College of Arts and Sciences Policy Committee Minutes
August 24, 2015

Present: Dale McFadden (chair), Stuart Davis, Julia Fox, Peter Guardino, Vivian Halloran, Scott Michaels, Julie Van Voorhis, Nick Williams

The meeting was called to order at 4:00.

The committee approved a partial FTE transfer request from the Department of Theatre and Contemporary Dance into Comparative Literature.

The CPC discussed the formation of a new Food Institute that will integrate research and instruction in food studies that are carried out in different departments in the College. The CPC plays a procedural role in the approval of this new unit within the College under the policy for Creating, Restructuring, Merging, or Eliminating Faculty units. While the general response to the proposed Food Institute has been positive, College policy requires that faculty involved in affected departments and programs to be given the opportunity to provide formal feedback. In addition, the policy requires formal position statements from the affected units.

The CPC discussed revisions to the policy for the promotion and renewal of contracts for non-tenure track (NTT) faculty with primarily instructional responsibilities (usually lecturers and senior lecturers). It was noted that NTT instructional faculty play different roles in different units, so units should be charged with developing standards that align with College policies, but are consistent with their requirements. The CPC will continue working on this policy in its next meeting.

Executive Dean Larry Singell arrived at 4:45. The CPC questioned Dean Singell about the status of the Food Institute. The CPC told the Dean about its request for faculty input and position statements as required by College policy. The CPC asked if any other committees were reviewing the Food Institute proposal and if the administrative structure of the unit is in line with that of comparable units. The Dean replied that the proposal had been circulated to relevant College committees, such as CUE (Committee for Undergraduate Education). He noted that the administrative structure is larger than that for other units, due to coalescing of different programs in the College.

Dean Singell then presented a report on the College budget for 2015-2016, in which he discussed the circumstances that contributed to the budget crisis at the end of the last fiscal year and how that budget situation was resolved. Contributing factors to the budget shortfall included the two-year tuition freeze mandated by President McRobbie, a decline in student credit hours in the College, and a 4% increase in assessments. This shortfall was
mitigated by a decline in benefit and health care costs, a higher than expected number of retirements, and lower than average pay increases. The College also used cash (money allocated for one-time expenses) for certain expenses and authorized fewer new hires.

Looking forward, the Dean expressed his commitment to the College having a balanced budget and restoring 2% wage increases for faculty and staff. He indicated that if present conditions continue into the future with regard to the rate of decline in student credit hours, the College would need to shrink by 59 faculty members over a five-year period in order to maintain a balanced budget.

He discussed the need to reduce expenses through fewer hires, more limited spousal accommodations and a reduction in the number of student academic appointments for graduate students. Additionally, the College will develop a policy regarding the maximum number of graduate courses per tenure track faculty member with a target of no more than 1 in 3 courses to be taught at the PhD level. The Dean also discussed the importance of linking to campus resources, such as the grand challenges outlined in the campus strategic plan, strategic hiring initiatives, and the new engineering program. The development of programs to increase the appeal of the College to international students is also an area of focused attention. According to the Dean, over the long term the College will need to get smaller and focus more intensively on undergraduate.

The Dean left the meeting at 5:35. The meeting adjourned at 5:40.

Julie Van Voorhis, recorder