

**Arts & Sciences Chairs Meeting**  
**Tuesday, March 3, 2020**  
**9:00-10:30 am, Madera 2381**  
**Minutes**

In attendance: Vandana Kohli, Cindy Wyels, Stephanie Guerrero, Sean Kelly, Mary Adler, Liz King, Christina Smith, Frank Barajas, Kiki Patsch, Beatrice de Oca, Antonio Jiménez Jiménez, Lynette Landry, Dennis Downey, Michael Soltys, Ivona Grzegorzczuk, Nancy Mozingo, Sonsoles de Lacalle, Jose Alamillo, Geoff Buhl, Toni Deboni, Ernesto Guerrero, Richard Yao

Absent: Blake Gillespie

**I. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Meeting minutes approved from February 18, 2020.

**II. Information Items**

*Coronavirus Memo*

Kohli referenced the campus memorandum that was sent regarding the Coronavirus and its potential impacts on faculty or student travel. In order to protect people's safety, travel documents need to follow the protocol that has been set in place for both domestic and international trips. This process involves receiving approval from the Provost's office and Risk Management in BFA. Kohli reminded Chairs that this is a dynamic situation and the goal is not to prevent anyone's travel but to ensure safety and minimize travel to high-risk areas.

Chairs asked for guidance about how the situation should be handled going forward in regards to the email sent by Jill Leafstedt about serving as an ambassador for online/bended classes if needed. Chairs emphasized the time needed in order to convert courses to online as well as the issue of students who may not have access to technology they need in order to participate virtually.

Kohli responded that the university is working on its Communicable Disease Plan and must keep in mind WASC requirements regarding the number of student credit hours. In past situations, the university was able to receive an exception for the reduced amount of credit hours due to wildfires in the community at the time. Chairs also asked if a faculty representative could be included on the disease plan taskforce, to which Kohli replied that Jason Miller is a member.

An additional question was raised about how to handle students in class who appear to be symptomatic. A Chair suggested that faculty adjust any attendance requirements that may be included in their syllabi, so that students are not forced to attend class sick.

Regarding 392 travel courses, Chairs again expressed concern about the unresolved issue of minimum enrollment and classes being cancelled due to students dropping out on the day of (or close to) the trip. Kohli responded that an exception can be made if the course originally had 15 students enrolled and something unexpected happens. Chairs responded that student

cancellations happen often, and another part of the issue is that students who cancel can request a refund that the campus must provide. As such, two factors are at play – minimum enrollment requirements as well as the timeline of decision-making/payments issued well in advance. Additional Chairs expressed that the main issue seems to be that students can drop the course at all; implementing a nonrefundable travel fee was a suggestion made that would potentially alleviate the issue.

Kohli asked Chairs if the group could develop parameters that can be collectively agreed upon. Chairs expressed frustration about having made attempts to meet with administration regarding this issue with no success; Kohli emphasized the need to develop concrete suggestions that can then be presented through the Deans. She asked the group if they would be comfortable with Dr. Jimenez and Dr. Grove working to develop a proposal for how to improve the 392 process; the Chairs agreed that they could then provide any feedback/suggestions about the proposal before Kohli presents it to the Provost and Dean of Extended University.

#### *Academic Advising Presentation*

Dean of Students Toni Deboni, Director of Academic Advising Ernesto Guerrero, and VP for Student Affairs Richard Yao provided a brief outline of the new Advising model that has been developed after the transition of Advising into DSA. Toni emphasized the importance of keeping in regular communication with A&S in order for this new model to be successful and collaborative. Ernesto asked Chairs to consider how Advising can support the work their programs are already doing by tailoring services specific to their needs/desire of Advising's involvement. Dr. Yao also clarified the delays in hiring that DSA experienced in finding additional advisors; their office is now fully staffed and the hope is that by fall semester these transitions can be implemented.

Ernesto spoke to the research in best practices for advising that his office has relied upon in making these changes. He clarified the separation between faculty and professional advising, emphasizing the intellectual, career, graduate school, research and curricular advising that faculty already provide and have the most expertise to do so. To the extent that each program desires, Ernesto is ready to have his office assist in receiving and routing students to programs based on their advising needs. Six advisors have been designated specifically to the school of Arts and Sciences, with 3 advisors for STEM/Nursing and 3 for social sciences, humanities, and arts. This allocation of advisors designates a ratio of approximately 6 advisors to 800 students. Lead advisors have been assigned to each group, and Ernesto's hope is to have Leads attend a monthly meeting with programs to keep apprised of their curriculum and any other changes.

Ernesto reiterated the goal of tailoring advising to meet the needs of each program; Sociology and Chicana/o Studies have seen huge success so far in the workshops they have put together with Advising. He also mentioned that his office is able to assist with monitoring students with below a 2.0 GPA within their major and can provide this data to programs that are interested.

Chairs asked about the benefits of having more than one faculty advisor within a program and whether it is more helpful for students. Ernesto responded that it is dependent on the major; smaller programs such as Chemistry have had success and larger majors such as Health Science have seen improved student retention with all faculty advising. Ernesto mentioned that

Chemistry has also implemented a mandatory advising; to which a Chair asked about the possibility of implementing mandatory advising for a small subset of majors (perhaps in the fall semester of students' senior year). Ernesto replied that this can be arranged simply by running a query; when asked how students are notified about mandatory advising, he stated that students receive an email as well as a hold placed on their registration.

Additional questions were asked by Chairs about whether Advising has been able to collect data on how many students are using degree planners. Dr. Yao stated that in fall 2019, approximately 3,049 students used the degree planner (higher for returning students). He stated that he would like to see these numbers continue to increase with more consistent outreach to students and coordination from all sides (Advising and programs).

#### *End of Year Celebrations*

Chair of Nursing, Dr. Landry, shared an important update for the group about an issue the Nursing program encountered with scheduling their yearly Pinning ceremony. Landry was informed by Conferences & Events that, due to Commencement preparations, all non-commencement large special events have been scheduled to take place before finals week (2 weeks prior to graduation). This decision was made without program consultation and does not work for their student needs and class schedule; Landry wanted to be sure and inform any other Chairs whose special events may also be impacted by this change.

### **III. Discussion Items**

Tabled for the following meeting.