Academic Council
Monday, March 30, 2015
CNS 200
Minutes

In attendance:

Faculty: Professors Mike Cavanaugh, Joe Dennin, Donald Greenberg, Shannon Harding, Alison Kris, Irene Mulvey (Executive Secretary), Elizabeth Petrino, Rona Preli, Susan Rakowitz (Secretary of the General Faculty), Amalia Rusu, Debra Strauss, Emily Smith, L. Kraig Steffen, John Thiel, Jo Yarrington.

Administrators: Deans Bruce Berdanier, Don Gibson, Bob Hannafin, Meredith Kazer, Jim Simon.

Student Observer: Jason Abate

Absent with regrets: Lynn Babington, Mousumi Bhattacharya, David Crawford, Martin Nguyen.

Invited Presenters: Professors Bill Abbott, David Gudelunas, Yohuru Williams, Tommy Xie, and Heather Petraglia

Prof. Preli called the meeting to order at 3:35.

1. Presidential courtesy: SVPAA Babington not in attendance today.

2. Report from the Secretary of the General Faculty

   Prof. Rakowitz: Nothing to report.

3. Report from the Executive Secretary

   Concerning item 3.a. (minutes) we did not receive the minutes from the last meeting so approval is postponed until the next AC meeting. No correspondence for 3.b. I want to remind the AC about the March 14th Salary Committee memo sent to you Saturday about an item accidentally left off the agenda by the Executive Secretary. It should be on the agenda today, but I suggest we take it up if we have time after all other new business has been completed.

4. Council Committee Reports: none

5. Petition for Immediate Hearing: none

6. Old Business: none

7. New Business

   a. Motion from R&T Committee re SOE representation

The Rank and Tenure Committee would like us to consider three motions affecting representation on the R & T Committee (see pages 3-5 of the packet).
Prof. Abbott: On January 12 the R & T Committee voted to ask the AC to approve three changes in the composition of the R & T Committee. One, that the AC consider increasing the number and composition of the R & T Committee from 7 to 9 members. Two, this increase would consist of one additional member from the School of Engineering and the other from Arts and Sciences. The School of Engineering has grown significantly in student enrollment and is currently the only school without a designated position. The addition for Arts and Sciences would keep the R & T Committee at an uneven, tie breaking number (9) and better represent the larger proportion of faculty from that school. The last motion is that if the Committee membership is increased to 9 that the number of full professors be increased from 4 to 5 to continue to insure a majority of full professors. I’ve sent the Committee’s arguments for and against these changes to the AC.

Prof. Abbott added that while it’s easy to schedule Committee meetings over the holiday break in January, trying to schedule time to process appeals in March is another story. It’s very difficult to schedule a convenient time for 7 members to meet. Nine will make it more difficult yet.

Prof. Thiel: A question about the 4 to 3 vote at the R&T Committee on this matter. Did the chair vote in order to break the tie?

Prof. Abbott: The chair always votes because of the Committee’s odd number (7).

Prof. Smith: Point of information: how many full-time faculty are in the School of Engineering?

Dean Berdanier: We currently have 9 full time faculty and adding two more in the fall. We have two full professors and three tenured faculty.

Prof. Mulvey: Are any of those professors of practice?

Dean Berdanier: Just one.

Prof. Mulvey: Professors of practice cannot serve on the R & T committee.

Prof. Rakowitz: My understanding is that there are 12 full-time faculty, including administrators with faculty status, in the School of Engineering, three of whom are not tenure track. There are 5 people eligible to serve on R & T.

Prof. Smith: If an Engineering faculty is added to the Committee, that person is not allowed to vote in Engineering cases, correct?

Prof. Abbott: They have a vote, but no one is present at the discussions on people in their department. They can leave a statement for discussion for all the other members of the Committee, and they leave their sealed ballot with the chair and that ballot is counted.

Prof. Dennin: If a candidate is from the same school and department, the affiliated R & T member must recuse him/herself. Engineering has departments unlike the School of Nursing.

Prof. Smith: Regarding schedule, why can’t the R & T Committee do what other Committees do and hold members to a specific meeting day to make scheduling easier?

