CAS Faculty Council Meeting Minutes  
November 20, 2013  
3:30 p.m., Arts & Sciences, Room 122

In Attendance: Marlene Belfort, Bret Benjamin, Sheila Curran Bernard, Ariel Caticha, Joanna Dreby, Michael Ford, Robert Gluck, Colin Henck, Jim Mower, Karin Reinhold, Julio Torres, Michael Werner, Edelgard Wulfert, Baris Yoruk, Liming Zhou

Not in attendance: Elise Andaya, Fan Pen Chen, Nicholas Creary, Fernando Leiva, Matthew Matsaganis, Maksim Royzen

1. Approval of Minutes from 10/9/13 Council Meeting

Minutes from the 10-09-2013 meeting were approved.

2. Chair’s Report

Jim Mower reported that there was no Chair’s Council meeting last week. However, at the Chair’s Council Meeting on Diversity the previous week, there was much conversation on ‘inclusive excellence,’ definitions of diversity and behaviors on campus that lead to inclusiveness or exclusiveness.

Jim Mower also made the following announcements:

1) Department, faculty and/or student highlights for December Senate Meeting due 11/25/13 (to Jay Oddi at joddi@albany.edu)

2) Full CAS Faculty Meeting is 12/4/13 from 3-5:00 p.m., Assembly Hall

3) Course Action Forms and Curricular Proposals are due no later than 2/28/14. Please submit program related proposals before the last day of classes in the fall semester (12/10/13). Bear in mind scheduling registration dates when specifying the effective semester for proposals. E-mail proposals to Cindy Endres at cendres@albany.edu.

4) Intersession Energy Savings Initiative (Limited Operations Period 12/20/13-1/1/14; Energy Conservation Period 1/2/14-1/16/14)

5) Thank you to all who participated in the October 19 Open House for Prospective Students.

6) Commencement is December 8, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. in the SEFCU Arena. Marching faculty should register by clicking the "Commencement Participation Faculty Sign-up" button in the middle of the page at http://www.albany.edu/commencement/faculty.php. Registration through the website is necessary and you will receive updates via email on assembly time, location, and other details the week prior to Commencement. Please also let your commencement coordinator/assistant to chair/department secretary know of your participation. Further information is available at: http://www.albany.edu/commencement/

3. Senate Report
Karin Reinhold reported that the meeting was short and there is nothing new to report.

However, at the previous meeting there was a proposal to dissolve the committee CAFFECoR (a committee that deals with issues of academic freedom) because the committee has not done work for years. The vote to dissolve the committee needed to be passed by 2/3 vote and ultimately it was not passed. The committee stands.

4. Dean’s Report

Dean Edelgard Wulfert reported the following:

1) The Chairs meeting last week was cancelled due to the meeting of the chairs with the diversity consultant, Jay Goosby, the previous week. That meeting was dedicated to developing specific action steps to advance the agenda of diversity and inclusion.

2) At the Deans Council Meeting the Provost announced that the President, with input from the Senate, formed a committee that will work on the logistics of an amicable separation of UAlbany and CNSE.

3) The Drescher Award (pre-tenure research leave for women and minorities) has been re-instanted in the new labor contract. An announcement will appear shortly about the award.

A councilor clarified that the deadline for a Drescher award granted in the spring is December 2nd. The award will be back in full for fall 2014. Individual development awards (for conferences and research) will also be available later this year. The Drescher is a SUNY system-wide award, whereas the individual development award is a campus initiative.

A councilor asked about the establishment of the Confucius Institute funded in part by the Chinese government and concerns about possible infringements on academic freedom and freedom of expression.

The Dean clarified that the C.I. is an academic center housed in CAS; the initiative will include faculty and student exchanges. The Chinese government will have no input regarding the Institute’s academic pursuits; the Institute Director is a UAlbany faculty member and UAlbany. The creation of the Institute has been vetted by the Faculty Senate’s Council on Research.

5. Committee Reports

Nominating (from Karin Reinheld):

Nothing new to report.

