

Minutes

Faculty Council 3 October 2024

256 BSC at 3:30pm

Voting Participants: Jeffrey Bishop, Elizabeth Block, Stephanie Tennill, Brian Downes, Melissa Ochoa, Flannery Burke, George Ndege, Grant Kapla, Blythe Janowiak, Elena Bray Speth, Brenda Kirchoff, Bukky Gbadegesin, Kim Powlishta, Ruth Warner, Scott Ragland, Toby Benis, Ellen Carnaghan, Sarah Bauer, Andre Zampaulo, Ruben Rosario, Ben England

Non-voting participants: Morgan Hazelton, Emily Hite, Rob Hughes, Dan Kozlowski, Laurie Russell, Dan Nickolai, Donna LaVoie

Welcome & Greetings

- Ruben remarks we are here until 5:30pm, though some will leave early. Introduction of Scott Ragland (new VP) and Ben England (new secretary).

Opening remarks by FC President

- Ruben delivers comments about how this is a scary time in higher education, but that it behooves us to take the reins and act when we can. We can try to guide where we land, or at least have a voice in where we land. This may be a time of difficult questions and difficult answers, and we should think about how we can think differently. Let's not hide; rather, let's embrace the issues.
- CAS Dean's report on how the continuing financial challenges affect CAS
 - Framework of challenges—realities—opportunities
 - We need to re-allocate funds to areas that are profitable. The higher ed of old days is dead. We can try to dig our heels in and ride it out, but that is not a viable option. We should use our creativity and wisdom to make changes, or changes will be made to us.
 - Significant loss of ~\$40 million at start of year, half carried from last year, half from unexpected loss of revenue (global grad visa issues) and research office expenses (mismanagement of funds that needed to be cleaned). The bureaucracy around visa issues is problematic.
 - Our response was to make 4% total budget reduction (2% in June, additional 2% in August-September). CAS was spared one of the three waves of budget reductions. See Donna's slides for specific amounts and locations of cuts. We have lost one third of our staff, and some vacant faculty lines went unfilled. We need to become less reliant on adjuncts; full-time faculty may need to take on more teaching, and merit evaluations can be adjusted to weigh teaching more heavily. All deans will need to meet with business and

finance office on the 20th of each month to ensure what is present in their copy of the budget is the reality of what happens in CAS.

- Creation of three task forces to tackle the challenges. Task forces are (1) FY25 staffing efficiency, (2) FY26 revenue growth, & (3) FY27 and beyond. The core is our safety net—how can we market what we have in new ways to attract more students? These groups will provide an initial set of recommendations, but will need to work beyond the current year. These task forces are unlikely to change under a new president. Question asked: is the faculty workload group taking into account the report from the senate? Answer from Donna: yes, we have to work away from a workload unit based on hours and return to a percent-based model.
- Reality: we are spending more than we are taking in. Growth in college-age students is not expected to increase. There is a projected second demographic cliff coming in 2027; the “market share” is shrinking. Private universities—especially smaller ones—are at particular risk. We are mid-size. Students displaced from universities that close do not often transfer; rather, they choose to stop college.
- Take opportunities to teach in the core. Are there opportunities for hybrid options for courses? Are there other courses we can offer online? Working adults who want to earn a micro-credential? Non-thesis MA programs? Shorter pathways to bachelor’s degrees in certain programs?
- In terms of the budget, CAS is out of levers to pull. Another round of reductions will involve faculty being involuntarily separated from the university. Question asked: what do you mean by getting another bill (*see above about meeting on the 20th of every month*)? Answer from Donna: Every month, the finance office may or may not tell me I’m over budget, and if I’m over, they may tell me I’ll have to reduce. Comment from Ruben (FC president): the faculty manual has a policy for laying off faculty over a certain timeline, so the cuts would not be immediate. There is a process for releasing faculty with ample warning.
- Comment from Ruben: some faculty may need to change what they teach, which may have implications for the future student body. Donna: curriculum review may be a part of this process. Minimum enrollment is 12 for undergraduate and 4 for graduate-level courses.
- Question asked: hiring outside consultants was not effective; does the upper administration overestimate the competence of the board who continue to approve high-paying administrative and athletic positions? Response from Donna: in terms of athletics, there is a recruitment aspect to sports, and it can generate revenue through ticket sales. Some members of the board do indeed understand the challenges. I’ve been in the room with them.
- Question: are there opportunities for a classification of R1 or not based on our characteristics, if the criteria for R1 classification are amended? Donna: there is that conversation; the teaching and scholarship we do give us a solid reputation. Do

not de-value what is happening in CAS. Given our size, the reputational cachet of our faculty is well known.

