

ACADEMIC COUNCIL MEETING
April 24, 2020 – Spring Meeting #2
Via WebEx @ 10:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M.
Minutes - Approved

Attendance: Meeting Held Via WebEx. See List of Co-Chairs, attached.

1. **Approval of February 21, 2020 minutes (attachment) (Co-Faculty Fellows):** Motion to approve by Dianne F. with second from Karen Ripee with the change of adding Karen Muir to the list of attendees. The motion passed unanimously, with no abstentions.
2. **Thank You to Departing Co-Chairs:** Thank you's go out to departing cochairs: Cathy Bill, Sandy Drakatos and Adele Wright (some are not departing until Fall).
3. **Update on Academic Council Elections:** The ballot for committee members is now functional and voting can resume; the initial ballot was missing some candidates and had to be redone. Good news, we will likely be welcoming 26 new council members to Committees in Autumn 2020. Amy Popovich will be the new Co-Faculty Fellow starting in Fall 2020, to replace Judy. Welcome, Amy and thank you, Judy!
4. **Update on Academic Council Charter Work:** Cathy and Judy are working on creating a draft charter, based on all the information compiled at the February retreat, to present at the July meeting, to ensure that all the contributions and thoughts and feedback from membership and leadership is represented. The Council will also consider if any items need to be added or altered, in light of how business is now conducted due to the COVID-19.
5. **CSEA Update:** Adam Keller provided an update on the CARES Act funding for colleges and universities, with approximately half the allocated funding to be distributed directly to students. The remaining approximately \$6 million is to pay for conversion to "distance learning" as described in the US Department of Education letter from Betsy DeVos explaining what the CARES money could be used for. All in the campus community should be interested and ensure the College remain accountable for how this money is used to support instruction during this pandemic. The exact language from the Department of Education letter upon passage of the CARES Act: "Campus Leaders can also spend these funds to enhance distance learning programs. The Department of Education will offer more funding guidance in the coming weeks." Adam also noted CSEA and the CSCC Administration had begun the bargaining process for the new faculty contract, as the current contract expires on June 30.
6. **Outstanding Academic Issues – COVID19:**
 - a. **Grading Options:** The college has given broad guidelines about grades for this semester (be compassionate, etc.). Several AC members asked about uncertainty with incompletes, and what are the financial aid ramifications for students receiving incompletes, or withdrawals, etc.

Ultimately, the faculty member is in control of assigning incompletes, and should assign them accordingly, as they believe it is appropriate. The Arts and Sciences Division has been asked to use a new form for assigning an incomplete under these circumstances.

- b. **Course Structure/Format:** Judy stated there are many trainings that have and will take(n) place to assist faculty in remote teaching. So far, there hasn't been any specifics on when the trainings will take place in order to provide training for faculty in order to offer their courses in the summer (and perhaps beyond).

There is also the issue of synchronous vs. asynchronous classes. Jennifer N. pointed out the challenge with students signing up for summer classes that all have days/times posted for class meetings. Students do not know if a given class will actually require meeting at those days/times (synchronous) or not (asynchronous). Students are already expressing confusion about interpreting the schedule and what classes they can or cannot sign up for, especially if they technically conflict in days/times for class meetings. Cathy shared the following from the CSCC website:

“Remote Classes: These classes were originally held or scheduled to be in the classroom and, due to COVID-19, were moved to a remote format, so they may not operate exactly like our typical online classes. Instructors may choose to hold a lecture at the regularly scheduled class time via a real-time, interactive web conferencing/chat tool such as Collaborate or WebEx. Ask your instructor about class specifics, such as where to find and submit assignments, and how to best participate.”

This leaves the choice of class format (fully online, or “remote”) in the hands of the faculty. Jennifer points out this doesn't really help students, in the case of classes that do not yet have an instructor listed.

Tammy added that there is an incredible burden on the adjuncts here as well. Converting a 3-hour lab into a “virtual” format is an INCREDIBLE amount of work.

