

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
24 November 2014
6104 Social Science
3:45pm-5:00pm

21 members attended. Dean Scholz chaired the meeting, calling it to order at 3:45 p.m.

1. Announcements and Updates.

- a. Dean Scholz introduced the session by thanking the Senators for their service on this body, and noting that UW-Madison relies on the participation of faculty in key processes and on decision-making bodies to make this university excellent.
- b. On that note, Dean Scholz reminded the Senators that the search for the next Dean of the Graduate School is under way, and he urged them to participate in that process.
- c. A search committee is being developed for the next Dean of Education.

2. Welcome from Dean Scholz, State of the College, Q&A

Dean Scholz made a formal presentation about the state of the college with a brief overview of his first year as Dean. L&S does a large amount of teaching for the University and many L&S faculty and staff win teaching awards. In the past year, L&S hired new faculty, but fewer than in previous years. In considering the budget and how allocations are made, Dean Scholz observed that L&S values drive decision-making: we seek to preserve and enhance the college as a research powerhouse and expand the frontiers of knowledge; we advocate for the liberal arts and sciences; and we take this mission beyond the boundaries of the campus. The college faces many challenges: lower-than-peer faculty compensation and budgetary constraints, which are only getting more constrained. He discussed the budget modeling exercise, for which all deans were asked to prepare 2/4/6% budget cut scenarios, and proposals to allow strategic increases in tuition for non-resident and professional school students. L&S's new tool (the Budget Status Report, or BSR) will help both departments and college keep track of unit-level budget decisions. Additional information about research and instruction will help departments and college understand departments' roles in the overall research and teaching missions. The Dean noted that the college and university have worked hard to develop creative solutions to budgetary challenges, and that we have been designing new curriculum for the 21st century.

Turning to one such initiative, Dean Scholz provided an update on the L&S Career Initiative, noting that it has now been fully funded by alumni. The program director has been building alumni professional network, and Inter L&S 210, the one-credit course at its center, is gaining enrollments. Other important activities under way on campus include the implementation of the new human resource system, the new campus diversity framework, and discussion of a new "activities-based" budgeting model.

In Q&A following this topic, senators asked:

- Whether we have more detail about changes that will ensue from the new budget model, and the impact on other schools/colleges. The dean reported that the Chancellor was mindful of disruption, and that changes would be gradual.
 - Whether there was news about L&S adopting a similar model for the college budget. The dean noted that these discussion are focused on allocation to schools/colleges; and that each of those units would make decisions about allocation (hence college attention to how data informs values-based decision-making).
 - The extent to which “Academic Analytics” is the best/only measure of research activity, since that tool is regarded as prone to error. The dean noted that other tools are also subject to error (and AA arose from frustration with those); AA is willing to listen to critique and is actively engaged in improving the tool.
 - How interdisciplinary departments and programs that rely on joint appointments may fare in the new allocation model. Dean Scholz observed that L&S is aware of these challenges and considers them in the broader context of mission and values – decisions will factor in qualitative factors, and will balance them. For example, departments may wish to have both large and small enrollment courses, since these serve different purposes.
3. Notes of the L&S Faculty Senate meeting held on March 10, 2014 were circulated with the agenda materials and were approved by a voice vote.
4. The Report of the Faculty Honors Committee (L&S Faculty Document 294) was presented by Sissel Schroder, Professor of Anthropology and Director of the L&S Honors Program. The report covered Academic Year 2013-2014 and Summer 2014. 1,200 students participated in the program (about 350 admitted in each year, and there is some attrition as students move between colleges). In 13-14, 255 students graduated with Honors in the Liberal Arts, Honors in the Major, or Comprehensive Honors. Professor Schroeder noted that 13-14 saw the implementation of a new application process, which shifted the deadlines to a “rolling” procedure that allows more students to apply to the program and allows the faculty to be more selective about admissions. The program continues to offer workshops to prepare students to apply for grants, summer research, grad school, and professional school, with a total of \$125,000 awarded for senior thesis work, travel grants, and support for student research and study. In 13-14, the program sponsored its Third annual senior honors thesis symposiums, where students share their research. Finally, the program continued to provide Honors Advising (a “signature strength” of the program), to consult with faculty about Honors in the Major and to support faculty teaching honors courses, and to partner with the FIGs program to offer Honors FIGS. In Q&A, senators asked if only first-year students may apply, and were assured that continuing and transfer students may also apply to the program.

The report was accepted, with thanks to Professor Schroeder and the program.

5. The Report of the L&S Academic Planning Council (L&S Faculty Document 295) was presented by Dean Scholz. 2013-14 was busy for the L&S APC, which was engaged in several requests for permission to reorganize units within the college; these proposals require time and attention to ensure smooth implementation of changes. The APC completed several Academic Program Reviews, considered requests to create and to discontinue programs, and offered comment on new programs to be created in other UW-Madison units or at other UW System campuses. The council also held a number of joint meetings with the CALS APC, a procedure that allows both councils to more efficiently consider matters related to programs shared by both colleges. There were no questions following this report, which was accepted by the Senate.
6. Professor Kapust, chair of the L&S Curriculum Committee, presented the annual report of the committee (L&S Faculty Document 296). In addition to conducting its regular business (reviewing course proposals and requests for academic program changes), the committee responded to Dean Scholz's request that it revisit procedures for undergraduate major declaration. Currently, students are encouraged to declare their major in the Junior year; many students declare much later, because there is no strict enforcement of the expectation that they do so. Analysis of data on student progress revealed that major declaration is strongly correlated with timely progress to degree. Further, declaring the major connects students to program resources, locks in program requirements, and helps foster a cohort learning experience. To extend these benefits more assertively to students, the committee has defined the declaration expectation more clearly (86 credits), recommended implementing this via assertive advising (e.g., sending multiple messages throughout students' careers), and placing enrollment holds if students do not declare by 86 credits. The committee emphasized the balance between sufficient "exploration" and making a commitment to a major; this policy is considered flexible enough to help students get on the path to declare the major and complete their degrees.

In discussion, senators strongly recommended that the college work with the Registrar's Office to use the online major declaration process, preferably developing a "one-click" process to set up advising appointments, which might be conducted by Skype. Others asked about how major declaration intersects with the activities-based budgeting discussed earlier, and Dean Scholz noted that allocations will likely be made to schools and colleges according to credits generated as well as students' 'degree-home'.

The L&S Senate adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Submitted by

Elaine M. Klein, Ph.D.
Secretary of the L&S Senate