

CLA Senate Meeting Minutes: Monday, April 9, 2018

1. Approval of Agenda

Agenda approved unanimously at 2:30 PM

2. Approval of the minutes from Feb 2018

Approved unanimously at 2:31 PM

3. Dean's Report

Dean addresses Mt. Ida merger with UMass Amherst. He says it is unclear whether it is the central UMass entity taking on the debt or whether it is UMass Amherst. He says Amherst needs to free up beds, but that UMass Boston needs residence halls too. UMB donors are outraged. The Dean emphasizes that we need to get more info and create a formal response. Dean acknowledges that there is a lot of legitimate outrage on campus and said the merger raises a lot of questions about what side deal was going on with Amherst and how UMB is being treated. He states that "we want to make a statement and not treat this as a fait accompli." He adds that another question raised is whether they really going to have 1000 interns here in Boston, or whether this is just a first step to having an urban campus in the Boston area.

Moderator says we should benefit from the Mt. Ida resources and states that the lack of transparency is shocking and unacceptable. The Dean questioned why the Mt. Ida campus isn't this being considered as facility for nursing. He is not sure Barry Mills has answers and stated that the "the point is that there has been no official notice about any notice of this."

Senator says that Chancellor needs to show us that he is not out of the door. The Dean states he is in agreement.

The Dean states that we have not received official approval for budget, but no reason for concern.

Dean addresses new tenure rules for teaching evaluations. The previous Provost formed committee to address lack of uniformity on campus concerning teaching evaluations, and it was decided at the Provost's level that they wanted to have at least two questions that would be uniform. In many cases the 1-5 scales had to be reversed because of opposite scoring systems. One issue is that some departments report means and averages, while others do not. The Dean acknowledged that all studies show if you rely on numbers solely, women professors are hurt by that. Despite this, the Provost has said she would like a comprehensive numerical table for all faculty, to be ranked according to their teaching scores. She has, with very late notice, held up a couple tenure cases temporarily but then realized that she couldn't put this in place immediately. She wants to have to questions that use "means" to compare professors within departments, and she wants to add this workload and responsibility to each department's DPC. When prompted with concern and skepticism from numerous senators on the issue, the Dean states that these numbers would only be used in tenure cases and that they would be used in context of all

the other aspects of a faculty member's teaching portfolio. He states that the FSU may try to override based on the red book, but states that he was not convinced that would succeed.

Senator points out that this is a comparison of colleagues, unnecessary to the tenure process, and that several aspects of the Dean's description of the purpose and method in which this data would be used were very contradictory. The senator states that it is not necessary to have comparative data within a department to see if a faculty member's numbers match the qualitative data collected in teaching evaluations and other sources.

A senator states that not all departments have an adequate system in place to rank faculty in any meaningful or fair way. Dean says most departments already do and have such lists.

Senator suggests that creating such lists would create animosity and would negatively change departmental cultures. Another senator suggests that the culture wouldn't change if only members of DPC knew the numbers. Another senator responds to this by stating that some departments include all tenure-track faculty on the DPC. The Moderator points out that introducing the ranking system could be corrosive and demoralizing.

Senator states that the FSU is adamant about upholding the Redbook, which assures that departments (DPCs) have final say over faculty evaluations.

Senator states that DPCs would need to create a very subtle, sophisticated, and complex tool that accounts for numerous factors including but not limited to course load, mentoring, advising, elective versus required courses, difficulty (lower level versus upper level courses), the number of course preps a faculty member has, whether they are teaching brand new courses and how many, whether they are also teaching uncompensated practicums and/or independent studies, advising and mentoring workload, quality of syllabi, etc. Another senator adds that one would also have to take into account a faculty member's experience/years in dept. Another senator adds that one would also need to take into consideration whether a faculty had courses cancelled and are teaching courses not in their field or for which they had no time to prepare.

Senator states that the numbers are so psychologically powerful that even if you write pages and pages of context, administrators will focus on the numbers.

Senator asks about the validity of such statistical tools, the Dean acknowledges that there is a danger when you focus on the difference between a 4.4 or a 4.6 etc.

Moderator states that the Provost is asking for these numbers at a strange time, given it is so late in the tenure process. The Dean said she realized right away that this wasn't a good idea and that it can't be implemented in this short timeframe. The Moderator asks if is she committed to it or is she going to be willing to back down on these cases. The Dean says current cases are moving forward but the Provost will be pursuing this mode of review for the future.