Some faculty are using Zoom because it is more stable and allows all class members to see each other (which is needed in ASL courses, for examples). Numerous faculty commented on the features and usability of Zoom versus other formats and asked that it be an additional option supported by the College. Cathy asked the group if there are objections to urging the college to also adopt Zoom as one possibility for use in virtual classes. No objections were raised.

Holly brought up the placement testing issue, which is a big issue. She said they discussed a product with Dr. Simons they could use for this purpose. For example, all students are being forced into English 1100 co-rec classes if they do not have placement or ACT testing to place directly into ENGL1100. They are going to have to ask for a paper from all students on the first day of class and then decide if they need to stay in the co-rec or move to ENGL1100.

Secure testing is a big concern due to students posting their exams online at websites like Chegg and Course Hero. Judy said TLTR is working on this and should be offering some solutions soon. Cathy Bill (DL lead, BPS) is sending the PPT file on “alternative testing options” to Cath R. and Judy A. so they can share it with the group.

- c. **Other:** There were also comments about faculty who need updated tech, and free internet for students is scheduled to end in June.

Judy suggested that the possibility of holding a virtual faculty forum , in lieu of the FIX conference, where faculty can communicate broadly with each other about best practices for online and remote learning. Tracy Koski will look into this further.

Nicole B. raised issues regarding support the mental health of students, and in recognizing students that may be in crisis. This is a huge problem anyway, let alone under the given COVID-19 circumstances. Students need guidance, Nicole suggested statements on Blackboard or ensure it is easily available and visible for students. Nicole is going to make some recommendations, and Judy/Cathy R. will push the info out to faculty. At the very least, Academic Council can reach several hundred faculty, if the college is not communicating broadly in this manner.

Judy suggested creating workgroups to address these issues. She asked the group to mention anything that may come up after the meeting by reaching out to Judy A. or Cathy R.

Holly Finnegan and Fauna Stout gave Promotion and Tenure update. For this SP 2020 semester, faculty can just add to the portfolio that they didn't have any observations for this semester due to COVID19 and that will be fine.

Cathy has participated in an OAA workgroup developing a faculty survey to be sent out prior to the close of finals week. This initial, brief survey will ask about immediate concerns and is geared toward improving student success outcomes in the remote/online learning that will continue this summer and possibly into fall. Later in the year, there will be a longer survey that will ask faculty to reflect back on SP and SU, for more long-term planning in the future. The surveys were put together by a professionally diverse group. While some colleges surveyed faculty more immediately, we are glad the College is pursuing this feedback now.

7. **Summer Meeting Dates:** Cathy and Judy confirmed summer meeting dates; both Thursdays (10:00-12:00) due to Cathy and Adam attending bargaining sessions on Fridays. These will be remote meetings:
- June 11
 - July 16

Meeting Adjourned: 12:05 p.m.

Minutes taken by Adam Keller, CSEA Vice President.

Academic Council Committee Co-Chairs

Academic Pathways

Cathy Bill, Dianne Fidelibus

Academic Rules and Policies

Patricia Allen, Jennifer Nardone

Assessment

Sandy Drakatos, Adele Wright

Curriculum

Marc Lord, Tamara Montgomery

Delaware Campus

Ruey Bruce, Karen Muir

Digital Learning

Martin Blaine, Nicholas Lakostik

Diversity and Inclusion

Nicole Brandt, Amy DeLorenzo

Dual Enrollment

Rachael Romain, Andrea Pifher

Faculty Entry, Training, and Professional Development

Melissa Marmee, Karen Rippe

Honors

Paul Graves, Rita Rice

Instructional Success

Tracy Koski, Patricia May-Woods

Promotion and Tenure

Holly Finnegan, Fauna Stout

Service Learning

Amy Popovich , Heather Thompson-Gillis

Student Support

Jeanette Ferguson, Jorie Schwartz