CAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2013
3:30 p.m., Arts & Sciences, Room 122

In Attendance: Elise Andaya, Marlene Belfort, Bret Benjamin, Ariel Caticha, Sheila Curran Bernard, Fan Pen Chen, Nicholas Creary, Joanna Dreby (Recorder), Michael Ford, Lisa Fuller, Robert Gluck, Fernando Leiva, Matthew Matsaganis, Jim Mower, Karin Reinhold, Maksim Royzen, Julio Torres, Edelgard Wulfert, Baris Yoruk.

Not in attendance: Liming Zhou.

1. Approval of Minutes from 5/08/13 Council Meeting

Minutes from the 5-08-2013 meeting were approved.

2. Chair’s Report

Introductions:

The new and continuing council members introduced themselves.

Faculty Council Primer:

The chair, Jim Mower, explained the role of the CAS Faculty Council. The group’s main role is in an advisory capacity to the Dean. This work of the CAS Council is outlined in the CAS by-laws. Traditionally, the faculty council has also drafted letters to the administration. There are six standing committees of the CAS Council.

The Academic Planning Committee advises the Dean on long-range academic policy and recently has been responsible for making travel award recommendations.

The Academic Programs Committee provides the Dean with recommendations on course and program changes, reviewing the course action forms submitted by different departments. Although in the past the work has been at times onerous, much of the work is now done on-line and the Council has worked to streamline these processes to make it more manageable.

The Academic Support Committee works with the library on acquisitions. Recently the committee has supported the efforts of the Academic Programs Committee.

The Faculty Development Committee provides advice and consultation to the Dean on issues affecting faculty development. This involves reviewing and making recommendations for FRAP awards.

The Nominating Committee recommends appointments to standing committees.

The Tenure and Promotion Committee reviews all recommendations from Departments for promotion and/or continuing appointment and acts on them.
Announcements:

1. This year quite a number of the councilors are Assistant Professors and therefore cannot chair and or convene the subcommittees of the Council. Although non-councilors might be able to step in, the by-laws do not allow for non-councilors to chair these committees. This is something that the Council will need to take up this year.

2. The Faculty Council and the University Senate are two governing bodies that work together. As a legislative body, the Senate has the right to pass legislation that affects the university curriculum. So if a new program is suggested, the Senate must approve of it. For all administrative decisions, the Senate only acts in an advisory capacity to the President. CAS has 21 members of the university senate. At times one or two departments are not represented, but efforts are made to ensure that departments are represented. At times there is an at-large member who is elected to the Senate. The ballots will be out soon.

3. Senate Report

The Senate met in May. At the time there was not a quorum to pass a proposed cap on minors in departments.

4. Dean’s Report

The Dean made a few announcements on university developments.

1) Start-up New York. This is an initiative of the Governor to foster public-private research partnerships between companies and universities in the state of New York. Companies will get a tax break if they locate next to the university and develop research partnerships with university programs. The university is in the process of identifying possible partnerships.

A councilor asked if they have any plan to connect with venture capitalists. The Dean explained that this may be part of the plan in some cases; it varies on a case-by-case basis.

2) Online teaching and learning initiative. The Provost and her staff presented about online education at the chairs’ retreat. The university currently seeks to identify faculty and departments interested in offering online courses or entire programs or parts of programs that can be offered online. A task force of faculty members will continue to examine possibilities.

A councilor reported that she participated as instructor of record in a research project conducted by another university comparing the effectiveness of providing a statistics course online versus in person. The project found no significant differences in terms of student learning outcomes.

Online instruction is an emerging trend, also for SUNY. The Chancellor spearheads an initiative, Open SUNY, by which eventually 25+ percent of courses across the SUNY system will be offered online over the next 5 years for learners system-wide. At UAlbany, many courses and several graduate programs are offered online. As this trend continues, interested CAS faculty will develop more online courses to participate in Open SUNY, particularly in regards to Gen Ed (CAS provides 90 percent of the University’s general education instruction).
3) **CAS strategic planning initiative.** Chairs are currently assembling data-based information on their departments and develop mini strategic plans. The individual proposals will provide the basis for a CAS strategic plan. The council will be involved in this process and provide input to help suggest future directions for the College.

A councilor suggested that it may be difficult for departments to develop strategic plans, and for CAS to do so, without knowing what the vision and priorities of President Jones are for Arts & Sciences.

The Dean reported that the President visited both the Dean for a briefing as well as the Chairs Council. He understands the important contributions of CAS to the University’s instructional and research program and has publically expressed support for CAS.

4) **Hiring.** CAS hired 25 new faculty members this year, 16 of which were funded via the 2020 mechanism. Last year, the CAS council evaluated and ranked the 2020 proposals, and a number of these proposals were successful, as is evident from the significant number of lines allocated to CAS. All funded proposals met one of both of the University’s priorities for the 2020 goal, i.e., attracting new students and/or increasing external funding. These goals will also be priorities for future hiring.

A councilor asked about the Research Foundation’s structural deficit and how it impacts us.

The Dean explained that any deficit reduces the University’s investment power. The more external grants faculty generate, the better. Of special interest are federal grants with a full overhead rate because grants with little or no overhead adversely affect us since the SUNY RF share is calculated over total, not direct cost, but paid for by the University’s indirect cost share. The Dean also explained that of the indirect cost coming to the University, the generating entity receives 10%; 2% stay with the Dean and 8% go to the department.

5) **CAS’s 20th anniversary.** CAS was founded in 1993. The Dean asked CAS faculty council members to participate in a committee that generates ideas for a modest celebration in the spring semester.

6) **Inaugural activities** – The Dean invited council members to participate in at least some of the many events that take place during the inaugural week leading up to the President’s installation and to bring along friends and colleagues.

**5. Committee Reports**

- **Nominating:** Conducted nominations for the at-large councilors.
- **Tenure and Promotion:** None.
- **Faculty Development:** None.
- **Academic Planning:** None.
- **Academic Programs:** None.
- **Academic Support:** None.

The Chair asks that each committee send to him via email a report of the activities for the past month before the next meeting.
6. Old Business
NONE

7. New Business
NONE

The meeting adjourned at 4:40.

Minutes submitted by Joanna Dreby