

Spring CAS Faculty Meeting Minutes (20 April 2021)

3:30 pm: The online meeting was called to order by Dean Mark Button. There were 97 Attendees.

1. Opening remarks from the Dean

Dean Mark Button: Thank you for your efforts during these challenging times. The pandemic has persisted for more than a year and many of us have lost loved ones. Persistent racial violence (anti-Black and anti-Asian) are abhorrent recent events during an already difficult time. In the face of these challenges, the College of Arts and Sciences continues to stand with and support all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Despite these things, we have reasons to be optimistic about the future. The College will graduate 720 students, our second largest Spring graduating class, and fall enrollments and commits are higher than in past four years. And, the College has just hired CAS alum Nicholas Gordon, as our new Director of Recruitment.

2. Approval of Minutes from the Fall Faculty Meeting held on December 10, 2020.

No comments. Poll results: 93% approved, 4% abstained, and 4% ineligible to vote.

3. Updates from the Dean

Update 1: College Five-Year Strategic Plan has been under development for the past year and a half. The final draft can be found at https://cas.unl.edu/strategicplan/CollegeStrategicPlan2021_042021.pdf. It should be considered a living document that will change over time. The strategic plan and new IBB budget model will be aligned.

Update 2: The lecturer compensation review process began in fall 2019 with the CAS Ad Hoc committee co-chaired by Debbie Minter and David Woodman. The majority of the non-fiscal recommendations of this committee have been adopted with the approval of new guidelines for lecturers in the college and with voting rights in College faculty meetings – starting with this one! Another major recommendation was to review compensation levels of all lecturers in the college with a .5 FTE or higher as of March 1, 2021. This internal review is taking place in consultation with chairs, directors, and unit leaders. We will be making recommendations for salary actions to the EVC by Monday (April 26th) after (1) consulting national salary data by disciplinary field and sub-field, and (2) assessing – on a case-by-case basis – the credentials, expertise, level of experience, and achieved performance for all lecturers in the college.

Update 3 (Assoc. Dean June Griffin): Experiential Learning will be brought forward for a vote later in the meeting. The College has a strong focus on experiential learning by linking academics plus experiences equals opportunity. This initiative arises from the N2025 Report, and the employers' survey that favors experiences. The UNL Academic Solutions Council defined experiential learning (EL) as including significant creative work, skill development, design, decision making, or stakeholder-based problem-solving. A college survey of EL courses found over 100 that met the definition. Campus-wide, there are

over 1600 courses. To lower the burden to meeting these experiences, there won't be a credit requirement and any activity that meets the criteria will be accepted.

Update 4 (Assoc. Dean Will Thomas): The Faculty are doing stellar work during a difficult year in which to conduct research. Thank you for your efforts, especially at the graduate level. Here are some highlights: Margaret Jacobs was inducted into the American Society of Arts & Sciences; Katherine Eichhorn and Jack Jeffries earned CAREER grants; and Kwame Dawes received a Magid Award for his visionary leadership as editor of *Prairie Schooner* and he received the Windham Campbell prize. This faculty has produced more proposals this year than last. \$30 million year to date. Last year, it was \$36 million. Christian Binek's EPSCoR was just funded at \$10 million. Ken Bloom also received a large NSF. This year, the College held its first Research Roundtable to discuss several opportunities with 37 faculty in attendance. Racial Equity Roundtable is planned for the Fall. There is a plan to offer CAS research funding opportunities. The CAS Research Advisory Committee has been discussing changes to the CAS funding areas.

Update 5 (Asst. Dean Alicia Kimbrough): CAS Budget Cut and IBB Update. We're still working through the \$5.9 million budget cut. Student category is 26.6%, Staff category is 15.9%, etc. The hiring outlook includes a projected loss in 2022 and 2023 in part because the college gave up its VSIPs as part of the budget cuts. The Incentive-Based Budget was stalled somewhat due to covid but is still moving forward. A variety of changes were summarized.

4. Opportunity for faculty to ask questions arising from annual reports of the various college committees.

- a. Executive Committee
- b. Promotion and Tenure Committee
- c. Curriculum and Advising Committee
- d. Committee on Student Academic Distinction, Awards, and Appeals
- e. Assessment Committee
- f. Research Advisory Committee
- g. Endowed/College Professorships Committee
- h. Research Space Committee
- i. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee
- j. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Committee

Assoc. Dean Pat Dussault: P&T guidelines include clarification of the deadlines. CAS will now require a minimum of four external reviewers, which is one more than in the EVC guidelines. Professorship recommendations must be ranked by the college committee. There were no questions about any of the committee reports.

5. Recommendation from the Academic Freedom Committee to endorse the proposed college statement on *Academic Freedom in Teaching and Learning*.

David Harwood, Earth & Atmos: The committee found there wasn't a good statement about academic freedom that would help incoming faculty members understand the issue, especially with regard to difficult issues.

Kevin Smith, Poli Sci: This statement came out of an ad hoc committee in the Faculty Senate.

Harwood: This statement made its way to the EVC's office, and was then brought to the Faculty Senate for a vote. It was also vetted by the Chairs & Directors and two Q&A sessions.

