

College of Education
Faculty Council
Minutes for Thursday, January 19, 2012
221 Chambers Building
2:30-4:30 p.m.

Members in attendance: Beverly Vandiver; Heather Zimmerman (for Orrin Murry); Deb Smith (for Fran Arbaugh); Simon Hooper; Stephanie Serriere; Jim Herbert; Shirley Woika; Leticia Oseguera; Barb Schaefer; Ed Fuller

Guest: David Monk

1. **Approval of the minutes from December 8, 2012:** The motion carried. The minutes were approved without any changes.
2. **Announcements by the Chair:** None
3. **Communications to the Council:** None
4. **Comments by the Dean of the College**
 - a. Dean Monk mentioned the College's annual report, noting that President Erikson had commented favorably on it and the upcoming meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Dean sent a sample of a letter he has sent out to donors in addressing the difficult events that unfolded in November 2011, while also focused on moving the College forward. The College has been successful in meeting its fundraising goal of \$20 million, 5 million over. Thus, our new goal has been set to 29 million.
 - b. Krauss Innovation Studio is primarily finished. It is envisioned to be open to students in evenings and in the nights. Some staff will be hired as monitors of the space. Renovation of Cedar Building will start soon. Math Education Lab is being considered for renovation.
 - c. The State has frozen its budget, which means its funding to Penn State as well. Each unit must return funds to the University. The College's assigned cut is \$121K in temporary dollars. The departments will be responsible for half of this amount, with reductions proportion to department's current budgets.
 - d. Faculty searches are progressing and promising.
 - e. The College's Report on Early Childhood Education will be published in early March.
 - f. The Dean reported a potential partnership with a university in Taiwan that he recently visited.
 - g. The Dean presented the latest revision of the changes in the use of RIF. The Dean reported that the goal is to move away from the formal funding split by percentage. Other changes are as follows: (1) an increase in the number of or amount for seed funding for promising research ideas (RIGs); (2) incentives/rewards for previous success (modeled after the College of Liberal Arts); (3) college-level infrastructure that helps with proposal preparation such as research design and methods; (4) an increase in start-up funds for new faculty; (5) an increase in departmental support (in proportion to the level of sponsored project activity); (6) the re-creation of a committee to evaluate proposals for funding as well as PIs requests for funds. In this revised document, there is a paragraph of explanation about the committee that will work with the

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Dean on RIF and transparency of budget use. The Dean welcomed comments and the new proposal will be put on the College Listserv.

The following comments, concerns, and questions were raised about the RIF proposal:

- In terms of revenue sharing, particularly coming from World Campus course funding, there seems to be lack of consistency of when money coming back to the departments is evenly distributed and when is it in proportion to a department's activity (research funding, in this case). This issue was tied to the Dean's Graduate Student Assistantships in that all departments must contribute equally to fund (World Campus funding) these assistantships; however, none of LPS students has received an assistantship since the initiative started two years ago. At issue is whether the criteria for awarding assistantship be revisited or whether each department should have assistantships awarded to their students. The Dean noted he is reluctant to change the current funding and assistantship process, but stated the pattern of awarding assistantship would be monitored and if needed changes would be considered in the future.
- Related to the above point is that all departments must give equal amount to fund the assistantships, even though some departments make more money through World Campus than others. The process of distribution is reversed with RIF in that its distribution to the departments will be in proportion to how much funding faculty in a department has garnered in grants
- Members of Faculty Council acknowledged that the revised proposal was improved and that the infrastructure model might benefit faculty in writing grants. Ed Fuller (EPS) also raised an issue on potential cost saving in that a new center in the College would be devoted to research design and methodology. Potentially the staff/faculty in the Center would be able to provide the services to faculty and thus save the College funds in hiring additional staff for these tasks.
- How will the Research Advisory Committee be formed and constituted? The Dean stated that in the past it's been composed of a member per department (5 before; 4 now). Department heads have in the past identified faculty to serve. The committee's charge will likely be expanded and more PIs would be included on the committee. In the past, the committee served to evaluate RIGs, but the reconstituted committee would also be involved in responding to PIs request for RIF. Previously, there have been no formal guidelines in how the committee was established, discharged its duties, etc. Such guidelines may need to be established.

