

MINUTES OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES FACULTY MEETING

Thursday, 22 April 2010, 3:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union

Opening remarks and approval of minutes:

Dean Manderscheid opened the meeting at 3:45 p.m. Wheeler Dixon (English) moved that the minutes of the last meeting be approved. Dean Manderscheid reminded faculty that the business of that meeting involved various non-controversial recommendations of College Committees which it was decided to handle by email response since weather forced cancellation of the December 9 meeting. Thomas Rinkevich (Classics and Religious Studies) seconded the motion to approve the minutes, which passed unanimously. Dean Manderscheid then stated that he had no formal opening comments.

Questions on College Committee Annual Reports

Of the seven College committee annual reports appended to the Agenda (from the Executive, Promotion and Tenure, Student Academic Distinction Awards and Appeals, Curriculum and Advising, Faculty Instructional Development, Assessment, and Endowed/College Professorships Committees) no faculty present raised any questions.

Two Recommendations of the College Curriculum Committee

Glenn Ledder (Mathematics) discussed first the Curriculum Committee's *recommendation to increase the current restriction of a maximum of 12 credits in coaching courses that may be credited toward College B.A. and B.S. degrees to a maximum of 15 credits*. This would allow students pursuing a Coaching Minor in the College of Education and Human Sciences, which requires 15 credits, to apply all 15 credits toward their A&S College degree. The faculty passed this recommendation unanimously. Stephen Burnett (Classics and Religious Studies) asked about the origin of the limit on the number of credits for courses advocating the doctrine or belief of a particular faith. He noted that UNL does not have such courses. William Watts, Asst Dean for Advising Services, explained that the limit is intended to address transfer credits from other institutions.

Ledder then discussed the Curriculum Committee's *recommendation to change the College's residency requirements*. Currently only 30 credits of open enrollment and summer independent study courses may be applied toward a College degree. The curriculum committee recommends removing this restriction since all College online and independent study courses are developed and taught by College faculty and since UNL seeks to increase online course enrollments. Counting them toward the residency requirement would increase enrollments. Ken Bloom (Physics and Astronomy) asked how this change would impact College and UNL enrollment figures. William Watts, Asst Dean for Advising Services, stated that in the current environment views are changing toward online courses. Deborah Minter (English) noted that open enrollment and independent study courses are different from online courses. (Specifically, open enrollment courses are a subset of online College courses in which students can decide when and over how long a period a course is taken.) The recommendation was passed unanimously.

Final Agenda Item: Opportunity to Ask Questions of the Dean

Ken Bloom (Physics and Astronomy) asked, What are the College's goals for next year?

Dean Manderscheid stated that he hopes to develop a strategic plan for the College. It would be a more long term plan as opposed to a yearly ortactical plan as we have currently. Among his hopes are to increase College grant funding by hiring more interdisciplinary faculty. He stated that the College "is on a tear" with \$43 million in grant funding so far this year, which equals the total for all of last year. He stated that in the humanities, the award of the prestigious Bancroft Prize to Margaret Jacobs (History) "is huge" and confirms the quality of College faculty and programs. Another goal is to target more money to allow students to study abroad. A further goal is to increase further the student retention rates in each year of study. Already, he said, College student retention rates have increased so that they are now greater than for UNL as a whole, which has not been true in the past. Greg Snow, Associate Dean, added that another goal is to review how the ACE program is playing out with regard to changes in enrollments in College courses. The Dean noted that the number of credit hours has gone up as have the number of majors.. About 6% of the 13% increase in majors can be attributed to the fact that all pre-nursing students are now counted as A&S students instead of General Studies students. Thus the true increase in number of majors is 7 %. The Dean suggested that the economy's lack of jobs in most fields may have induced students to major in A&S subjects that appeal to them rather than entering pre-professional programs. Also, the economy may have induced students who might otherwise have enrolled at out-of-state institutions to remain in Nebraska in order to benefit from its lower in-state tuition rates. Moreover, the College's enrollment growth has been accompanied by an increase in student ACT scores.

Deborah Minter (English) asked, Why is the date for ACE assessment being rolled back?

Dean Manderscheid deferred to Associate Dean Snow to answer this question. Snow stated that the intention was to give departments more time to assess courses because ACE courses only began this academic year. Glenn Ledder (Mathematics) noted that what is not being rolled back is re-certification of ACE courses after three years, although the precise schedule has not yet been determined. Snow stated that assessment and recertification should be linked. Ledder stated that the time lines may not be synchronized. Snow stated that the College does not want departments to do redundant work in doing re-certification and assessment.

Jim Lewis (Mathematics) asked, "Why is \$200K being removed from the College's teaching assistantship budget?"

Dean Manderscheid noted that UNL is required to make a 1.5% budget cut, but the College's hit is only 0.3%. The available options to cut include faculty, staff, TA lines, or vertical cuts. The Dean stated that TA budget cuts will be strategic and not be targeted for departments having increased enrollment pressures. The Dean stated that he realizes that A&S pays lower GTA stipends across the board in all departments compared to peer institutions. Consequently, last year \$85K was withheld from the salary increase allocated for the College with a view toward increasing College TA stipends. However, once budget cuts were announced that money was not spent and could be used to soften the present \$200K TA budget cut. Anthony Starace (Physics and Astronomy) asked what is the percentage of the total budget represented by \$200K. The Dean stated it was approximately 3% of the TA budget to the best of his knowledge. The Dean concluded that he will be in contact with department chairs regarding the TA budget implications for each department.

Jim Lewis (Mathematics) asked, "Does the \$2 million in research budget cuts impact the College?"

Dean Manderscheid stated that it may in fact affect the VCR office's ability to help provide services and grant matching funds . He said that VCR Prem Paul has saidthat the cut should not present significant

problems for his office. However, Manderscheid said that we shall have to see. Nevertheless, Manderscheid recounted anecdotal evidence of worse budget cut problems elsewhere, including at the University of Colorado, Clemson, Yale, and the University of Arizona. He quoted Chancellor Perlman, who said there is a need at this time for “clear and clever thinking.” Despite our problems, and perhaps as a result of worse problems elsewhere, the College is succeeding in hiring many of our first choices in this year’s faculty searches. This is very good news, but we need to approach the future with a sober outlook. The Dean noted finally that he is chairing an Efficiency and Entrepreneurship pre-Task Force focused on saving and/or generating funds for UNL.

Ken Bloom (Physics and Astronomy) asked, “Are there any other worries?”

Dean Manderscheid immediately noted that space is a key issue for the foreseeable future. Another key issue is our educational infrastructure. He noted that the College’s biology and chemistry laboratories are run at all possible hours but that not all students who wish to take the laboratories are able to do so. Furthermore, in chemistry the most up-to-date experiments cannot be offered owing to the need for modern fume hoods.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony F. Starace, *Faculty Secretary*