Prof. Abbott: We could do that, but it would drastically reduce the number of people able and willing to run for the Committee.

Prof. Harding: Why does the last, ninth person have to come from CAS rather than at large. The argument that the CAS has more faculty doesn’t hold water.

Prof. Abbott: I don’t have an answer for that.

Dean Gibson: The professional schools have more students than the CAS and a large chunk of faculty. We should be consistent one way or the other on the question of representation. In support of Emily’s suggestion, I think the last seat should be at large.

Prof. Mulvey: An at large seat would require a problematic Handbook change. If I have my numbers right, there are five members of the School of Engineering currently eligible to serve in this one slot. How many are available from other schools, CAS, for example?
Prof. Rakowitz: I don’t have the full answer to your question. I do have the numbers of tenure track faculty in these other schools. The College has 174, DSB 46, GSEAP 29, Engineering 12, and School of Nursing 24. That’s tenure track faculty including tenured administrators.

Prof. Preli: Do we want to vote on these motions?

Prof. Smith: Are we in a position to ask the R&T Committee to go back and reconsider?

Prof. Preli: There are many different ways to pursue this, including not to pursue this.

Prof. Thiel: They have put a lot of work into this, so I want us to consider their first motion on page 4 of the packet.

**MOTION [Thiel/Yarrington] that the AC approve the amendment to the Handbook as shown on page 4 of the packet, to expand the Rank and Tenure Committee by adding a member from the School of Engineering and another member from the College of Arts & Sciences.**

Dean: Berdanier: I speak in favor of the motion. Perspectives on scholarship and teaching are expanding around the university and the R & T Committee should reflect these changes. Engineering has grown from 300 to 500 students. We may add another 100 students by the fall, certainly by next fall. We are moving toward 14 full time teaching faculty plus three administrators by the fall of 2017. I think we offer a unique perspective to add and would love to have this opportunity for a seat on the R & T Committee.

Prof. Greenberg: I think this is premature. The Engineering School has not been around long enough. I’m concerned that there are not enough committee- qualified faculty to fairly represent the school.

Prof. Thiel: I speak against the motion. There are not enough electable faculty to justify a seat at this time. Professors from the School of Engineering are currently eligible to be elected to this committee. Someone has to stand for election who is electable. I’m concerned that due to Engineering’s small faculty numbers the same person will run over and again. A school half the size of the English department having their own seat on R & T strikes me as disproportionate.

Prof. Smith: I think that Engineering should have a slot, but that the ninth slot should not go to CAS by default simply because they’re bigger. I’m not sure where I come down on this. I just don’t think the elections are truly democratic here. I don’t think the best person is always elected due to a variety of factors that go on during elections stemming from a divide among schools, etc.

Prof. Mulvey: I’m against the motion. I’m in agreement with every point John Thiel made. I want to reiterate that faculty members of the School of Engineering can serve on the R & T Committee. I think there are many who would be elected if they ran. This motion guarantees a seat for the School of Engineering. The problem in a small school like Engineering, not unlike the School of Nursing, is that the school puts up one person and this person is elected by acclamation. I don’t think that’s appropriate because it doesn’t give the General Faculty any choice. There’s just not enough faculty in the school yet to conduct a fair election.

Dean Kazer: Do we have any data going back to see how large a school has to be to win recognition? Thirteen years ago the School of Nursing with 24 full-time faculty was half of what it is today. As long as I can remember we’ve always had our own spot on R & T. If we have some data that says a faculty of a certain size should get a certain size representation that’s one thing. But, what is the right number? I don’t think we should make a decision without knowing this. It would seem that from a historical perspective 12 is the right number.

Prof. Dennin: I’m strongly opposed to this motion on two grounds: I was on the R & T committee this year, and in the three week widow for the appeals process we could not find a time when we were all available. Moreover, if a candidate’s from your department you can’t be there for discussion. Going to 9 is going to create even more scheduling problems. And there is no way of getting around the fact that appeals have to be done in a very small and inconvenient window of time. I believe that this is not a representative position like the Undergraduate Curriculum
Committee where different disciplines have their say. It’s probably not unreasonable to consider at-large from both the college and the professional schools. But, if we opt for the at-large choice, I think professional schools should worry about having even less people on the R & T committee. Assuming the candidate has a well-prepared dossier with reasonably informative inside and outside letters it’s not a huge problem to make a decision about people from other disciplines.

