

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE FACULTY SENATE MEETING

3:30 p.m., 20 April 2009

Room 272 Bascom Hall

1. Announcements and Questions. Dean Sandefur led discussion of several items announced as open for conversation.
 - a. **The Madison Initiative for Undergraduates** The MIU is important to L&S, which serves the majority of first and second year undergraduates. Many positions created through the initiative may be allocated to the college. The MIU will also enhance support for advising and need-based aid. The dean encouraged faculty members to share their opinions with the Regents and the public. In discussion, members noted that the current faculty are excellent, and that they, too, should be rewarded for their efforts. Others commented on the important symbolic gesture for the faculty to contribute to student scholarship funds. When the difficulty of talking with students about the initiative was raised, several members offered suggestions for engaging students in conversation about the future of the university.
 - b. **Budget Issues.** The budget situation is still uncertain. Although the proposed budget favors the university, there may be cuts, and deans have been asked develop scenarios that take reductions into account. Also, at the time of this meeting, there was no pay plan. The Dean ended his remarks by observing that the new Chancellor seems to be very supportive of the college. There were no questions.
 - c. **Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Visit for Institutional Accreditation.** At the end of April, a site visit will be conducted as part of the university's decennial review for institutional accreditation. Visitors will be various experts from peer institutions. They have read the self-study and strategic planning documents prepared by several university-wide teams of faculty, staff and students. If called upon to participate in meetings with the visitors, everyone should answer questions openly and honestly. Self-study materials have been shared with the Senators, and all members of the faculty are encouraged to attend the faculty forum to be held on April 27, 2009 (3:00, Pyle Center).
 - d. **Strategic Planning in L&S.** Just as the university has been engaged in strategic planning, L&S has been asked to create a strategic plan. In the past, L&S simply adopted the campus plan as its own; this time, on the advice of the Academic Planning Council, Dean Sandefur decided to develop a more focused document that places college activities that are undertaken in pursuit of its distinct mission in the context of the campus-wide Strategic Framework. The Dean consulted the Academic Planning Council, the Committee on Academic Staff Issues, the Classified Staff Issues Committee, all L&S chairs and directors. He invited volunteers from these groups to discuss the College mission and priorities and help prepare a document. The results of discussions will be presented for discussion in Fall 2009.
 - e. **Provost's call for departments to review course lists by August 3, 2009.** A recent audit of the university course lists by the Office of the Registrar and Provost's Office showed that 35% of 13,500 courses have not been taught in more than six years. The Provost has asked departments to remove obsolete courses from their active course lists. A streamlined process for approving deletions has been created. Assistant Dean Elaine Klein is coordinating this process for L&S departments. The online *Course Guide* (which replaces listings that used to appear in the *Catalogs*) shows all courses in a department's active list; since there is no mechanism for "hiding" courses, students may think obsolete courses are available. A related project is seeking to develop a streamlined and improved course approval process.
 - f. **Call for nominations to serve on L&S Academic Planning Council.** Dean Sandefur invited nominations for faculty to serve on the Academic Planning Council, to represent the Social and the Natural Sciences.

There were no additional questions or discussion.

2. **Minutes of the L&S Faculty Senate 14 April 2008** were accepted and filed as submitted.
3. **Annual Report of the Faculty Honors Committee, 2007-2008** (L&S FacDoc 277). Professor Chuck Snowden (Psychology), Director of the Honors Program, presented the report, highlighting several items in it:
 - a. The program has proposed a new model for admitting students to the program. The system relies less on the grades students earned in high school, and instead emphasizes student interest and the work they do while at UW-Madison.
 - b. Two new courses were created to engage students in “Diversity Dialogues” that examine diversity from multidisciplinary perspective.
 - c. The Honors Program approach for electronically tracking student advising contacts is being considered as a model for campus-wide use, and has attracted the interest of other peer institutions.
 - d. A new relationship with the School of Education will allow Education students to complete the honors programs in L&S majors. The Honors Program will administer the program and advise students.Professor Snowden concluded by congratulating Molly McGlone, who received an L&S Award for Excellence in Advising. In discussion senators asked about the ability of departments and programs to offer “true” Honors courses. Another effect of the MIU (discussed above) may be to increase the university’s capacity to offer more such experiences to students and to assess their impact. A motion to file the report was unanimously approved.
4. **Annual Report of the Academic Planning Council, 2008-2009** (L&S FacDoc 278). Dean Sandefur, who chairs the council, presented the report. He noted that the APC had been indispensable to him in responding to the request to develop a strategic plan, and that he anticipated that it would help him make determinations about the Madison Initiative for Undergraduate proposals if the opportunity should arise to do so. Work on program review continues, and members of the faculty will be asked to participate in many reviews scheduled to take place in 2009-2010. The review process is essential to maintaining the quality of departments and programs. There were no questions about the report, which was filed by a unanimously approved motion.
5. **Annual Report of the Curriculum Committee, 2008-2009** (L&S Faculty Document 279). Professor Michael Morgan (Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences) presented the report on behalf of the committee. He reported that, in addition to the ongoing review of proposals to add/change/delete courses, the committee had approved revision of the directed study chapter of the L&S Handbook. The revisions include recommendations to departments regarding “best practices” for using those courses. The committee also revised material in the L&S portion of the *Undergraduate Catalog*, the better to explain the purpose of liberal education to students and their families. Finally, revisions to the baccalaureate degree requirements (BABS07) are still being implemented, as the committee considers requests to allow non-L&S courses to count toward meeting the minimum required coursework in Liberal Arts and Science courses; other aspects of implementation have proceeded smoothly. There were no questions about the report, and a motion to file was unanimously approved.
6. **Future Business** Dean Sandefur invited members to offer suggestions for future items to be discussed at the Fall 2009 meeting. No suggestions were offered; however, members were encouraged to contact Assistant Dean Elaine Klein.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Submitted by Elaine M. Klein, Ph.D.
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Secretary of the L&S Faculty