

Fall Faculty Meeting Minutes (December 14, 2017)

3:45 Parliamentarian Steve Lahey called the meeting to order.

Item I. Approval of minutes from spring (4/13/17) faculty meeting.

Ray Hames (Anthro) moved approval of the minutes. Marco Abel (Engl) seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Opening Comments.

Election of secretary for two-year term. Mark Griep agreed to be nominated. Matt Jockers moved to elected Mark Griep as secretary. Ray Hames (Anthro) seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Appointment of parliamentarian. Steve Lahey agreed to be reappointed. June Griffin (Engl) moved to have Steve Lahey reappointed as parliamentarian. Marco Abel (Engl) seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

III. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to Actuarial Science major & minor.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote with no discussion.

IV. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to Economics major and minor.

Ken Bloom (Phys) asked whether there are any concerns about the major being too many hours? Assoc. Dean Griffin explained that the number of hours in the major (33) falls within the range of many majors in the college. Moreover, the addition of calculus to the major simply codifies what was—already in practice—an unstated requirement (or prerequisite). So, this makes the requirement clearer.

In response to Assoc. Dean Theiss-Morse's question about whether these changes applied to the whole major or just A&S, Assoc. Dean Griffin confirmed that this change is specific to the Economics major in the College of Arts & Sciences only.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote.

V. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to the Global Studies major.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote with no discussion.

VI. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to the History major.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote with no discussion.

VII. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes Humanities in Medicine minor.

Assoc. Dean Theiss-Morse asked why the additional course list is so changed. Rose Holz (WGS & Humanities in Medicine director) explained that the proposed minor maintains the focus on humanities. She added that some courses were removed from the list on the basis of conversations with students about connections between the course and the focus on the minor. (At one point, there was a decision to include more courses outside the humanities which can dilute the focus of the minor). Finally, special topics courses were removed because the topic is hard to predict.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote.

VIII: Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to the Sociology major.

Assoc. Dean Griffin explained that this change brings the major requirements more in line with other majors across the college.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote with no discussion.

IX. Recommendation from the College Curriculum Committee to approve changes to the major and minor in Women's & Gender Studies.

Assoc. Dean Matt Jockers asked if 36 hours was on the high end of major requirements in the college? Christina Fielder (Director, A&S Advising) shared some other majors in the college that required 36 hours. Rose Holz (WGS) also noted that the unit's curriculum committee felt that 36 was appropriate.

The changes were approved by unanimous vote with no discussion.

X. Opportunities to Ask Questions of the Dean

Rose Holz (WGS) asked if there was any news about the move to the **new building**? Associate Dean Matt Jockers explained that the college was awaiting word from the EVC's office about the cost of the renovations. He noted that the requirement to bring the building to current code had a big impact on budget. Once those costs are determined, he said, each of the relevant chairs will tour the space. He noted that the project management piece will likely be taken over by Alecia Kimbrough (Asst. Dean, College of Arts & Sciences).

Jody Redepenning (Chem) said that he was surprised by the email he received regarding **summer sessions budget**. He noted that cutting money available for course offerings cuts into the university's revenue. Assoc. Dean Diana Pilson explained that summer sessions budget was cut by 5% across the board and the operating budget was cut to \$0. Because the college had 5% less to distribute, many departments received some reduction in summer funding. Assoc. Dean Pilson noted that if department leaders see opportunities to save summer sessions budget money which could then be reallocated to areas of the college with increased demand for summer courses, she would appreciate that. She also explained that the college is expected to

