

Humanities and Natural Sciences College Assembly
Thursday, February 26, 2015
Bobet Hall Room 332
12:30 p.m. - 1:50 p.m.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The assembly was called to order at 12:30pm by Dean Maria Calzada in Bobet Hall 332.

In attendance:

Biological Sciences - Anderson

Chemistry - Heinecke, Koplitz, Stephenson

Classical Studies - Rosenbecker (Parliamentarian)

English - Adams, Allison, Biguenet, Eklund, Ewell, Melancon, Murphy, Schaberg, Sebastian, Welsh

History - Butler (by proxy), Eggers, Fernandez, Gerlich, Howard, Moore, Nystrom, Rupakheti, Thum

Languages and Cultures/Humanities - Doll, Farge, Kornovich, Rogers, Salmon

Mathematics/Natural Science - Kelly, Tucci

Philosophy - Berendzen, Brice, Coolidge, Gossiaux, Kahn, Mui, Peterson

Physics - Kargol, McHugh

Psychological Sciences - Dupuis, Nichols

Religious Studies - Bednarz, Goodine, Gruber, Keulman, Khan, Vacek, Wessinger (by proxy)

College of Humanities and Natural Sciences - Calzada, Quesada

Dean's Student Advisory Council Representatives - Christopher Backes, Emily Reynolds

Other Guests - Patrick Armstrong, Project Manager for Academic Affairs

II. Invocation

The invocation was given by Father Peter Rogers.

III. Approval of Minutes for January 15, 2015

There was a motion to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2015 meeting -- it was seconded, a vote was taken, and the minutes were approved.

IV. Announcements

1. Clickers: Calzada related that she had several conversations with the Parliamentarian about the use of clickers in College Assembly meetings. She noted that utilizing the technology inadvertently represents a move to secret ballots. Elaborating that there are pros and cons to the use of these devices, she asked the group if anyone objected. The issue of half-votes was raised, and Calzada responded that if there was ever any doubt in the count or if there was a close contest, a manual tally could be taken. However, she anticipates that with such a small population of half-vote holders, this won't be an issue, especially when the votes are overwhelmingly for or against an issue. She said if there were no objections, which there weren't, the group would use clickers for votes going forward.

2. President's Open House: The event date is March 14th. Calzada encouraged faculty attendance at the 8:00am breakfast to welcome students and parents, as well as the 12:30pm reception and fair.

3. Dean's Student Advisory Council (DSAC): Calzada introduced the DSAC Speakers, Christopher Backes and Emily Reynolds.

4. Calzada's final announcement was that she had attended a meeting of the group working with external consultant Lucie Lapovsky on the long-term financial equilibrium of the university, noting that the process will likely take the whole year. She was pleased to report that it will be a transparent process, and that in the

next few weeks there will be a mechanism for everyone to give specific feedback as to where they think the school can save money and make money.

5. Dr. Ralph Tucci announced that the university recently approved a Computer Information Systems major that was created between Math and Business. It will start in Fall 2015. He reminded the group that Math also houses minors in Computer Science and Computational Science, adding that he feels that in the 21st century it is reasonable for any student who graduates from college to have at least one computer programming course.

6. Dr. Christopher Schaberg announced an upcoming event: The Center for Faculty Innovation will be having a showcase for recent recipients of Marquette fellowships, and faculty research and development grants etc. It will be on Friday, March 13th, on the first floor of the library.

7. Dr. Mark Fernandez announced an upcoming lecture: Dr. Michael Ross, Associate Professor of History at the University of Maryland, and formerly of Loyola, will talk about his new book *The Great New Orleans Kidnapping Case: Race, Law, and Justice in the Reconstruction Era*. Wednesday March 4th, in the Whitney Bank Presentation Room.

V. Old Business

Anticipating that the Reports/Common Curriculum section of the meeting would be a lengthy discussion, Calzada asked the group if there were any objections to moving it to the final item on the agenda. There were no objections, so the next order of business became "Old Business".

Motion: The HNS College Assembly recommends to the Provost that salary increments for promotion be increased to \$3000 for attaining the rank of Associate Professor and \$5000 for attaining the rank of Professor.

Calzada asked if there was any discussion of the motion: Comments included analysis of how such a raise would affect compression issues -- some said the amounts were too low and that raising the proposed amounts would mitigate compression, while others said it would exacerbate this condition.

Comments from those against increasing the proposed amounts included a) an argument that the current raises are set at \$2,500 and \$3,500 respectively, and asking for too much might guarantee a negative response, b) a statement that assistant professors in the Humanities are not underpaid when compared to Tulane, and c) that recently hired assistant-salaries are already closing in on associate-salaries.

