Arts & Sciences Chairs Meeting
September 12, 2023
9:00 – 10:30 am via Zoom
Meeting Notes

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Stacey Anderson, Dana Baker, Raquel Baker, Geoff Buhl, Rainer Buschmann, Heather Castillo, Stephen Clark, LaSonya Davis, Trina Darakjy, Sonsoles de Lacalle, Colleen Delaney, Erich Fleming, Blake Gillespie, Philip Hampton, Alison Harris, Jacob Jenkins, Kimmy Kee Rose, Vandana Kohli, Marianne McGrath, Kiki Patsch, Luis Sanchez, Bryan Swig, Brian Thoms

Absent: Jose Alamillo, Greg Wood

I.   **Information Items**

Facilities update: Dean Kohli announced the two-week closure of Bell Tower West (BTW) due to a flea infestation. President Yao will meet with faculty and staff who have offices in BTW to provide an update.

Winter Intersession: Dean Kohli asked Chairs to submit Winter Intersession four-week courses that will meet Learning Outcomes to LSO Swig with a cc to her.

Field Trips: This topic will be discussed at a future Chairs Meeting.

Spring Schedule: Dean Kohli announced that Spring 2024 schedules are due to the Dean's Office on October 1. She advised Chairs to begin creating schedules that benefit students with attention to class size, student preferences for classes, flexibility in terms of modality, and student learning outcomes.

STEAM Carnival: AD Hampton announced an opportunity for academic programs and student clubs and classes to participate in the STEAM Carnival on Saturday, November 4 from 1:00 – 5:00 PM. He indicated that volunteers from various Arts & Sciences programs and the broader campus needed to create engaging hands-on experiences for the pk-8 attendees. AD Hampton will send an email with a sign-up sheet for Chairs to forward to faculty.

Get Ready for College Event: AD Hampton called for volunteers for a "Get Ready for College" event on Friday, September 15. He noted that Admissions is seeking faculty representatives to have lunch with prospective transfer students from noon – 1:00 PM. AD Hampton will send an email with event details for Chairs to forward to faculty.

TT Lines: Dean Kohli advised Chairs to continue with TT searches unless they receive word from the Dean's Office announcing otherwise. She confirmed that additional conversations on this topic will follow.

Faculty Meetings: Dean Kohli invited Chairs to upcoming focused meetings with faculty groups for open conversations in Madera 2381:

October 10 (11:30 AM – 1:00 PM): Non-Tenure Track Faculty
October 13 (9:00 – 11:30 AM): Senior and Tenured Faculty
October 19 (11:30 AM – 1:00 PM): Probationary Faculty

CV 2030: Dean Kohli announced that the new Collective Vision 2030 (CV 2030) might need to align with the Four Strategic Focal Points - LEAP: Leading through Experiential Academic Programs, LUX: Creating High Quality Learner User Experiences, APEX: Leading the Regional P-20 Educational Ecosystem, and FAST: Supporting Faculty and Scholars and Teachers or any other University approved strategic plan. She indicated that CV 2030 planning will commence once CI's strategic plan is codified. She anticipates the School will begin the planning process in Spring 2024 and release a plan of action and an approved CV 2030 by the end of Spring 2025.

III.   **Discussion Items**

"Culture of Assessment": Dean Kohli asked Chairs to provide a status of programmatic assessment in their departments. A round robin discussion with Anthropology, Art, Biology, Black Studies, Chemistry, Communication, Computer Science, English, Global Languages, Health Science, History, Mathematics, Nursing, Performing Arts, Political Science & Global Studies, Psychology and Sociology ensued. Below are the salient points resulting from this conversation.

- Program learning outcomes should be measurable, doable, and should include the distinct sub fields of the discipline.

- In some fields such as art, assessing student learning outcomes is difficult. More guidance "in difficult to assess" programs will be needed.

- Pieces of the assessment process exist but there is an absence of an extensive network for collecting data at the class level. Although programs review teaching evaluations, and have completed self-studies, actual implementation of formalized assessment is lagging.

- Five PLO with sub-goals seems to be the desired norm that facilitates the development of a curriculum matrix and mapping courses to assessment and learning outcomes. Signature assignments are critical and can be found on many professional organizations' websites. When creating a new program, vigilance is required in demonstrating to the Chancellor's Office that an assessment plan is in place.

- Some programs have standardized tests and assignments, which can be implemented in a few classes that all majors are required to take. The task will be to collect this information in a comprehensive way to develop an overall assessment plan.

- Significant startup support is needed in the beginning to help reimburse the faculty for the extra time required for the development of an assessment plan. Once an assessment culture has been embraced, fewer external resources are required to continue the momentum.

- Some programs have a digitized capstone portfolio that is used to measure student learning outcomes where there are deficiencies, curricular modifications are required.

- Programs are trying to take it to the next step of closing the loop and critically examining whether the data gleaned accurately reflects if students are where the programs want them to be. What is critical to a culture of assessment is engaging and closing the loop activities.

- Some programs are moving in the direction of a competency-based program. It is important to be able to measure learning and how it impacts students and the program. It is critical that the learning outcomes be individually mapped against the course where each learning outcome may be introduced, developed, and matured.

- Some programs are even unsure whether assessment processes exist within their department.

- There is an understanding of the different needs of students and the different types of concerted approaches to measuring educational effectiveness to determine whether students are learning. Assessment must involve the entire faculty and represent agreed upon student learning outcomes.

- Some programs are already committed to a culture of assessment and conduct ongoing evaluation and assessment due to additional accreditation requirements. These departments review syllabi and utilize a teaching evaluation template as a part of their accreditation process. It is important to track what strategies faculty put into place to improve their teaching effectiveness, and gradually move from a teaching-oriented approach to a learner-oriented approach.

- It is important for the chair to lead the assessment process and facilitate a culture of assessment that is committed to student learning outcomes.

- Some departments would like to formally identify an assessment officer within the program to facilitate the development of signature assignments, evaluation rubrics, and signature projects.

- Assessments should never be used in a punitive way.

- Some chairs noted that creating a culture of assessment might prove challenging for the Department Chair. It will test their leadership and their ability to create a collective process that will help departments become student learning focused.

IV. Chairs' Items

CHRS: This topic will be discussed at a future Chairs Meeting.