Prof. Rakowitz: I’d like to speak against the motion on the grounds of prematurity. In recent years when we’ve had a vacancy on R & T, it has been really difficult to find an acceptable candidate willing to come forward. This applies to both small and large schools. So, going to 9 people and 5 full professors is not going to improve this situation. And in the case of the School of Engineering only 5 people are eligible to run, only 2 of whom are full professors. In some years, depending on who just left the committee, the slot may have to be filled by a full professor. In that case, you’re creating a seat open to exactly two individuals. It’s premature no matter how many people are being represented.

Prof. Smith: the FDEC just added a slot for the School of Engineering so there’s a precedent for this. Scheduling should not determine how we decide a big situation like this. We can find an answer. We are the Academic Council. We prioritize it. If we are going to go with Joe’s argument about judging a dossier, then we have to treat all schools equally. Either there are designations for all, or there are none. I’d rather think positively than worse-case scenario. I would not like to be the School of Engineering and never have representation guaranteed.

Prof. Yarrington: I agree with Emily. I’m listening to all sides. But scheduling should not be a problem, but something to be done well in advance. I also think that this position should be an at-large position. I think it’s time to give people opportunity across the schools. Meredith makes a good case. If the School of Nursing had a faculty of 12 and a designated spot, then why not Engineering?

Dean Kazer: A point of clarification, we only have 6 people eligible for Rank & Tenure and 2 full professors, so we really aren’t that different from Engineering. We should not deny people representation because people can’t fit it into their schedule. Giving the School of Engineering representation is a big statement about the values of the university.

Prof. Mulvey: Meredith is making exactly my point. The General Faculty should be making the decision on representation for the School of Nursing, but the School of Nursing has not given the General Faculty any choice for many years. And I think it would be the same thing for the School of Engineering. We could amend the motion to have all positions at large. I worry that this might mean that R & T would be only represented by the CAS. But, for purposes of discussion, I suggest that the R & T have no designated slots and all members be at-large.

Prof. Prel: I was on R & T so I’m passionate about these issues. I’m in favor of the motion for two reasons: faculty on R & T serve an invaluable mentor function when they return to their schools, i.e., a data base for junior faculty. This is true for CAS and the professional schools. Also, like the Academic Council, R & T is one of the really important governance committees. It’s important that we not marginalize Engineering. Professional schools have struggled over the years to have a say in governance. For the larger body of CAS to presume to understand the unique differences in the various professional schools I think marginalizes the professional schools. Their perspectives are critical for maintaining an appreciation for the distinctive contributions each school brings to the Fairfield University community. There’s great diversity here. If we are to move forward in a meaningful inclusive way we have to represent all of the schools on these important governance bodies.

Prof. Greenberg: We made a mistake with Nursing. It’s too small a faculty. Nobody is guaranteed a seat on Rank & Tenure - no discipline, no department, no individual. It’s always up for contestation. And members of the School of Engineering can run and be elected. Faculties from any discipline are capable of making a decision about any other discipline if provided the appropriate data. In fact, we keep members of the candidate’s discipline/department out of the discussion in order to arrive at a more objective decision. Whether someone should be elected at-large is not
relevant to this discussion nor is the question whether the committee should be expanded to 9 members.

Prof. Preli: Further discussion? No?

**MOTION FAILED: 0 in favor, 9 against, 4 abstentions**

b. **Proposal for a Major and Minor in Digital Journalism**

Prof. Preli: Proposal for a Major and Minor in Digital Journalism (page 6 of the packet).

Prof. Petrin: We would like to talk today about the English Department’s proposal for a new major and minor in Digital Journalism. We in the Department started to discuss this when it became clear to us that journalism was undergoing a sea change, moving away from modes of print so familiar to us. We want to change the journalism concentration into a major and minor more relevant to students and more visible to them - given that it will become a stand-alone major. It is still grounded in a strong foundation of reading and interpreting literature. There are three literature courses required in the major. But it also takes into account the fact that digital journalism is a reality. We are expanding what we are currently doing to make our program more timely.