Comments from those in favor of higher amounts included a) that many of today's assistant professors haven't had a raise since they were hired, b) the group of people who would benefit from this annually is very small, c) a higher raise only represents a few thousand dollars in a much larger annual budget d) the raise that comes with the promotion from assistant to associate is one of the largest raises faculty members ever get so it should indeed be higher than \$3k, and e) \$3k is not in balance with the amount of work that is done at this stage of the career. For example, many who come up for tenure are expected to produce a book -- books carry costs for copyediting and images, in addition to the time and effort spent taking the book through to publishing. The school's Jesuit social-justice beliefs were cited, as was the fact that a faculty member could ask for permission to teach an extra class and receive, in exchange, an adjunct's salary of an additional \$4k for a single semester's work. To the suggestion that the figures be raised to \$5k and \$7k, Calzada reminded the group that they own this proposal and can amend it.

There was a motion to amend the amounts to \$5k and \$5k -- it was seconded, a vote was taken, and the motion passed with 28 in favor, 10 against, and 5 abstentions. The motion to recommend raises in these amounts to the

Provost passed with 34 in favor, 7 against, and 4 abstentions. Calzada said she will bring the matter to the Provost's attention at the next opportunity.

VI. Reports

Common Curriculum (CC)

Dr. John Sebastian took the floor in his capacity as Director of the Common Curriculum. He gave a presentation entitled, "Revising the Common Curriculum" (Attachment A). He noted that the work was born from the first 2 years of experiences with the new CC (launched in Fall 2013), and his goal in sharing this information is to suggest fixes for bugs in the system, and to gather feedback. Approval for any changes will require review by the SCCC, the UC&CC, and the other colleges. Overall, he emphasized that the goals of the new CC remain the same, and he is only hoping to improve the way the school arrives at those goals, for example, to boil down the rubric to something more manageable.

He began by reviewing the 5 core competencies of the new CC, followed by the original details of same. Sebastian reminded the group that the original details were immediately revised or deferred in early Fall 2013 due to financial issues which included the inability to hire the faculty needed to carry out certain components. Moving to elective-challenged majors, Sebastian related that guidelines were established to identify these groups, and many applied for this designation. He covered statistics for these populations, noting that there are more students coming into them each year -- a trend that is predicted to continue given that there are 4 more such programs starting next year. He then displayed several DPCLs from elective-challenged majors, pointing out that students therein actually pick and choose "cafeteria-style" from many options to fulfill what were supposed to be specific CC required courses.

Sebastian continued on to "Current Challenges": a) The revision process led to a larger, more complex CC, b) said complexity poses challenges to consistent advising (the DPCLs themselves can be difficult to interpret) and results in students taking unnecessary additional coursework, c) the lack of commonality (making "CC" a misnomer) creates difficulties in planning courses, as well as in performing assessment (which goes back to SACS accreditation issues), d) RAC designations were applied inconsistently and are difficult to track -- they also place additional burdens on certain programs where there are fewer options to satisfy the RACs within the program, and e) the distinction between introductory and advanced CC courses is sometimes arbitrary, the result being that students take time-sensitive courses out of order (he displayed counts of freshmen taking advanced courses and seniors taking introductory courses).

Now focusing on "Common Elements Across All Degree Programs", Sebastian displayed classes or categories that the vast majority of the departments are indeed including in their individual line-ups. He then discussed "College Restructuring" noting that beginning in Fall 2016, all programs that currently have a 51-credit CC will be in the College of Arts and Sciences, all Business degree programs will continue to have 39 credits, as will all Music and Fine Arts degree programs.

The final slides contained recommendations for moving forward:

Recommendation #1. Since 39 credits is the number that even the elective-challenged majors can accommodate, he suggested a revised new CC with 3 tiers totaling 39 hours:

1st tier. Instead of "introductory" courses, there would be a "Foundation" level with a total of 9 hours including a First-Year Seminar, English T122/Critical Reading and Writing, and a beginning Math course/T122, A115, or A257 -- all to be done in the student's first year.

2nd tier. "Knowledge courses" totaling 21 hours, including History/T122 or T124, Philosophy/T122, Religious Studies/T122 or T124, Natural Science, Writing About Literature, Creative Arts and Cultures, and Social Science

3rd tier. “Values courses” totaling 9 hours, including Foundational Ethics, a Catholic Traditions course, and a Diversity course -- values courses would have PHIL T122 or RELS T122/T124 as pre-requisites.