- Question: Discount rates and OVPR are out of our control. Is there a mechanism to stop what has happened in those offices? Answer from Donna: previous VP enrollment decided discount rates were the answer, but the new person has set a higher threshold for discount rates (65% is how much we cut). OVPR may have overcommitted and had to also pay fines due to failing two audits. There is a new interim OVPR director. And there is an internal auditing team. Checks and balances must come from deans.
- Comment from Ruben: I am concerned about monthly budget report where we may have to cut faculty. FC exists to advocate for faculty, and we have a faculty manual. How well does the finance office understand the faculty procedures? Answer from Donna: the board understands; it's unclear about the finance office's understanding of the faculty manual. We must follow the manual, and it binds what we can do.
- Donna: Again, the core is our safety net. Let's not forget the joy that is teaching and the curiosity that our students bring to the classroom. When it comes to teaching loads, there is not meant to be an across-the-board increase in teaching (depending on workload policy). But we can increase teaching where there are opportunities to increase teaching. Reductions in research expectations can be implemented to account for a temporary increase in teaching. Question: is there a thought moving forward that full-time faculty can teach online? Answer from Donna: Yes if they want to, if it's approved.
- Final thoughts: everything we do matters, from the classroom to the large grants. We need to get TO the future, not THROUGH the future.

4:50pm

Memorandum from the chair of LLC

- There's a question as to whether a department chair can be an elected representative from the department. It is unclear in the by-laws.
- Department of LLC (languages, literatures, and cultures) is in the process of being changed to Linguistics, Literatures, and Cultures.

CAS Committee Reports:

- Academic Honesty (final report)
 - disbanded
- Faculty Advisory Committee (new charge from the Dean)
 - Madrid: same charge as main campus: what should we continue doing and stop doing. Looking at NTT faculty voting issues; welcoming two new NTT members.

- Graduate Curriculum Committee: there is nothing to add to the GCC proposal. No questions. VOTE: motion passes. Next meeting is October 22 and call for proposals will go out tomorrow (October 4th).
- Nominations Committee: Scott Ragland—as VP—is now chair of the nominations committee.
- Rank, Tenure, and Sabbatical Committee: no report
- Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (attachment sent): There are several changes outlined in the handout disseminated before this meeting. There are no questions. VOTE: motion passes. UCC has one new member and is now fully staffed. Call for proposals is out for this month. Will meet the third week of each month, pending schedules.
- DEI Committee: no report. Meeting is forthcoming.

University Committee Reports:

- Faculty Senate: Most recent senate meeting outlined the three working groups (task forces).
- UUCC: Met yesterday. Deadlines and priority deadlines are approaching for new courses for next academic year. Ignite seminars and collaborative inquiry are always welcome. UUCC is working on two drafts: policy on accessing seminars and collaborative inquiry courses. Second draft is about grad-level courses dual-listing with 4000-level courses. Provost office is looking at this more carefully. Likely suggestion is to have two syllabi (one for undergrad and one for grad). May try to circulate a draft soon. UUCC meetings occur one day before FC meetings, so communication is a challenge.
- UCART: no report
- GAAC: met three weeks ago and again next week. Consulting group brought in during September 2023. Reviewed administrative structure of graduate education and filed a report a year later. Provost is constituting a committee for graduate education administrative review. Will work with the faculty senate for this committee.
- UAAC: met this morning and approved language of repeating course policy. Discussed two new policies: pre-req coursework policy and incomplete course policy. Will meet again November 7th.
- Academic Program Review Council: no report
- Library Advisory Committee: no report

New Business

- none

Adjourn at 5:15pm