We had three department meetings to discuss these new offerings. We met with the Dean multiple times to define the major and minor and make it something everyone could support. The history of this process began in 1997. The major in English has traditionally been one of our most popular majors. We have six tracks in English - 229 students in English and 66 of those in Journalism. We see Journalism as an interdisciplinary study linking English, Communication, and more media-related fields as a unified program. Indeed, we have opted to keep Journalism within English to present a more unified way of presenting Journalism. We are deepening our commitment to Journalism as well as establishing a broader commitment to the digital humanities and the English Department in general.

This has been a very collaborative process. We reached out to Communications, FTM, to Ethics and the School of Engineering. I refer to pages 22-23 in the packet, Appendix 1, where you can see what the 12 course requirement entails. Ten courses is the traditional load for a major, but we found that on average English students take 12 courses anyway. By offering this we expand student knowledge in Journalism, provide training in news writing and digital journalism, and offer a course in big data story-telling, graphic and statistical analytical tools, and a menu of other courses (see page 22) including a course in Ethics in the Media reflecting the University's Jesuit tradition. And, finally, students will take a capstone experience consisting of an internship or an opportunity to team up with other students working for The Mirror, or work with a professor on a series of articles in investigative journalism. The minor is an abbreviated version of this.

It’s important to acknowledge that we have extensive experience working with adjuncts who have training in the field including people who write for The Hartford Courant and The New York Times. So, a program like this would require one additional full-time person. If the offering proves to be successful with students drawn to the major and minor – we are projecting 100-150 students – then perhaps we would hire a full-time professor of practice to offer courses and advise students.

Prof. Xie: This has been a collaborative effort within the English Department. We have incorporated courses from a variety of disciplines. But, we also came up with a name that appeals to students. In fact, students are already inquiring about the Digital Journalism program.

Prof. Simon: One, our current program doesn’t serve students very well. You can pursue a major in English/Journalism taking as few as two Journalism classes. The current program is frankly an embarrassment underscoring the need for this new program. Two, as Dean I’ve been trying to develop more ways of attracting freshmen to the College of Arts and Sciences. Admissions informed us that the two majors students want most and we don’t offer are Journalism and Public Relations. This was part of the motivation for going in this direction.
We’ve tried to be humble with regard to student projections. Earlier, I was told that Journalism might appeal to middle-age males interested in switching careers, but when I arrived the first day of class my room was entirely women looking for their first job, none over 25 years of age. That makes you humble in terms of student projections. Right now the range runs from 55 to as high as 400 Journalism students if all the variables align themselves. So we used the number of 150 as a reasonable number which matches Admissions estimate of 50 students that this program may attract each year.

Two more points: you’ll see a note in our packet from Lynn Babington promising resources will be provided. I’ll find out on Tuesday whether a tenure-track faculty slot in English and Digital Writing will win approval. This person will spend half their time in Journalism and half devoted to other department needs. We also project a need for a Professor of the Practice next Spring and administrators have also been very supportive of that.

Finally, from a personal point of view, I’m upset with the administration’s complaint that there are too many faculty committee hoops for new proposals to jump through, taking too much time. Well, this package was proposed exactly sixty days ago to the English Department. It’s been approved by a string of committees, and sits today before the Academic Council. I can’t imagine any serious proposal going through our process faster than that. This underscores the fact that our current system works extremely well. The committee votes have been 49 to nothing showing strong faculty support for this initiative.

Prof. Harding: Looking at the materials, I notice that many other schools have this type of program housed in Communications, but we do not require a Comm course. How come?

Prof. Petrinio: We made two electives out of a list of courses that includes a number of Comm courses. But our feeling was that with good advising students would take those courses. In fact, a related minor or major in related fields is recommended. It's not required because we wanted students to take a more Comm-centric study, say, or media-related investigation. They could select two courses from Comm, or pair this with a Comm minor. We hope to give students the opportunity to pair journalism in English with another field making for a more interdisciplinary study.