He said there are some things missing including History II, Religious Studies II, Philosophy II, Science II, and foreign languages -- he emphasized that it is not because they are not important, it's because these are the things that are not consistently required right now. At present, there is a large structure at which some have chipped away at to get down to something like this -- he would prefer starting with the smaller set and building on it individually:

Recommendation #2. Sebastian encouraged the development of additional college, division, or program level requirements as appropriate, urging the group to consider enhancing their programs on top of a reduced/more manageable CC, and supplementing requirements where they make sense and can indeed be completed by students. He showed a sample History DPCLs that incorporates this idea (see slide #13).

Recommendation #3. Sebastian suggested renaming the core. “Common Curriculum” sets certain expectations, and evokes thoughts of Louisiana’s “Common Core”. He offered, “Loyola Core” as an example, and invited further suggestions.

Sebastian opened the floor to feedback:

When asked how many students would be in programs requiring less than the full Common Curriculum 2 year from now, Sebastian answered 60%. Several speakers expressed discomfort with the idea of half the programs having to meet the other half at the “lowest common denominator” -- there was also concern that one half could potentially continue to lower or change re-established standards, with the other half always being forced to follow suit. Others felt that making the proposed changes after only 2 years (and before full implementation of the original plan) felt too soon: Sebastian said attempts to get certain programs to embrace the current (already reduced-credit) plan have failed, and that 2 years has been ample time to know that students are taking a “hodge-podge” of classes, with no rationale behind their choices.

While some recognized the reality of the situation, and saw the value of departments’ individually supplementing their requirements with items not being universally utilized in the existing CC, there was also concern that building out such requirements could be a difficult and time-consuming process. Discussion continued with many weighing in on possible tweaks to the options presented, including starting over from scratch, as well as not changing anything and letting the substitution policy facilitate a means for both sides to do what they need to do. Sebastian ultimately cited truth in advertising, stating that the current CC is not common, it's not a core, and what's happening now is not how the system was built or was intended to work. He feels uncomfortable talking about the new CC at orientations and having to encourage students to check what he says against their DPCLs because what he says may not actually be accurate for them. Allowing departments or colleges to supplement and build their own “cores” may alleviate these problems (recommendation #2).

Positions that favored fewer hours included references to already-excessive requirements and departments that already supplement with adjunct-courses, as well as a hope that reductions in the current “cumbersome” system would help with retention and building the student-base. Opinions in favor also included DSAC representative Reynold’s statement that she liked the model: She felt there was value in starting with a strong backbone and growing from there based on student interaction and desires; she added that when requirements are too complex, there’s potential for damage on the students’ side.

There was discussion of the items that would remain in the CC, with a focus on what a department would offer if they knew they were only going to have access to each student once: What would programs teach that would make students want to return to them, instead of having students be forced to return to them? English was scrutinized for possibly having a greater number of entries, given that in addition to ENGL T122, the odds of a

student's First-Year Seminar, Creative Arts and Cultures, and Writing About Literature (WAL) requirements falling under English were high: Sebastian volunteered that there has been exploration around emphasizing writing (more than literature) in the WAL requirement, which met with interest -- there was favor for a more widely applicable requirement of writing about texts. English was defended in that they teach 2 different disciplines: Basic writing, but also literature. It was said that without a WAL course, Loyola graduates could leave the school without a single exposure to literature.

As time ran out, talk expanded to a larger view of the issues: Arguments for or against changing the existing CC were compared to the "reality" of the situation versus the ideals of a liberal arts college. While it had been rejected earlier in the conversation, recommendation #3/"Loyola Core" was now endorsed as a means of bridging the 2 extremes. Specific concerns included what exactly would be gained by adopting the plan since HNS departments will indeed be unsatisfied and will indeed augment their individual requirements, bringing the situation full circle. The rationale for change on behalf of facilitating assessment was also questioned in that the University could identify elements from the "true" core and assess those. Others spoke of the value and rewards of a robust CC which they viewed as already on the decline, and the stated mission of the University as opposed to the "reality" of what is occurring or what this additional change would represent.

Sebastian's final remarks included a reiteration of his desire to protect the integrity of the label "common curriculum". He also said that the current situation (which some continued to suggest might be tolerable) creates a level of unnecessary complication for the University. Ultimately, his position was that this is where the University is now. He advised that should faculty reject the plan, a possible next step would be to bring in the Deans of the other Colleges, but he warned that the other Colleges are ready to embrace an official 39 hour CC.

VII. Move to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded.

Attachment A - "Revising the Common Curriculum"