

**Arts & Sciences Chairs Meeting**  
**Tuesday, December 1, 2020**  
**9:00-10:30 am, via Zoom**  
**Minutes**

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

**I. Information Items**

*Spring Enrollments Update*

AD Hampton shared the latest enrollment numbers with Chairs and confirmed that enrollment is flattening and down significantly from the previous year. While there is some optimism that the numbers may increase closer to the start of spring semester, based on current projections it is possible that the school will come in below its annualized FTES target of 4,880. One recommendation shared with Chairs is that if they are facing the need to cancel a low-enrolled section, to consider merging sections or, alternatively, moving students from one section to another provided the sections are asynchronous. AD Hampton also provided an overview of a recently pulled report of low-enrolled sections and stated that he welcomes a chance to review this data with Chairs individually and to consider best strategies in their spring schedule moving forward.

Conversation opened up to several Chairs who spoke to their concerns surrounding the high number of low-enrolled sections and would like to know how other program enrollments are doing. One Chair raised a question about whether there may be a lower threshold for making enrollment due to these peculiar circumstances. Dean Kohli stated that she would report back to Chairs regarding flexibility with enrollment after communicating with upper administration. She also reminded Chairs that if they can make a strong case for keeping open class sections that are on the threshold of making the minimum enrollment, these may be granted exceptions, but advised that they keep in mind the potential impacts of low-enrolled sections on their program FTES, SFR and the subsequent resource allocations that these targets determine.

Other Chairs spoke to being in a similar situation with at least ten sections that may not make enrollments Chairs expressed surprise at some courses that in the past have almost always been guaranteed to fill by this point, and in some programs the enrollment numbers in upper division elective offerings look bleak even after having surveyed students regarding their scheduling and online modality preferences. Chairs also shared their concerns in being able to identify the gap in student enrollment and whether the university is losing returning students or if the overarching issue is lower numbers of students having been admitted.

Dean Kohli asked the group to consider whether the unique and unprecedented circumstances of the past year may allow us to be hopeful about enrollment patterns picking back up in the next few semesters. Chairs also asked whether other the other schools on campus are facing low enrollments, to which Dean Kohli confirmed that we are seeing this impact university-wide. Chairs raised the important question of how much longer they should wait for additional student

enrollments before making changes to their spring schedule and cutting low-enrolled sections, especially as they would like to inform adjunct faculty as soon as possible regarding their teaching assignments. Dean Kohli asked Chairs to communicate with their faculty a timeline of how long they plan to wait before making cuts to the schedule. Some Chairs also shared their intention to communicate with students prior to making any cancellations to provide them with alternative options and inform them about potential course substitutions for any courses that are major requirements.

Chairs also shared their thoughts surrounding possible factors that are impacting student enrollment, such as the fact that many students are making decisions based on where they reside which was not an issue in previous years. Additionally, Chairs shared their speculation that students may be waiting to receive their final Fall 2020 grades prior to registering for spring; optimism was expressed that students will decide to re-enroll once the Credit/No-Credit resolution is passed by the Academic Senate.

A strategy for encouraging future enrollments was shared by one Chair, who previously wrote to students that had withdrawn within the six weeks prior to offer assistance and remind them that registration would be upcoming for the following semester. Another way to promote increased FTES is to open up any asynchronous courses to be offered through CSU Online, in which students outside of CI are able to take courses that count program FTES. AD Hampton agreed to re-distribute to Chairs instructions on how to do so.

Dean Kohli assured that in the previous two academic years, A&S as a whole has successfully demonstrated a pattern of effectively managing its resources and that the dips in enrollment are not a result of issues at the department level. She encouraged them to focus on addressing the short-term issues of this semester while also taking advantage of the enrollment data. While anticipated budget cuts for this year are projected to be minimal in the division of Academic Affairs, there are some concerns beyond this academic year if budget deficits increase in conjunction with continued drops in university-wide enrollment, which at that point would be addressed by upper administration on campus.

Chairs asked if there is a method for monitoring class enrollment other than examining each individual section through CI Records, to which Dean Kohli stated that instructions on how to run more user-friendly enrollment reports will be distributed by Manager of Academic Resources (MAR) Cunningham-Spence.

### *Transfer Enrollments*

Chairs shared their recent experience with transfer enrollment and an issue regarding students having been incorrectly advised regarding which courses they should register for within their major. Chairs expressed that they felt it would have been more beneficial for students to meet with faculty advisors prior to registration, which allows for more consultation and understanding of major requirements. Multiple Chairs expressed having experienced this issue with the timeline and structure of Transfer Orientation, to which Dean Kohli asked if the group would prefer a formal memorandum be drafted which captures this feedback/concerns and states Chairs' strong preference for transfer students to receive faculty advising prior to their registration appointment.

Chairs agreed, and Dean Kohli stated that she will capture the various feedback and concerns expressed and forward the information to Academic Advising on the group's behalf.

### **III. Discussion Items**

#### *Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Council (AABAC) Update*

Chair Anderson shared that there are no major updates to report at this time.

### **II. Chairs' Items**

#### *Poll on Faculty Teaching Assignments*

Chair Barajas sought input from fellow Chairs regarding their decision-making for allocating teaching assignments, especially in light of unpredictable enrollment patterns being faced.

Chairs spoke to the importance of rotating teaching assignments to balance out the workload among faculty and ensure that student/major needs are being met. Another aspect of concern raised was the need for tenure-track faculty to be flexible in the courses they are willing to teach, rather than the same individuals taking on the less-desired courses each semester. Dean Kohli encouraged Chairs that her support is on record in encouraging the message that courses do not belong to individual faculty and that one way to encourage equitable workloads is by creating a two-year rotating schedule that alleviates potential concerns over teaching preferences. Another strategy shared for balancing teaching assignments is to incentivize faculty who agree to teach a larger section with the assignment of a smaller section which makes workload more equitable.