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- h. The Dean presented the latest iteration of the roles and responsibilities for Director and Program Coordinators and took comments and feedback. As the comments are extensive, many were sent to the Chair after the meeting to be included in the minutes and shared with faculty. They are attached to the minutes and include responses that the Dean made if the issue was addressed in the meeting. The primary concerns noted were as follows: (a) the delineation of internal communications the director would be responsible for; (b) the eligibility of fixed term faculty as director; (c) the role of the director to “read/review theses to ensure quality-control”; (d) the amount of resources available to support the director and program coordinators, including supplemental compensation; (e) ability of the director to deal with curriculum issues across disciplines within a department; and (f) the role of program coordinators.

5. Reports of Standing Committees

- 5.1 **Committee on Graduate Studies & Research Policy** (Jerry Trusty, Chair): The Committee is meeting on February 16 to make decisions on the University Graduate Fellowships and Dean’s Graduate Assistantships. The Committee will also be deciding on Student Dissertation Research Initiation Grants. February 1 is deadline for Student RIGs and February 3 is the deadline for UGF’s and Dean’s Assistantships.
 - 5.2 **Committee on Curricular Affairs** (Stephanie Serriere, Chair): No new information. The committee is scheduled to meet Friday, January 20.
 - 5.3 **Committee on Faculty, Staff, and Student Concerns** (Barbara Schaefer): The committee has been constituted but has not met yet. Nominations are out for faculty, staff and student awards. The Dean wondered whether one of the criteria for the staff award—staff member must be in College for 5 years in order to be eligible for the award—was useful and whether it could be changed. The Chair will ask the council members to vote on changing the criterion for the staff award.
 - 5.4 **Technology Committee** (Simon Hooper, Chair): The committee has not met, but there is a concern about administrative rights faculty members have over their computers. In general, faculty should not have administrative rights, but the lack of access of specific areas on the computer has unintended consequences occurred. Thus, faculty members do need administrative rights.
- 6. Reports of special and ad hoc committees**
- 6.1 Departmental representatives to Faculty Council (Fran Arbaugh): A final report will be asked from the committee, so that a vote can be taken over a change in departmental representation as delineated in the constitution. The proposal is that Faculty Council (FC) reduce the number of Faculty Council Representatives to 15. All faculty need to vote (not just FC). There is a report from that committee.

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7. News from Faculty Senate (Beverly Vandiver)

Faculty Senate will visit on Jan. 31st from 1-4p.m. The 2 p.m. is the faculty session and will be held in 221 Chambers. Faculty Senate and Senate Council have been quite concerned about the recent events at the University. The Senate Council has one motion pending: a vote on having an independent investigation of the board's involvement in the scandal with members not associated with the university. The Senate Council met with Louis B. Freeh and he read his charge from the letter of engagement and indicated that a verbal report would be given to the Board prior the final report. It was not clear whether Faculty Senate would have access to the verbal report. In essence, there is concern about transparency and to trust what will be reported. Thus, another vote is pending in Faculty Senate: a vote of no confidence of the Board of Trustees. Senate Council members along with the Deans/Chancellors have been invited to a reception that the Trustees have tonight prior to their meeting tomorrow.

8. Unfinished business

8.1 Changes in RIF Guidelines (see Dean's Comments)

8.2 New departmental position (see Dean Comments)

8.3 Representation of departments (see #7 above)

8.4 Update on current and future building renovations—deferred until next meeting

8.5 Equitable workspaces for faculty throughout the College—deferred until next meeting

8.6 Academic integrity—deferred until next meeting

9. New business:

9.1 Strengthening faculty councils' involvement in the College's governance: deferred until next meeting

9.2 Forensic session: Do Faculty Council want to have a town hall meeting/forensic session this spring? The question was posed on how many people came to the last two sessions. The response was they were not well attended because of conflicts with other existing scheduled meetings. The Chair asked representatives to inquire within their departments about whether to have a forensic and on what topic.

10. Forensic business: None

11. Comments and recommendations for the good of the College: None

Submitted by Stephanie C. Serriere and Beverly J. Vandiver

Addendum to Faculty Council Minutes
Faculty Comments and Feedback about the Director and Program Coordinator Positions
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1. Suggestions were made about the list of responsibilities for the Director that might reflect more fully what the role entails. "Communication: Responsible for internal (within PSU) communication, including credit transfer requests, reports of completion of candidacy and comprehensive examinations, requests to Graduate School for extensions, departmental reports such as annual Bunton-Waller fellowship reports, communication of Graduate School policy changes to faculty, initiation of graduate faculty applications, and approval of graduation check sheets for degrees being awarded."