Moderator asks about course cancellation deadline for fall 2018 courses. The Provost's Office wants to impose a strict deadline of two weeks prior to the start of classes for course cancellations based on enrollments; the Dean does not enforce this deadline. The Dean said he begins talking to chairs in August regarding cancellations and current enrollment. He states that he lets some departments, such as English, self-manage because they always come out where they need to. He refers to the 10% financial penalty for cancelling a course late but says it is only applies to non-continuing NTTs.

The Dean says there is an active group, formed out of the admissions office, to take care of any holds that prevent students from registering, including the immunization hold. He says we don't control a lot of the holds at the college level. He said students have the perception that they have to pay earlier if they register earlier. The Dean doesn't know if that problem has been fully resolved. There is currently a surge in enrollment, and he is trying to set it up "dummy sections" now that students can't see but which can be opened up if needed. He states that this is what we do for highly enrolled courses. The Provost's office is worried whether we are planning right for fall given the apparent surge in enrollment. He states that we have the whole summer to prepare and is trying to have all first-year orientation sessions in June. He says Saturday's early admission session was really big, and believes that the residence hall is part of the draw, and that that is very appealing. It has gotten a lot of out-of-state student interest and is generating revenue.
Dean's Report, end: 3:13 PM

4. Moderator's Report

Everyone should have received an email about service on Senate and Senate committees. The Moderator would like to have all responses by May 1. Please email her or Louise if any questions about service. She stated that we will be dealing today with new courses, course changes, but nothing from MHSP.

Moderator's report, end: 3:15 PM

5. Motion from the Academic Affairs Committee to approve the following NEW courses:

*AFRSTY 142: Approved unanimously

*ART 208

*ART 315

*ART 235: Approved unanimously as a block

*CLSICS 416L

A senator flagged no pre-requisite for this course.

Approved unanimously.

*COMM 315: Approved unanimously

*ENGL 451: Approved unanimously

*FREN 310

*FREN 312: Approved unanimously as a block.

*JAP 222: Approved with 1 abstention.

*MLLC 480: Approved unanimously.

*POLISCI 435: A senator noted that this course has ample pre-requisites. Approved unanimously.

*RELSTY 309: A senator inquired as to why the rationale for the course says it builds on other courses and especially since the rationale states that the course would become the capstone (if religious studies becomes a major). A senator in the Classics and Religious studies department seemed unaware of the rationale but stated that a discussion of capstones may be in order and that the course provides some fundamental basis for taking other courses. Moderator suggested removing the line at the end regarding the capstone. Unanimously approved.

Discussion of new course approvals ended 3:32 PM

6) Motion from the Academic Affairs Committee to approve the following changes to existing courses:

The Moderator stated that several courses with additions of cross-listings were not included in the agenda.

ART 250

ART 315

ART 317

ART 375 :Approved unanimously as a block.

ENGL 124: Lengthy discussion of the unwieldy discussion of diversity in the proposed new description. Discussion ensues about the danger of the Gen/Ed Diversity committee undermining faculty autonomy re faculty council directive.

Senator notes that many courses we teach are inherently diverse. The need to add such appellations also pre-supposes that any course without “across cultures” or the like in the title is only about dead white men and is not adequately diverse.

Moderator proposes to write a formal response to the Gen Ed committee/faculty council that indicates that we are not going to pass courses with these kinds of lengthy, overly-specific course descriptions that are off-putting and confusing to students.

The Moderator's proposal for the SEC to write response to the Faculty Council was approved unanimously.

ENGL 354: Approved unanimously.

7) Ad-hoc Curricular Concerns Committee: Senator notes committee is gathering information from registrar so that we have more data on how pre-requisites have affected cancellation/enrollment. Will report back at next meeting.

8) Course Overlap Addendum to One Form

There was discussion of the draft circulated by the Moderator. A Senator said the prefatory remarks contained in the draft would calm fears that we are penalizing faculty. A Senator suggested flipping the order of the two paragraphs to further reinforce the reason behind the draft. A Senator asked if this form will be required. The Moderator said this would be recommended and that we could do a pilot year or eventually have AAC make this part of their charge.

The Moderator asked senators to bring this form to their departments and see if there are recommendations and/or resistance.

Motion to adjourn, approved unanimously 3:57 PM

