

COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCE FACULTY SENATE MEETING
NOTES
30 November 2015
165 Bascom Hall

The meeting began at 3:45 p.m. 27 Senators were in attendance.

1. Dean Scholz congratulated UW-Madison's most recently named Rhodes Scholar, Colin Higgins, who graduated in May 2015 with comprehensive honors in Environmental Studies, Geography, and History; he is currently completing his Master of Public Affairs in the LaFollette School. The dean also congratulated Professors Mark Eriksson and Gary Shiu (both in Physics) who were recently elected as fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
2. Dean Scholz provided an update with respect to the report of the L&S Academic Planning Council. Per governance processes articulated in Faculty Policies and Procedures and mediated by University and College Academic Planning Council Guidelines, the L&S APC approved proposals to create a new Department of Asian Languages and Cultures (from the departments of East Asian Languages and Literature and of Languages and Cultures of Asia) and a new Department of German, Nordic, and Slavic (from the Departments of German, of Scandinavian Studies, and of Slavic Languages & Literature). These proposals will next be discussed at the University APC and will be presented to the university-level Faculty Senate. The L&S APC approved the Department of African Languages and Literature request to rename itself as the Department of African Cultural Studies; that, too, will move on to the University Academic Planning Council and to the university-level Faculty Senate.
3. With apologies for the change in the order of business, Dean Scholz asked Sabine Gross (Professor of German and Director, L&S Honors Program) to present the annual Report of the Faculty Honors Committee (Academic Year 2014-15), which was distributed as *L&S Faculty Document 299*. Professor Gross cited a few highlights from the report, noting that the recently named Rhodes Scholar had earned comprehensive honors, and that he is the third UW-Madison Rhodes Scholar to have achieved that. The program aspires to provide to students the experience of a small liberal arts college within (and with access to the resources of) a comprehensive research university. It provides excellent advising as well as access to and mentoring in research. The program is distinctive among such programs in that student achievement is not driven primarily by GPA: L&S Honors students are not only high achieving but highly motivated. There is a lower GPA requirement to participate, but students must apply for admission and must actively participate in the program. With only limited resources to support this high quality experience, membership is limited to 350 students, though applications have been increasing. There were no questions about the report.

4. Dean Scholz gave an overview of the State of the College, citing achievements and challenges in 2014-15 and looking ahead to the coming year. Highlights included the many teaching awards earned by L&S faculty, the key role of L&S faculty and staff played in the discovery of *homo Naledi*, the decision to locate the Consortium of International Humanities Centers and Institutes at UW-Madison effective 2017, and major awards granted to L&S physicists. The dean noted significant “headwinds:” large budget cuts to the university (and the large cuts to the college budget), challenges to tenure and shared governance, and damage to morale and the UW brand. At the same time, the university received 80% of the funding needed for a new Chemistry Building, a new HR system, and permission to join the Common Application System. (When asked about the last item, the dean explained that applications could rise from 33,000 to 50,000, and the system is expected to attract a wider range of applicants from across the nation and around the world.)

Dean Scholz explained that L&S will meet its cut via a hiring freeze (unless positions are supported by gift funds). Many departments are meeting their cuts by giving up positions as they become empty. The dean noted that it is useful to document the effect these reductions: with fewer faculty and staff, the college will teach fewer courses and deliver fewer seats/credits and fewer services to students. The time needed to do things will increase, because fewer people are doing the work. In discussion about the impact of cuts, one senator noted that reducing lectures with TA-taught discussions means less experience for graduate students, smaller support packages, and smaller graduate student cohorts. Further, courses that need TAs may be forced to recruit students who are not training in the discipline, perhaps affecting the quality of instruction. Several senators expressed concern that the university is not losing high quality students to peers, but to lesser institutions that offer them better support.

