

University of Wisconsin-Madison
College of Letters and Science
Office of the Dean
105 South Hall

**LETTERS AND SCIENCE
FACULTY SENATE**

MEETING NOTES

April 12, 2021

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COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

12 April 2021

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Remote via Zoom

Present: Dean Eric Wilcots, Elaine M. Klein, Miranda Weber, Rebekah Pare, Tina Nielsen, Lori DeMeuse, Greg Downey, Kimbrin Cornelius, Carol Lee, Kristin Eschenfelder, Kenneth Cameron, Shirin Malekpour, Howard Schweber, Allyson Bennett, Almita Miranda, Ben Parrell, Chontel Syfox, Johannes Wallmann, Kathryn Sanchez, Almita Miranda, Howard Schweber, Daniel Spaulding, Susan Zaeske, Lucas Graves, Dmitry Mukhin, Catalina Toma, and Timothy Yu.

1. Welcome

Dean Wilcots welcomed the L&S Faculty Senate.

2. Approval of notes of the L&S Faculty Senate meeting held 9 November 2020

Notes of the November 2020 meeting were approved.

3. L&S SuccessWorks Presentation: Communication with Students about their Major

Dean Wilcots introduced Associate Dean and Executive Director of SuccessWorks, Rebekah Pare. RP explained the goals of SuccessWorks and described how this student support unit helps students represent to others the transferrable skills they have obtained from their majors. SuccessWorks is currently working on a “*What can I do with X major*” project. So far, they’ve created flyers for majors in English, Biology, Sociology, and Statistics. The overall goal is to complete one of these sheets for each major offered by L&S departments and programs. RP noted that students, faculty, advisors, and employers are well-aware of the extraordinary circumstances presented by the global pandemic, and that this includes economic uncertainty, concerns about the job market, and about decisions related to post-graduation plans. Successworks is monitoring this and will continue to keep the college community informed.

4. For Discussion: Request for Authorization to Implement a new L&S degree and major: Bachelor of Liberal Studies and Major in Applied Social Science

The draft “Request for Authorization to Implement a New Degree and Major” was presented as L&S Faculty Document #315. Associate Dean and Professor of Journalism Greg Downey, and Associate Dean for Academic Planning Elaine Klein have been leading the working group and faculty committee that prepared these proposals. EMK noted that this initiative is part of a larger campus project, and L&S is joining SoHE and the Wisconsin School of Business in serving new undergraduate audiences. The proposed L&S degree and major are intended to meet the needs of a particular group of learners who seek to complete their undergraduate degrees, who

have “some college; no degree”. Market data suggest that there are many thousands of potential students in the upper Midwest who meet these criteria; furthermore, offering an online degree will increase access for students who cannot attend residential, full-time programs like L&S currently offers. This new L&S degree is designed as a Bachelor of Liberal Studies, that will be combined (eventually) with a variety of majors that are designed to be integrative and applied, to leverage the benefit of college-level study of the liberal arts and sciences in ways that will be relevant to whatever these students are engaged in in their everyday lives. The programs will be designed with clear pathways and simple requirements, with an emphasis on how the topics studied in class connect to lives lived.

GD explained that a committee of faculty and staff developed the notice of intent and the more detailed request for authorization to implement the program. The group developed learning outcomes and an overall structure of the degree that includes global and language study, data science, digital communication, etc. All students will meet the UW-Madison General Education Requirements, and complete additional L&S breadth requirements. The program design will better accept transfer credit, and will be adaptable to what individual students bring with them.

EMK explained that the L&S Curriculum Committee and L&S APC enthusiastically recommended approval of the BLS+MASS program. In accordance with the usual process for program approval, consultation across the college and campus is under way. If the program is approved by the University Academic Planning Council, it will go to UW System for comment by other UW campuses, and finally, to Board of Regents for approval. If approved by BoR, it will move on to implementation, with the aspiration that the first group of students will enroll in Fall 2022.

DISCUSSION: Carol Lee asked if the program will seek input on courses that would be useful; EMK responded that feedback is always welcome, and Dean Wilcots explained that in the early phase of the program, development of new majors will be guided by market data and observation of similar programs offered at other institutions, so expansion will be somewhat cautious at first.

Lucas Graves asked what kind of resources are available for departments that want to develop courses for the applied social science major. Dean Wilcots explained that unlike the residential BA/BS, courses will be developed in consultation between the program committee and campus partners; at the time of this meeting, those discussions with a small number of departments/programs for the initial set of offerings was under way. This, again, reflects a cautious approach.

5.Q&A with the Dean

Dean Wilcots provided a variety of updates about the College of Letters & Science.

- The college is seeking resources to support new facilities, including a new building for the School of Computer, Data, and Information Science. The CDIS building will be

located between Brogden and WID. The CDIS building is 100% gift funded, and they are hoping for 2024 completion. The new L&S academic building will host the Department of History, Center for Jewish studies, classrooms, and more.

- In other development news, the “Day of the Badger” raised \$2.7m total, and L&S raised over \$500k from alumni and friends.
- Turning to the pandemic, Dean Wilcots encouraged everyone who can be vaccinated to do so. With the high vaccination rate, campus can begin again to hold events in-person, with Commencement held for students only in Camp Randall. Other activities will remain online: given the success of SOAR online last summer, SOAR will be online again in Summer 2021.
- Projections for the Fall 2021 class are strong, with 7610 students anticipated to enroll in Fall 2021 compared to 7306 in Fall 2020.
- Staffing Announcements: DeVon Wilson is our inaugural Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Jenny Saffran is new faculty Director of the Honors Program! L&S will engage in a new search for a CIO later this year. There is a task force working on this.

Discussion focused on the building updates. Carol Lee asked if the biology building is included in the building updates; Dean Wilcots responded that it will not be part of the plan for this biennium. He added, however, that the college is identifying priorities for next biennial budget, which are likely to include biology and psychology. Daniel Weix asked if the possibility of borrowing authority was a reasonable aspiration for the university, and Dean Wilcots agreed that it would be a useful tool, giving the university greater capacity to address long-term planning as well as to respond to emergency maintenance needs.

There were no further questions or discussion.

The meeting ended at 4:40 p.m.

Submitted by Elaine M. Klein, Secretary