College of Arts and Sciences Policy Committee Minutes
February 1, 2016

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

The meeting was called to order at 4:00. The minutes from January 25 were discussed and approved.

One partial FTE transfer from The Kinsey Institute to the Department of Gender Studies was discussed and approved.

The three department chairs who participated on the College Fiscal Sustainability Task Force joined the meeting at 4:30 to share their observations about the experience. The three chairs are Bill Hetrick (Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, representing N&M), Eric Sandweiss (Department of History, representing S&H), and Winni Sullivan (Department of Religious Studies, representing A&H).

The discussion began with a brief overview of the task force meetings, which consisted primarily of administrators from other schools on campus sharing ideas for increasing enrollments, cutting costs and other potential strategies for resolving the College’s budget shortfall. The chairs noted that in the meetings Executive Dean Larry Singell spent a significant amount of time explaining the complexities of the College to non-College task force members, since the College is different in both size and scope from the professional schools.

The chairs then discussed the report provided by the task force, which they characterized as a list of options, not a prescription for a solution. It is the College’s charge to develop a plan that responds to these ideas, as appropriate to its situation. The chairs noted that not all the suggestions are appropriate for the College.

The CPC and the chairs then discussed the College’s response to the task force report. The chairs stated that their work on the task force was complete, and they did not have a role in drafting the response. The chairs and the CPC advocate a communicative process that includes faculty. It was suggested working groups organized by discipline (A&H, N&M, and S&H) might be useful, since each of these areas has a different set of concerns and would approach the problems in different ways. One chair noted that it is important that departments in the College not to compete with one another, which could be an unintended consequence of trying to increase enrollments.

The chairs left the meeting at 5:00 and Executive Dean Larry Singell joined the meeting at that time. The CPC briefly reported on their meeting with the chairs on the task force, and attention
was then turned to the response to the task force report. The timeline for submission of the report was discussed, as was the nature of the response. Dean Singell noted that all of the suggestions presented by the task force would require a response, even if in the negative. Implementation of all actions could take up to seven years. The Dean also noted that even if all the recommendations were accepted, there still might be a shortfall, and negotiations with the Provost would be required to close the gap.

The CPC asked the Dean how the work of drafting the response was allocated. Dean Singell responded that the Associate Deans or Senior Dean’s Office Professional Staff with the most experience in an area were assigned specific aspects of the report, which would then be combined into a single response. While the Dean agreed that faculty involvement is important, the short timeframe for the response requires the initial draft response will come from the administration. The Dean expects to share the draft with the CPC and the three chairs for comments and revision in early February; the response document is due to the Provost at the end of March.

Julie Van Voorhis, recorder