Tenure and Promotion (from Ariel Caticha):

Ariel Caticha is the new chair of the committee. The T&P Committee has been busy. They have the following cases to review this academic year: 11 Mandatory Fall Cases (we will have met on 7 of them by the end of the semester; have met on 3 thus far), 1 Early Case, 2 Promotion to Full Cases, and 1 Mandatory Spring Case. The committee currently has 12 faculty members, however we will lose one in the spring as she is taking on the role of interim chair (and Chairs are not allowed to serve).
Faculty Development (from Liming Zhou):

The Faculty Development Committee finished reviewing 15 FRAP-A proposals last month.

Academic Planning (from Nick Creary):

The committee will be meeting soon to review the CAS Travel Grants shortly. The committee anticipates around the same number to review as last year (around 70 applications).

Academic Programs (from Marlene Belfort):

A light stream of applications has come through.

Academic Support (Fan Pen Chen):

Have no business to report as of yet. Academic support offers to help academic programs and can do so when advised.

6. Old Business

1) Kathy Gersowitz from the Dean’s office spoke on Course Action Forms for course proposals with General Education content.

   - By December 1st competency plans are due from the individual majors. All the necessary documents can be found on the CAS website.
   - The Academic Programs Committee (APC) of the CAS Council will review Course Action forms associated with the competency plans. However, APC does not need to look over the material if there are no changes to the course content; in this case the plan will go right to the UAC to ensure that it meets the new general education requirements.
   - At this point, they expect a light workload as it appears that most departments will be able to meet competency plans with existing course content. In this case, the APC might not have a lot of work associated with the new competency plans.
   - APC will continue to review all newly developed courses, however, associated with the new competency plans. APC should forward to UAC any proposals that do not have a course action form attached. APC will still need to see and approve any new courses.
   - Of course, there may be some borderline cases. In this event, UAC and APC can consult.
   - Marlene Belfort asked for those plans with Course Action forms to be flagged to ease the process.

A Councilor asked what happens if a competency plan is denied. Kathy Gersowitz answered that the whole plan would go back to the department. In other words, the course action form will not go ahead if the general education competency is not met.

A Councilor asked whether if while reviewing the proposals there appears to be a red flag in terms of the general education competencies, the committee should flag it. Kathy Gersowitz requested that they do so.
A Councilor asked whether or not discussion has come up about the tensions of the timeline of the completion of general education courses. In the old system, students generally meet general education requirements during the first two years, however changes that push requirements into the majors makes it unlikely that students will meet their general education competencies in the first two years. Kathy Gersowitz suggested that this may need to come up in conversation with Leslie Halpern, Associate Dean of Gen Ed.

2) Kathy Gersowitz addressed the restraints of current by-laws

- From the administrative perspective there has been some talk about revising the by-laws since they are from 2005.
- The tension over filling the committees is noted, since non-councilors are prohibited from being chairs of committees and so many assistant professors are CAS councilors.
- Kathy Gersowitz is not aware of any reason for this restriction.
- Tenure and promotion aside, Kathy Gersowitz does not see any problem with appointing someone as a councilor-at-large for a short time period to serve as a chair. This may be one way of dealing with the issue without revising the by-laws.
- Modifying bylaws can be tricky.

A Councilor asked if staffing issues have been resolved this year. They have been.

A Councilor asked if there are any patterns to the rotations. There are not at this time since Councilors typically come on and off all the time.

A Councilor asked how the bylaws are sanctioned. Any charter changes must be done via a vote of the entire CAS voting faculty. A two-thirds majority vote becomes of recommendation to the Dean.

The Dean’s office currently does not have time to invest into revising the by-laws this year, but supports looking over this issue during the summer of 2014 with a group of past and future chairs.

A Councilor recommended tabling the conversation until the summer when this committee can be formed.

7. New Business

1) The UUP Albany chapter will host a forum on Monday December 2 from 4:30 – 6:30 PM to discuss Open SUNY and on-line education. The issue of on-line education came up during the past CAS council meeting as a concern of the faculty.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Minutes submitted by Joanna Dreby