

9-15-2016

Minutes, Arts & Sciences Executive Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 15, 2016

Arts & Sciences Executive Committee

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
September 15, 2016
Agenda

12:30 in CSS 167

Lunch will be served

1. Approve Minutes from September 1, 2016 (see attached)
2. New Business
 - a. Discuss agenda for faculty meeting(s) on September 22
 - b. Review of committee vacancies/structures for AY 2016-2017
 - i. FACIP
 - ii. FEC
 - iii. Board of Trustees ad hoc committee
 - c. FEC Scheduling Issue
3. Old Business
 - a. rFLA Science Proposal c/o Science Division and AAC (tabled Spring 2016)
4. Committee Reports
 - a. Curriculum Committee
 - b. Faculty Affairs Committee
 - c. Student Government Association
 - d. President
 - e. Provost



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
September 15, 2016
Minutes

PRESENT

Dexter Boniface, Emily Russell, Mario D’Amato, Ashley Kistler, Rick Vitray, Eric Smaw, Robert Vander Poppen, Matthew Cassidy, Grant Cornwell, Susan Singer, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Meribeth Huebner (for David Richard), James McLaughlin, Marc Fetscherin.

Guest: Claire Strom

CALL TO ORDER

Dexter Boniface called the meeting to order at 12:33 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 9/1/16

EC unanimously approved the minutes from the 9/1/16 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss agenda for faculty meeting(s) on September 22

Dexter Boniface

There is just one agenda item for the September 22 meeting: approval of changes to the Bylaws. Cornwell will convene the All-Faculty Meeting and recognize Vander Poppen as Parliamentarian and Russell as Secretary for this meeting. He will present a PowerPoint of key changes to the All-Faculty Bylaws, ask for someone to move approval of the whole package, then open it for discussion. It is conceivable that someone will request dividing the question. The individual who makes the request is responsible for recommending how it is divided. After the vote, Cornwell will call for a motion to adjourn the All-Faculty Meeting.

Boniface will convene the College of Liberal Arts Faculty Meeting and follow the same procedure as the All-Faculty meeting. As there isn’t enough time, all other business (approval of minutes, announcements, etc.) will be suspended for this meeting.

Again, it’s likely that someone will call to divide the question.

Kistler: Can a request be made to divide the question on bylaws that do not exist?

Vander Poppen: I will check.

Russell: We should allow the request.

A 2/3 vote is needed for the Bylaws to pass. Boniface asked EC members to e-mail their divisions encouraging them to turn out and vote next week.

Review of committee vacancies/structures for AY 2016-2017

Dexter Boniface

FACIP: Oxford has left the College, so we have a vacancy to fill on the Faculty Advisory Council to International Programs. Boniface will reach out to Coyle and Mesbah to see if they are still interested and, if so, have a run-off election.

FEC: One vacancy to fill. Boniface will present a list of eligible faculty at the next EC meeting.

BoT ad hoc committee: The Board of Trustees is seeking a small body of faculty to interact with. Cornwell said the Board chair recommends a body of 5 trustees and 5 faculty. Kistler asked if the 5 faculty will include Crummer. Yes. Because the relationship between the board members and faculty will build over time, Cornwell stressed the importance of continuity.

Boniface suggested a model that includes the elected chairs of the two faculty committees, the faculty president and vice president, and the Crummer faculty president. Kistler supports that model, but questioned the continuity of the model since committee chairs generally change each year. Cornwell stated that a year of continuity is good.

In the spirit of continuity, Vitray suggested a model that includes the two faculty presidents and a slate of three faculty who would each serve for a two-year term. Fetscherin asked about a model that includes the two committee chairs, two faculty presidents, and a slate of 1 from the faculty. EC discussed including untenured faculty on the committee. Some concern was expressed that untenured faculty might not feel free to speak openly with board members since ultimately it's the BoT who approve promotion and tenure decisions.

Kistler moved to support Boniface's proposal. Russell seconded the motion. EC unanimously approved.

FEC Scheduling Issue

Jennifer Cavanaugh

An urgent issue has risen regarding due dates of CEC letters. Because spring term will be filled with midcourse reviews, promotion to full professor reviews have been moved to fall. We now have a situation where the official due date for CEC letters is too late for

the review schedule in place. Since this is likely to become the new norm, Cavanaugh asked whether we need to change the official due date for CEC letters or just ask the three CEC chairs who are impacted by this schedule to move up the due date for their letters.

Boniface said we will tackle promotion and tenure issues eventually, but for now we should just ask the CEC chairs to submit their letters early. Cavanaugh will contact the chairs.

OLD BUSINESS

rFLA Science Proposal c/o Science Division and AAC (tabled Spring 2016)

Dexter Boniface

Boniface explained that the Science Division wants to reconfigure the “S” part of the Gen Ed Program that requires students to receive exposure to scientific thinking. The proposal was approved last spring by AAC and tabled by EC because it was received too late in the year.

Boniface met with the Science Division to express concerns raised by EC. The Division plans to revamp the rationale but the proposal will remain as written (**Attachment #1**). Boniface asked if we should wait two weeks for an updated rationale. Russell asked about timelines and whether there is an urgency to render a decision. Strom said we are fine for spring term; any version of this proposal that is approved will need to be grandfathered.