offer more bottleneck courses and increase the total credit hours generated by university. Assoc. Dean Pilson noted that she has also prioritized courses that can only be offered in the summer (field courses; study abroad). Assoc. Dean Griffin added that units should also think about offering courses that support students' time-to-degree. Julia McQuillan (Soci) asked whether online worldwide might offer incentives to offer/develop online courses. She noted that the Sociology Department's online courses are filling. Assoc. Dean Pilson responded that summer online comes from the college's regular summer budget (not an additional set of funds from NU Online Worldwide). Ken Bloom (Phys) invited concerned faculty to the Academic Planning Committee's (APC) hearing on January 17, if the cut to summer budget is causing problems. Dean Francisco agreed, stating that it is important to hear about the impacts of these cuts. John Osterman offered that small amount of operating distributed in past summers was important to keeping Cedar Point Biological Station open. In addition, Microbiology is a bottleneck course and it is uncertain whether—given the cuts to summer budgets—the course will be offered. Dan Hoyt (Soci) noted that summer session budgets have always fluctuated in the past. Assoc. Dean Pilson cautioned that all colleges on campus received reduced summer sessions money and that, per credit hour, Arts & Sciences got more summer money than at least one other college. Dan Hoyt (Soci) noted that in the past, the college had proposed to Academic Affairs that they be allowed to lower the upper cap faculty can earn for teaching (which would reduce the cost of running summer courses) and wondered if that had been considered as an option. Assoc. Dean Pilson said that, to her knowledge, the salary caps had not been changed.

Steve Lahey (CLRS) asked whether there was any news on **future budget cuts** or a timeline for future announcements regarding budget. Dean Francisco asked Ken Bloom (Phys and APC chair) if he would like to comment. Ken Bloom explained that there have been one set of cuts as announced and that the APC would be conducting hearings on those cuts in January. But Chancellor Green had communicated with APC that there are no further planned cuts for spring. Dean Francisco mentioned the possibility of a midyear rescission. He noted that Academic Affairs had held back 2% to address an expected midyear rescission.

Dean Francisco also explained that, at the dean's level, the college had been reflecting on the lessons of this exercise. "Are there programs that we need to protect/build up? In case we get to a point where program cuts are happening, programs would be in better standing," he explained. Dan Hoyt (Soci) asked if there is the possibility of another VSIP. Dean Francisco noted that given the new policy in which vacant/open lines revert to academic affairs, a VSIP wouldn't necessarily help the college's budget.

Ken Bloom (Phys) asked what significant issues are facing the college right now and how is the college administration responding to those issues? Dean Francisco explained that his biggest concern is the uncertainty and instability created by hiring freezes and announced budget cuts. The burden of those costs, he explained, are coming back to the college. He said he does think that the University has to share the responsibility of this burden with colleges: "They need to understand what this has created: faculty we want to keep see this environment as reason to go and the college won't have the money to make retention offers."

Julia McQuillan (Soci) asked whether the college leadership had any indication of how chairs might best position their departments. Should departments be maximizing credit hours, growing the major or growing the graduate program? Dean Francisco said that in this budget/allocation exercise, they were working at credit hours and majors. There seemed to be less awareness of graduate programs. He explained that the associate deans deserve a lot of credit for taking the data that the EVC's office sent, working through that data and making arguments back to upper administration. Dean Francisco suggested that one question we should ask is what upper administration has learned from this exercise.

Assoc. Dean Griffin offered that some of the conversations they had with upper administration seemed to have influenced some of the models they used. She noted that the college leadership takes every opportunity to explain or demonstrate the implications of proposed cuts.

Dean Francisco said that he has learned a lot in this process. It reinforces for him that A&S is a great college. He said that one of his priorities when he arrived here was to make the college more self-sustaining (through fundraising, etc.). This budget situation validated his observation from four years ago. The college, he argued would benefit from being more self-sustaining. He offered one example of an initiative that may help the college by expanding its impact: The partnership seed grants (one in social sciences, humanities and sciences). Assoc. Dean Matt Jockers added that he was delighted by the number of applications. One donor is supporting one of the awards and is putting forth funds to support a forum (one regional and one national speaker about the value of liberal arts and opportunities for partnering with faculty in A&S).

Debbie Minter (Engl) asked the Dean to comment on the recent issues surrounding academic freedom and freedom of speech that have surfaced on campus. Dean Francisco explained that the college established a Committee on Academic Freedom (with Marco Abel (Engl) as chair). The Dean noted that having just returned from the Von Humboldt meeting overseas, he sees this as a global issue (not just here at Nebraska or even nationally).

With no further questions, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Minter