disciplines across all the programs. While there is an anecdotal report of careful certification, syllabi approval, and heavy oversight, this is not consistent within all programs. Ms. Petraglia further argues that many peer institutions have already moved to a more rigorous and restrictive policy. While some good courses might be missed, the University runs the risk of accepting credit for inappropriate courses. As a result, Prof. Sapp and Ms. Petraglia would like to resubmit the original proposal.

Professor Dennin suggests making limited acceptances of programs with respect to programs like that at UConn. He also notes that according to the language of the UConn program, teachers are seen as adjunct instructors. Prof. Dennin further argues that by accepting these programs the University may gain a recruiting advantage over peer institutions with more restrictive policies in place.

Ms. Petraglia states that the Academic Planning Committee did discuss this possibility before reaching the present proposal, but the challenge was the short time period in the summer when decisions had to be made. She instead emphasized the need to have a transparent policy that would be understandable to school counselors who would in turn prepare the schools. A school-by-school or discipline-by-discipline system of evaluation would be logistically difficult to do.

Professor Downie expresses support for having a uniform policy.

Professor Greenberg asks how College Professor is defined.

Ms. Petraglia responds that a student is asked to submit documentation from the university and the criteria are about being on campus.

Professor Thiel seeks clarification as to whether or not the proposed policy seeks to raise a higher standard.

Ms. Petraglia states the Academic Planning Committee indeed saw that there was a need to recommend a more restrictive policy in order to tighten up the level of courses coming in.
Ms. Petraglia leaves, Prof. Sapp stays.

**MOTION [Greenberg/Petrino] to amend the Journal of Record as recommended by the Academic Planning Committee [new text underlined, deleted text struck through]:**

College Courses in High School:
For students who pursue college courses **while in** their high school, upon receipt of an official college transcript, the course work will be evaluated by the appropriate dean/director in consultation with the appropriate curriculum area, provided the following criteria are met:

- The course(s) must have been completed in a college environment and must have been taught by a college professor
- The course(s)/credits were not used to satisfy high school graduation requirements
- A final grade of “C” or better was earned.

That dean/director will determine the appropriateness of the transfer credit for the student’s program and decide whether it has met Fairfield’s curriculum standards. Only courses in which the student received a grade of “C” or higher will be considered. A maximum of 15 credits of approved coursework will be awarded transfer credit. Approved courses with a grade of "C" or higher. The grades will not be transferred.

Professor Dennin speaks against, stating that he would like to change bullet point one to be less restrictive.

SVPAA Fitzgerald speaks in favor, stating that the core is where Fairfield University delivers a Jesuit education to its students. That experience is not just content knowledge. He also notes that 15 AP credits and 15 transfer credits would give students sophomore standing, which would be especially appealing for students interested in 5-year dual degree programs.

Professor Greenberg speaks in favor, deferring to the expertise of the Academic Planning Committee.

Professor Thiel speaks in favor, stating that the Academic Planning Committee came back with no changes because there was no way to be more specific and that it is better not to be, since that affords the University greater flexibility and judgment.

Professor He speaks in favor, agreeing with Prof. Thiel, and stating that a maximum of 15 credit hours is generous.

Professor Petrino speaks in favor stating that she feels better knowing that the deans or directors will serve as a fail-safe. She states that she believes these proposed guidelines to be appropriate.

**MOTION PASSES 13-1-1**

Professor Mulvey suggests moving to 7b. since Professor Pagano is here. No objections.

**7b. Program Review of the MA in Communication (materials distributed with the 4/7/2014 AC packet)**
Professor Pagano reports on the 5-year review of the MA program in Communications. He notes that 35 students are presently enrolled in the program with 13 graduating in May. He adds that 15 students have been added since September and that the program seems on track of hitting 60 students, which the administration would like to see.

SVPPA Fitzgerald asks if there is anything to report about the 5th year full-time option.

Professor Pagano responds that there is the accelerated option for BA students who would like to continue on for the MA. He adds however that more than an additional 5th year would be required and states that they are presently assessing interest with juniors and seniors, and that such an option is not part of the present review.

Professor Dennin notes that for the fiscal year of 2013, 80 students were proposed and that returns have gone down in the last two years. Noting the new competing programs at Sacred Heart and Bridgeport, he asks - why should we be we confident that numbers will be met?

Professor Pagano responds that there has not been sufficient marketing and that Sacred Heart has an unbelievable 1 year program. He states that the MA department is concerned and is looking into the accelerated option.