This inclusion in the director's responsibilities would involve making a new second column heading titled "Communication."

2. Will fixed term faculty be eligible to serve as director? In some departments, there are co-PICs, in which one is a non-tenure track faculty. At present, the Dean reports that if it's a co-PIC appointment, it's considered okay. Concern was expressed that if it were a fixed-term whether the faculty would be engaged in research and have the expertise to address the research aspects associated with graduate work. A conversation ensued that pointed out that some fixed-term know a lot about the history of the college or program and have extensive experience. Conversely, a tenured faculty member who just came here may be less qualified so it should not necessarily depend on tenure/non-tenured/or fixed term.
3. Another concern was the role of directors to "read/review student theses to ensure quality-control." It was noted, "As written this seems fraught with peril." Would the director have the expertise to read and review all theses and offer feedback? Currently the department heads or PICs are responsible to sign off on all theses. Will the director be responsible for all aspects of academic programs: master's, doctoral, residential, and world campus? For some programs, there is a lot of work involved when there are both an online program as well as a residential one. But importantly, what standards of quality will be used to evaluate theses? What if a thesis doesn't meet the director's standards? Is that a veto to a student passing? Does the advising faculty member get reprimanded? In short, when would the review occur and with what outcome? Also, if the job is to "ensure quality control" then reciprocally, then faculty would need to develop departmental-wide guidelines. Would these guidelines be developed by the curriculum committee and reviewed and agreed to by all faculty members? Departmental level quality control is EVERY faculty members' responsibility; it is disconcerting to suggest that the director may relieve others of that responsibility. Thus, it is not recommended that the directors should be reading the dissertations. The director will NOT be able to measure quality in vastly diverse fields.

Unless changed, it was highlighted that the department head has been responsible to sign off on theses in order for them to be considered completed and submitted to the Graduate School. Would the role shift to the director? It was also pointed out that it says "read/review" and not "evaluate." The Dean indicated that the goal is to have directors involved in the thesis process. The primary concern is whether the inclusion of the director is necessary or whether it adds more bureaucracy. It was asked what the intent is of a director's signature. It was said that it is merely another set of eyes. It may not be intended to prevent one student from graduated but a larger flag might be raised for departmental consideration, and input to the department head. The director is to then communicate with the department head, with potential implications on how a program is run.

The director should not be making recommendations for graduate faculty, as the director will not know about the needs of all programs. Program coordinators should decide about the needs of their programs.

4. More flexibility should be given on compensation for the positions. If departments are given the flexibility to divide up the list of responsibilities in slightly different ways between program coordinators and department head (DH), then it would seem that departments would be able to change the compensation model as well.

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Maybe no one gets a course release, but the program coordinator gets more travel funds and the DH gets nothing new. Program coordinator should be compensated more than \$300 in additional travel support. While the goal is to save money, \$300 additional travel support for program coordinators is not commensurate to the workload and it is not even reflective of the fees associated with travel for conferences or data collection. It suggested that at least \$1,000, if not \$1,200, would be more adequate.

A question was raised about supplemental compensation for program coordinators. The Dean answered that this compensation is in the case of an external review—NCATE, PDE, or exceptional major reviews.

The duties of PICs are already too voluminous for the compensation offered; the absence of incentive and limited incentive for the director will make it more difficult to attract anyone to either position.

5. Another concern raised was the extent to which the director would be able to deal with issues across curricular areas.
6. It is a good idea for directors to be engaged in cross-program recruitment/assistantships. This should be a top tier responsibility. But to make this a reality, funding from the College should be given to the Directors and there needs to be a commitment with the Public Relations Office to ensure there is marketing support to Directors' efforts, such as a contemporary web presence, conference program advertising, targeted emailing or mailing to conference attendees, newsletter or active web updates, etc.
7. Responsibilities of program coordinators:
 - Is it necessary for them to "Process student requests for course substitutions/waivers" or is this the domain of faculty advisors?
 - There are tasks left off of the list of coordinator responsibilities (coordinating program events, program budgets, program faculty meetings, coordinating with WC within programs etc. as only examples).
 - Program coordinators should be looking at their programs for assistantships/awards as well; that's only listed for the director.