Prof. Harding: Are there other programs that don’t require Communications in this major? How was this course list put together? Did you look at what we offer and construct a major from that or check out other programs with similar courses to build a program similar to those offered by other institutions?

Prof. Petrinio: We reached out to people in every related department, all of whom suggested appropriate courses. We also had to consider how frequently those courses would be offered and how good a fit they were. It had more to do with related courses found in Appendix 3. We looked at the number of related and required courses for those majors at each of these institutions (see Appendix 3) to remain competitive.

Prof. Greenberg: I have no problem with a major in Journalism. But, I’m really having a problem with your calling it Digital Journalism. There’s not one course here that is *sui generis* ‘digital’. What’s your rationale for calling it Digital Journalism at this point.

Dean Simon: We’ve gotten away from the idea of separate platforms for print, for broadcasts, for internet. What these platforms share in common is their digital nature. The modern journalist must be able to disseminate information using a variety of platforms.

Prof. Greenberg: That was also true in 1900. You beg the question. Journalism is journalism including digital. Is there something that makes Digital Journalism special? Will a student coming from this program have a leg up from someone coming from another Journalism program? I don’t see it.

Prof. Simon: They were not doing podcasts, shooting videos, or the many other things digital makes possible in 1900. This course arose out of the Digital Journalism course taught by Prof. Xie for eight
years now. This course is designed to be the opposite of print-oriented courses. The Big Data course is solely based on spreadsheets and university crime records, and digitalizing these things for using our Excel analytical tools and the more complicated analytics Prof. Xie uses in his classes.

Prof. Greenberg: You have a 12 course major with only one course making the proposed program ‘digital’. I’m still having trouble justifying this program ‘digital’.

Prof. Rakowitz: I have a different problem with the title. I’m convinced that digital content is here. In fact, any journalism program in the year 2015 would have a ton of digital content. But, this makes me feel that what’s cutting edge today will in a short time be dated. Why not just call it ‘journalism’.

Prof. Petrino: We went through a variety of titles, ‘media-writing and journalism’, ‘journalism in the digital age’, for instance. We had to find something that would bring journalism into a period where most of this work is being done on-line. It’s not as if Digital Journalism doesn’t exist. Google other universities and it can be found elsewhere. So, the consensus was that this title would suffice to express what we are about here.

Prof. Simon: Sue, your instincts are right. This was in part a marketing decision. We had an alumni group that helped us throughout this process. They urged us not to call it ‘Journalism’ which would only sound like what we already offer. We are trying to reinvent this. The most common title is Media Journalism, but that suggests print and broadcast hinting that we plan to offer a multiple number of mediums. We are trying to get away from different tracks, which is totally outdated. In five years we might perhaps drop the ‘Digital’ when it becomes more the norm. But our alumni tell us that ‘Digital’ is the right way to identify it. Moreover, other institutions use ‘Digital’ as well.

Prof. Dennin: I ask my trademark question: on pages 18 and 19 you talk about a Professor of the Practice and searching for a tenure-track hire and yet none of that is reflected in your budget.

Prof. Simon: I refer you to page 21 where you will find a tenure-track hire for the Fall, 2015.

Prof. Dennin: I don’t want words, I want numbers.

Prof. Petrino: You’ll notice the hire is in Digital Writing with an open sub-specialty.

Prof. Dennin: So, this person would be teaching only 1/3 in Digital Journalism and the other 2/3’s in English?

Prof. Petrino: We hope to do more work within digital technology in our other writing courses. This person would be teaching journalism but with the opportunity to teach other courses in digital media as well. She/he would not only be teaching Journalism students, but students from other concentrations.

Prof. Dennin: You’re requiring a capstone experience consisting of an actual hands-on experience. Are these kinds of experiences available in the outside community?

Prof. Simon: We have a faculty member who gets a course release in the Fall and Spring to supervise internships. There is an overwhelming number of opportunities for capstone experiences in the Fairfield area.

Prof. Dennin: On page 29 we find a memo about a new division. Can you explain?