Julia McQuillan, Soci: She begins her classes with a discussion about these issues and finds this an articulation that helps students understand it.

Regina Werum, Soci: This is a very nice statement. Where will this be posted and how widely will it be shared.

Harwood: The expectation is that this statement will lead the campus and even brought to the Faculty Senate.

Dussault: It won't be a bylaw but will be posted as a statement of the faculty.

Button: If the college were to adopt this, it may help propel it forward. If it was adopted university-wide, any future statement would become part of the new faculty guidance and govern the college.

Werum: Move to adopt the statement.

The Poll results: 89% yes, 1% no, 4% abstain, 4% ineligible to vote.

6. Recommendation from the College Curriculum and Advising Committee to approve.

a. New Mathematical Data Science Major

b. CAS Experiential Learning (new college CDR; no additional credit hours)

Item a. Petronela Radu, Mathematics: This interdisciplinary major was designed by the departments of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics. There are a growing number of data science jobs, many of which are unfilled. In addition, a poll in Mathematics showed that many students want this degree. Three courses serve as the focus: Mathematics offers Math in the City; Computer Science offers Senior Design; and Statistics has a new course. There are many local jobs available in this area, notably in the area of sports analytics.

Button: Proposed a friendly amendment to change the title to Data Science, which was its original title. The goal is a degree that can be pursued through three different colleges because Data Science cuts across the disciplines. The other two colleges are also going to use the name Data Science.

Radu: Amendment accepted.

Jolene Smyth, Soci: Proposed changing the Soci course requirement to one that is regularly offered.

Radu: Amendment accepted.

Button: Notes that there is an effort underway to coordinate this major across the three colleges.

Ken Bloom, Physics: The Academic Planning Comm has a proposal from Statistics. Will there be two more proposals coming forward?

Radu: Yes.

A poll was sent and the results were: 94% yes, 1% Abstain, 3% ineligible to vote

Item b. Griffin: Although this is presented as a College Degree Requirement, it will not involve course credits.

Shireen Adenwalla, Physics: How will the increased burden on faculty be allayed?

Griffin: We already have courses, internships, and Study Abroad activities that will meet the requirements. With regard to theses, the UGEdWorking Group proposed setting loads on faculty beyond which they do not have to contribute.

Button: The College intends to expand staff capacity to include the area of experiential learning. There is no mandate to the Departments. It is a university-wide commitment to documenting experiential learning.

Adenwalla: The issue is that students within a discipline will choose an experience in that same discipline and such demand will grow. What are the resources to handle this increased burden?

Griffin: The Dean's experiential learning scholarship is available to juniors to use during their senior year.

Mark van Roojen, Philosophy: Who will be responsible for implementing this? Over the long term, implementation may change as administrations change.

Griffin: This was designed to be much simpler than the ACE process. The middle "9" project synchronized these types of courses across the college. When new courses are proposed they'll be able to flag courses as meeting this requirement without much need for justification.

van Roojen: This is one more thing to manage in addition to many others.

Mike Herman, BioSci: SBS supports experiential learning. However, this proposal is being made before a process to acknowledge them has been developed.

Griffin: In the short term, the approval process will be very simple.

Werum: If there are about CAS 100 courses, what is the proportion of students who take one of those courses?

Griffin: We could estimate that number but we haven't yet identified the mechanism for recognizing things like UCARE. Even so, it will be the responsibility of UCARE to track student participation.

Kathy Castle, Communications: Given the short timeline to implementation, what are the steps the college will make over the next year toward planning?

Griffin: If it is approved, it will start one year from now which provides some time. Since Juniors and Seniors will likely drive this CDR, we'll have a few years to develop them.

Adenwalla: Experiential Learning is important but, if the burden on faculty was increased by 20%, the burden would be too great.

Button: If we leverage current college-wide, university-wide, and other opportunities, the burden will be on students to find these opportunities.

Castle: Is it possible to offer a friendly amendment to review this after a year to ensure that the mechanisms were in place?

Button: This is a Curr Comm proposal based on university language. Can this be delayed?

Griffin: The Curr Comm would prefer to delay action until the next Fall meeting.

Joe Mendola, Philosophy: Given that CAS only has 100 courses and 1/3 of students in contrast to 1500 across the university, it sounds as though there will be a burden. Have all the mechanisms been developed?

Griffin: In the Colleges of Fine & Performing Arts and Architecture, most of their courses meet the EL requirement.

Mendola: Could we define more of our courses as EL?

Griffin: It wouldn't be to our advantage. The goal is to offer meaningful activities to students in their degree.

Button: The poll will now include an option to defer until Fall.

van Roojen: If we defer, it will give the Curr Comm time to estimate how many students will meet the requirement.

Griffin: We will examine the data for this year's seniors.

The Poll results: 73% Defer discussion

7. Questions and Feedback

5:13 pm

Button: We're over time so there is no time for questions. I wanted to alert everyone to "Everytime I Talk About... Black Voices in a Time of Change: Poetry, Art, and Music" led by UNL Poets and Kwame Dawes will take place tonight at 7pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Griep