Professor Pagano leaves.

Professor Dennin asks what are the AC’s options with respect to the review.

SVPPA Fitzgerald states that the Educational Planning Committee will be coming up with a template for review, but that further reviews are ultimately the responsibility of the deans.

Professor Mulvey notes that the 5-year review was part of the requirement from the program’s inception.

Professor Dennin states that he has seen many programs approved, but some have fallen short of projections. He asks would it be possible to review the program again in 3 years to see if things have stabilized or turned around.

**MOTION [Dennin/Greenberg] to require another program review in 3 years**

Professor Mulvey states that she is unsure what the concern is.

Professor Dennin responds that there needs to be more oversight - that the Academic Council can’t simply leave it to the deans.

SVPPA Fitzgerald speaks against the motion. He states that the Academic Council’s role is to look at the academic objectives of a program and that it is up to the administration, meaning deans and Vice Presidents, to look at the business model. He reiterates that the EPC is coming up with a good template for the regular review of programs.

Dean Gibson emphasizes that business model questions do reside with the deans.
**MOTION FAILS 2-10-2**

7a. **Revisions to Spring 2015 calendar from AC Calendar Review Committee**

Professor Harding presents the proposed changes to calendar (see separate handout “Academic Calendar Changes”). She notes that the sheet summarizes the changes and how they compare. The Academic Calendar Subcommittee paid special attention to trying to make equal the number of times each weekday is a class day in the semester.

Professor Storms asks if the Tuesday that becomes an academic Monday is for both undergraduates and graduates.

Professor Harding says yes it is.

Professor Rakowtiz notes that perhaps there should be no turbos on Mondays and Fridays since each day only meets for 12 classes.

SVPAA Fitzgerald states the requirements set forth by the JoR boxes us in when inclement weather occurs, especially when there is a need for 14 or 15 weeks of instruction.

Professor Yarrington agrees and states that the limited number of instruction days on Mondays and Fridays hampers a program that builds on turbos.

Professor Harding adds that the committee mentioned the possibility of foregoing the Easter Monday holiday in order to regain a Monday, but the possibility was met with resistance from parents. The recouping of days was also the very reason the subcommittee recommended starting the semester before the MLK holiday.

Professor Dennin asks isn’t the date of graduation open?

SVPAA Fitzgerald responds that the date of graduation is not mandated, but determined by the president and staff.

Prof Kris expresses her sincere appreciation for the subcommittee. She further adds that Nursing has half semester courses (7 weeks/7 weeks) so the shorter semester is very difficult to manage. Additionally clinicals cannot accommodate academic Mondays.

Professor Harding responds that removing Easter Monday would resolve that.

Professor Mulvey points out that the JoR requirements for the academic calendar are not onerous: three reading days, and a month between semesters - needed for the work of the faculty. She elaborates that what is really pushing us is parents complaining about the semester starting before the MLK holiday. Graduation and Easter Monday are also issues, but none of this is relevant to the JoR academic calendar entry.
SVPA F Fitzgerald noted that parents complained because it placed moving day onto a work day requiring many parents to request time off. He adds that only 50% of undergraduates have a final exam.

Professor Mulvey stresses that faculty have work to do in the interim.

Professor Steffen asks why do we have a senior week? He notes that the additional half week would open up 2 full days.

Professor Mulvey asks what should we do with the Spring 2015 calendar?

Professor Steffen asks whether a half Monday would be possible?

**MOTION [Mulvey/Yarrington] to accept the Spring 2015 calendar changes.**

Professor Storms asks whether this academic calendar applies to graduate students.

**MOTION [Fitzgerald/Storms] to amend the motion to apply only to the undergraduate calendar.**

Professor Harding speaks against the amendment stating that the last day of classes and reading days would be different.

Professor Storms notes that they end differently anyway.

**MOTION to amend PASSES 10-2-2**

The motion is amended.

Professor Downie speaks against the amended motion, because the academic calendar should begin a week before the MLK holiday or the Easter Monday holiday should be eliminated.

Ms. Woods stresses that Easter Monday is very important to students who choose to celebrate Easter with family and require Monday for travel time.

**MOTION AS AMENDED PASSES 13-0-1.**

**MOTION [Fitzgerald/Yarrington] to recess this meeting and reconvene on May 13 at a time to be determined and sent to members by email.**

MOTION PASSED unanimously.

Meeting recessed at 5:00pm

Respectfully submitted,
Martin Nguyen