Smaw: What is the motivation for making this change?

Vitray: The primary problem is staffing the courses and will become a real problem next academic year.

D’Amato: Additionally, the science faculty believe it would be very beneficial for all of our students to have a stronger, sustained laboratory experience.

Singer: Based on research, the evidence suggests learning gains are most prominent when labs are integrated.

The proposal was tabled until the next EC meeting. Singer and Strom will meet with the science chairs to discuss the proposal.

ADJOURNMENT

Dexter Boniface

Boniface adjourned the meeting at 1:52 PM.

ATTACHMENT 1

To: Academic Affairs Committee

Proposal:

The Division of Science and Math proposes a change to Science Foundations Courses. The proposed change serves two purposes: (1) to ensure that all Rollins students complete at least one science course with a substantial lab experience and (2) to ensure that the demand for science foundations courses can be met with current staff rather than the addition of temporary or permanent new faculty positions.

CURRENT PRACTICE

The current practice for Science foundations courses is to offer a lab experience under one of three options:

- (1) The class meets for three 50 minute lectures and a separate weekly 2 hour 45 minute lab period that meets outside of lecture time. Lab and lecture are taught within the rFLA matrix. Labs meet Tuesday or Thursday morning (8:00-10:45 am).
- (2) The class meets during the Tuesday/Thursday time block (8:00-10:45 am). For the majority of the meetings the class is 75 minutes in duration. It is at the instructors discretion to use the full time block for a laboratory experience 6-8 times during the semester.
- (3) The class meets for either three 50 minute or two 75 minute lectures and includes infrequent laboratory experiences infused into the lecture time.

PROPOSED CHANGES

- (1) All 100-level and 150-level Science Foundations courses will include a lab which meets at least six times a semester for 2 hours and 45 minutes or the equivalent number of hours at the discretion of the instructor. Labs enable students to understand scientists' way of knowing and will be taught as such – there is no particular skill set attached to the lab.
 - a. All 100-level and 150-level Science Foundations courses will be taught by a scientist (i.e. someone with a Ph.D. in a scientific discipline)
- (2) 200-level Science Foundations courses will not include a lab but have a prerequisite of the student earning credit for BIO 120, CHM 120, PHY 120, PHY 130, ENV 225, and PSY 255 (or the equivalent course via transfer credit) – no exceptions. These prerequisite courses all include a weekly 3 hour lab period.
 - a. 200-level Science Foundations courses can be taught by any faculty member at the College.
 - b. While many of the students that earn credit for the above prerequisite course are science majors, many are not. Students often complete the first course in a science major and then decide to major in disciplines outside the sciences.
- (3) Overloads will not be allowed in S courses if seats are open in other S courses.
- (4) As is the current procedure, science foundations courses taught by faculty from outside the Division must be approved by the Division Chair in consultation with the Science Division departmental chairs.

RATIONALE

Under the previous general education program every student was required to take two science courses, one of which included a laboratory experience. As a division we agreed that one science course with a laboratory experience was appropriate for the structure of the new foundations curriculum. The majority of the S courses offered to date follow current practice option 3 above (lab infused into lecture). Given the critical importance of science in today's world abandoning the full laboratory requirement has been a serious mistake. Labs are where students learn the unique and critical feature of the natural sciences, direct analytical and quantitative observation of physical reality. Teaching science without students having a significant experience in a lab is like teaching literature without having students write or teaching a language where students never speak. A critical part of experimental science is making a mistake, recognizing the mistake, and taking the time to account for the mistake. The truncated and infused labs do not allow students to appreciate this. Science courses without a sustained lab experience are highly prone to become courses about science rather than what science actually is. If continued, the infusion of labs in the science component of the general education curriculum will be detrimental to the education of our students, weaken the pedagogical reputation of Rollins College,¹ and hinder our ability to recruit and retain outstanding faculty in the division.

To maintain the high teaching quality in both our general education and majors curricula that Rollins is known for, our science courses must be taught by tenured/tenure-track faculty. Even if one ignores the ongoing administrative headache of hiring and mentoring a cycle of temporary faculty (visitors, post docs, and adjuncts), the quality of the instructor is never guaranteed. As a division we recognize the creation of new tenure-track lines is not feasible based on economic and physical (office/lab space) constraints.

The director of the general education program has determined that the division must offer 35 foundations course per year. Given the current planned staffing in the science division and the major course demands, we estimate a capacity for offering 20-22 foundations courses per year at the 100-150 level. The additional 13-15 courses may be taught by any faculty member, pending approval via our current policy. The majority of these 13-15 courses will be at the 200-level without a lab, but we anticipate that faculty from departments who taught "O, N" courses under the previous general education curriculum (e.g. psychology, anthropology) would teach courses at the 100-150 level with the required lab.

Concern has been voiced that the 200 level courses will only be populated by science majors and therefore not in the spirit of the foundations curriculum. The number of students who complete the introductory science courses and leave the sciences is conservatively estimated at 50%. In addition, we think it would be a valuable experience for our science majors to matriculate in more courses outside of the Bush building, seeing science taught from a more interdisciplinary perspective.

¹ A recent survey of peer institutions found that six out of seven required all students to take a science course with a lab.