Prof. Simon: Back in July I met with senior members of the college to kick around the idea of a division between communication and emerging media. But we moved away from this idea. There is no discussion going on about a new division at this time.

MOTION [Steffen/Smith] to approve the Program in Digital Journalism.

MOTION TO AMEND [Rakowitz/Smith] to add a program review after five years.
Prof. Petrino: We propose a departmental review in three years to see what the student count is and if we have sufficient resources to serve them. But, like any new program this should have a formal fifth year review.

MOTION TO AMEND PASSED: 14 in favor, none opposed or abstaining

MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED: 12 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstaining

MOTION [Rakowitz/Mulvey] to approve the minor in Digital Journalism

MOTION PASSED: 13 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstaining

Proposal for a Major in Public Relations

Prof. Gudelunas: I’ll keep this very brief. The major in Public Relations is a stand-alone major in the Department of Communications. It comes out of a growing demand from students for such a major. We have long told students that we do Public Relations and here are the sequence of courses you need to take in what would be essentially a major in this field. We’ve decided to codify and concretize what had been informally advised over the years. The intention is to make Public Relations more visible for interested students and students looking at the university. No new courses. We are using existing courses, including courses from other programs and departments as well.

Mr. Abate: I just want to emphasize that this idea has a lot of student support, particularly in light of the forthcoming political elections. From an admissions perspective, it distinguishes Fairfield for offering such a program.

Prof. Dennin: On page 59 you talk of enrollment of 100 students. Then on page 60 you anticipate about 60 students per year. Could you clarify?

Prof. Gudelunas: Our best guess is 25 to 50 students per class. Much depends on how many switch over from a Communications major or double major. More sophomores than juniors or seniors might make this shift. Final enrollments will depend on the health of the economy and students from other departments.

Prof. Dennin: On page 62 you mention that most of the Jesuit institutions that offer Public Relations offer this in their own department. Are those departments mostly in the Arts and Sciences?

Prof. Gudelunas: With a couple of exceptions, the vast majority are in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Prof. Harding: I like this idea. My concern is how did you come up with the list of required courses? Did you look at other schools? Do other schools offer a curriculum like this?

Prof. Gudelunas: Can’t recall the total list. But, our search included the University of Chicago and Quinnipiac as a neighboring institution. We relied on Prof. Arendt in the Department of Communications who brings an extensive background in this area. She reached out to her colleagues at other institutions with Public Relations programs regarding required coursework. Faculty who teach these courses were canvassed as well. There was a prolonged discussion within the department about required coursework also.

Prof. Thiel: If a student chose to double major, could a student be a Communications and a Public Relations major?

Prof. Gudelunas: On page 58 we make it clear that double counting is not acceptable.

Prof. Thiel: If a lot of these courses are from courses that we already offer in Communications wouldn’t that lead to a lot of double counting?

Prof. Gudelunas: We are not double counting. We have the eleven courses specified in this proposal, plus the eight additional CO courses. And the two other required CO courses, 100 and
200, are specifically outlined. And it's specified that Communications courses cannot be repeated. It's a total of 57 credits to get the double major. We don't anticipate anyone taking that many courses to get the double major. We do anticipate some students majoring in Public Relations and minoring in Communications.

**MOTION [Kris/Steffen] To approve the major and minor in Public Relations with a five year review.**

Prof. Dennin: Who does the reviews?

Prof. Mulvey: The procedure for the five year with routing procedure is in The Journal of Record.

**MOTION: To accept the major and minor in Public Relations with an amendment for a five year review.**

**MOTION PASSED: 11 in favor, none opposed, 3 abstaining**

7.e and 7.f Proposed revisions to the JoR from the Academic Planning Committee on Withdrawal Policy, Change of Major, Transfer Credit, First-Year Midterm Estimates, Academic Probation, Academic Advancement, Academic Dismissal

Heather Petraglia, Director for Academic Support and Retention, and Yohuru Williams, Associate VP for Academic Affairs, gave an informational presentation on the material in the packet. As the time was late, the AC decided to put off action on these items until the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 5 pm.

God Bless, Mike Cavanaugh