Turning to the continued excellence of the college, the dean again noted that ten of twelve campus distinguished teaching awards were earned by L&S faculty. He shared the success of the L&S Career Initiative, which seeks to help students convert what they learn in L&S into skills that can be applied to a career. A new course has been created to support these goals, corporate sponsors are interested in and are supporting the initiative, and a recent survey of L&S alumni suggests that for recent graduates, a degree in the liberal arts and sciences is just as competitive as a degree from the College of Engineering or School of Business. Most important: nearly 90% of L&S alumni are happy with their degrees and believe they get a competitive advantage for having the degree. Citing several publications, the dean noted the importance of getting this information out – to “tell the L&S story” beyond campus about what we’re trying to do, and that we do it well.

The dean noted several other initiatives under way that support L&S goals, including revenue-generating programs that allow departments to receive some of the funds generated by the programs and a new budget model for summer programs. (When asked about demand for summer instruction, Dean Scholz reported that two peer institutions offer twice as many

credit hours as UW-Madison, so there is likely to be room for growth.) In addition, the college has benefited from philanthropy; most notably, “the Morgridge Match” has helped endow chairs and distinguished chairs. Overall, the program has brought more than \$100 Million to the college, with 45 new professorships that have benefited all L&S divisions.

The dean noted that the college fielded 30 outside offers in 2014-15; so far, in 2015-16, there have been 43. Of those that have been resolved, L&S has successfully retained 16 out of 18, including cases where colleagues had excellent offers from Cornell, Princeton, Northwestern, Minnesota, Ohio State, and Purdue.

Finally, the dean noted that the university has undertaken an ambitious comprehensive campaign, expressing hope that it will be successful enough to have a remarkable impact on the university.

In the question and answer period, senators asked clarifying questions about the retentions and outside offers and about the Morgridge gift and gifts by other donors to other units. One senator expressed concern about the deleterious effect outside offers have on departments, noting, in particular, the growing and persistent inequities between those who get salary increases via such offers and the “loyalty tax” imposed on those who don’t. The Dean agreed that this is a concern, and expressed regret that the recent 3-year exercise (in which all faculty members were reviewed and some found eligible for increases) cannot be repeated until the budget cut has been met. The aspiration is that the college will engage in a regular process for review and increase; until that can happen, this will be a tension.

Senators noted a tension between the emphasis on excellence in teaching and learning and the demand to generate more credits. Similarly, the emphasis on generating credits seems to be at odds with the need to pursue, promote, and produce excellent research. Dean Scholz explained that departments have been encouraged to strike a balance between large and small courses, and to understand that students will necessarily take a mixture of courses. The college takes note of participation in high impact practices, since we care about how students learn. The emphasis on these things is not turning away from research – but it is about balance.

Finally, senators noted that the hiring freeze means that short-term budget reductions are non-strategic and very circumstantial; the dean agreed, but noted that all department budgets were cut differentially and the college will navigate toward those budgets over time.

5. Notes of the L&S Faculty Senate meeting held 9 March 2015 were approved.
6. Dean Scholz presented the Report of the L&S Academic Planning Council (Academic Year 2014-15), which was circulated as *L&S Faculty Document 297*. He noted that the L&S APC had been very busy in the past year, having approved plans submitted by several departments

seeking permission to restructure, approved curricular changes related to prior years' departmental restructurings, and completing the reviews of many academic programs. There were no further questions on the report.

7. Ivy Corfis, Professor of Spanish and Chair of the L&S Curriculum Committee, presented the 2014-15 Report of the L&S Curriculum Committee (*L&S Faculty Document 298*). She began by thanking the previous chair (Dan Kapust, Professor of Political Science) and the L&S staff who support the committee. Among the committee's most notable work was the approval and implementation of a policy requiring L&S undergraduates to declare a major before reaching 86 credits (if they do not do so, they receive a registration hold that can only be lifted after they seek advising and meet with a dean); the policy is being piloted in Fall 2015 and will be implemented in Spring 2016. The committee also considered and approved the request to create a large enrollment undergraduate course associated with the L&S Career Initiative (discussed above). There were no questions concerning the report.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Submitted by Elaine M. Klein, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean for Academic Planning
Secretary, L&S Faculty