

Arts & Sciences Chairs Meeting
Tuesday, November 3, 2020
9:00-10:30 am, via Zoom
Minutes

In attendance: Vandana Kohli, Phil Hampton, Chanda Cunningham-Spence, Stephanie Guerrero, Mary Adler, Liz King, Christina Smith, Frank Barajas, Sean Anderson, Kimmy Kee-Rose, Andrea Grove, Geoff Buhl, Erich Fleming, Dana Baker, Colleen Delaney, Jose Alamillo, Sonsoles deLacalle, Michael Soltys, Blake Gillespie, Antonio Jiménez Jiménez

Guests: Marianne McGrath, Jaime Lapeyre, Lydia Dixon, Amira Ibrahim, Ron Berkowsky, Theresa Avila, Hugo Tapia, Dan Reineman, Rudi Von May, Hyunsook Youn

Absent: Lynette Landry

I. Welcome and Introductions

Dean Kohli welcomed the junior faculty guests to the meeting and thanked them for attending. The group went through introductions, and the Dean spoke to the goal of inviting junior tenure-track faculty to attend in hopes of providing a more holistic sense of the Chairs' role and a glimpse into the kinds of topics discussed at Chairs' meetings.

II. Information Items

Working from Campus & Return to Research: Spring 2021 Requests

AD Hampton reminded Chairs of the upcoming deadline of Friday, November 6 to submit faculty requests for access to campus in the spring semester. Two types of requests are available: 1) faculty requesting to work from campus in their designated office space, and/or 2) faculty requesting to conduct research from campus.

Chairs were provided with the request templates for both options, and it was clarified that faculty conducting research with outside collaborators may not bring external parties on to campus. This was an area of concern for Chairs whose work will be paused without the ability to continue work with external colleagues, especially as their study will have a significant impact on state legislature. Dean Kohli stated that she would bring this request to the Spring Planning Taskforce and will provide an update when she learns more.

Volunteers for A&S Taskforces

AD Hampton provided an update on recruitment volunteers who have agreed to serve with him on the following taskforces: Faculty Awards and Spotlight and Research. He has currently secured the following Chairs to work with him on Research: Chairs Soltys, Adler, and de Lacalle; working on the Awards taskforce are Chairs Alamillo and Kee-Rose.

AD Hampton stated that he is still in need of faculty volunteers and will be sending out another request to faculty in the school.

III. Chairs' Items

WASC Accreditation

Chairs expressed concern over the upcoming WASC accreditation especially in light of recently announced changes in upper administration. The Chairs suggested that they would like to have Dr. Perry from the Academic Programs and Planning office attend a future Chairs meeting. The issues Chairs wanted addressed were related to two broad themes: WASC; and curriculum review and approval.

Items to be addressed by Perry:

- Update on curriculum, specifically updates on the processes, delays, current status
- Status of the WASC mid-cycle report – when will this be shared with faculty/Chairs
- What will be needed from the academic programs (assessment, etc.) for the WASC accreditation review and report and how will this be communicated
- What are the concrete plans to involve the university-wide community in the accreditation process
- Elementary explanation/presentation on what is important, of concern
- The process for developing LOIs?
- What is the role of the faculty in the program review process considering that the Continuous Improvement Committee has been inactive
- Are program review reports able to address most of WASC's expectations

Recent Academic Senate Resolutions

Chair Adler shared an update with the group surrounding her recent conversations with Faculty Affairs about the implications of a recently passed Senate Resolution on lecturer peer evaluations. Dr. Grant (AVP of Faculty Affairs) confirmed for Adler that the Senate has approved a resolution which allows faculty to forego peer evaluations if they do not intend to include those evaluations in their evaluation file. Chairs will no longer need to evaluate those faculty who have decided to opt out. Adler confirmed that Faculty Affairs will be keeping a record of who has opted out of evaluations and will inform Chairs accordingly, however, the current timeline of distributing this information is unknown. Chair Gillespie also shared that Chemistry department is discussing an alternative process for conducting peer observations in spring.

IV. Discussion Items

President Beck's Announcement

Dean Kohli checked in with the group to address any questions or concerns they may have surrounding the recent announcement of President Beck's upcoming departure for CSUN. Dean Kohli stated that she will be sending an email to the school in hopes of easing any concerns around the Retention, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) process considering the change in administration. She also assured Chairs that it is highly unusual for a Provost to overturn a Dean's recommendation and hopes that they will offer this assurance of continuity to their faculty as well. One Chair also spoke to the need of highlighting the importance of letters Chairs write on behalf of their faculty, as these may carry a heavier weight than usual given the current circumstances. The group agreed that it would be best for Dean Kohli to work on drafting a letter to all faculty in collaboration with the two other Deans and the faculty members on the University Retention, Tenure, Promotion (URTPC) Committee.