

Letters and Science Academic Planning Council

Tuesday, April 5, 2016, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., 101 South Hall - *approved 4/19/2016*

Chair: Karl Scholz

Members present: Angela Powell, Anna Gemrich, Matt Turner, Ivy Corfis, Harry Brighthouse, Katherine Bowie, Charles Fry, Steven Kantrowitz, Clark Landis, Jan Edwards

Observers present: Anne Gunther, Greg Downey, Susan Ellis-Weismer, James Montgomery, Elaine Klein, Nancy Westphal-Johnson, Kimbrin Cornelius, Sue Zaeske, Devon Wilson, Eric Wilcots, Susan Ellis-Weismer

1. Announcements and Updates. Mary Ellen Gabriel has joined the L&S Admin team as Director of Communications, and Cal Bergman will soon be starting as the Associate Dean for L&S SAA. KS also noted he invited Patrick Sims to speak at the upcoming faculty plenary to support campus efforts of increasing tolerance and creating welcoming environments for all students.

2. Consent Agenda: a. Approval of notes, 15 March 2016; b. Religious Studies as “Department-Like Entity” Consent agenda was approved by the council.

3. Academic Program Change: Economics Graduate Programs, Change in Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code. The proposed CIP code is appropriate for the program, and aligns with how similar programs are coded. Immigration law relies on the codes, so changing to this code can provide significant benefits for international students. Members unanimously approved the request to the change of CIP code.

4. Academic Program Review a. Mead-Witter School of Music

SZ summarized conversation from the previous meeting. KS updated members on a meeting he recently had with the Dean of Education (Hess), and is confident the SoE supports the Music Education program. SZ also noted recruitment challenges the department is having; these are shared with other arts areas and recruiting continues to be a priority and concern for arts departments. Points of member conversation included:

- Members noted several observations made in the review (funding and TA positions for graduate students, not-ideal advising, and not enough faculty) that point to the possibility that graduate program may not be the “right” size, and wondered if the School has considered carefully whether graduate admissions are aligned with current budget realities, and in particular those aspects of graduate programming that are critical for student success (e.g., funding, faculty size, employment opportunities and placement). Other departments in L&S have wrestled with these issues, too, and have found the exercise to be valuable. Among other things, these discussions can (and probably should) guide decisions about the optimal graduate program size.
- Members congratulated the department on strengthening its understanding and exercise of shared governance.

Members unanimously accepted the review as completed, and offered counsel that the School be asked by the dean to engage in a discussion about whether graduate program admissions and program size are aligned in ways that optimize student success.

b. School of Journalism and Mass Communication

SZ led discussion; KS noted that GD had been Director during the reviewed, and that he could offer comment if needed. She indicated this is an internationally-recognized research department, and draws many undergraduates for study, too (600 majors). The recommendations in the report are fairly modest, in large part due to the uncertainty about the future size of the faculty. They include suggestions to improve advising, grievance procedures, and increase internships. Member discussion included:

- The importance of the school strategically using academic staff instruction. Members agreed it wasn't clear from the review whether the department is intentional about this, or that SJMC strives for balance across the different program subareas. There are more faculty in the Journalism area, though more students pursue Strategic Communication. GD observed that three academic staff are assigned across the areas evenly, and that Strategic Communications courses are (and can be) taught in larger groups. Because Journalism courses emphasize writing, they must stay small.
- Whether the professional program is sustainable, and if it is a priority for the department. Though the it has been proposed that they recruit students from China, that can produce other resource issues.
- Concern about budget cuts and faculty losses. Council member are aware that all L&S departments experienced cuts, expressed regret about the significant negative impact cuts are having on top-ranking departments, and noted that this isn't the only internationally-ranked program that has had to take steep cuts.
- Mitigating the impact of cuts may require looking to other departments with aligned missions and goals, and increasing collaboration with those units. Council members wondered if departments are working as closely together as they could be, and if communications departments on campus might capitalize on their mutual strengths and find places for efficiencies and collaboration.

Members unanimously approved the motion to accept the report. They advised the department to continuing seeking ways to work with other departments and areas on campus to provide the best experience for their students with the resources that are available.

5. Consultations of the Dean: Aspirations for L&S Students

Members agreed the draft document is on the right track, and that they would welcome the opportunity to discuss it further at a future meeting.

Meeting adjourned at: 2:30

Notes submitted by Kimbrin Cornelius