

## Faculty Council Minutes

Wednesday, February 3, 2010, Drake Room

In attendance: Dean Lenz, Chair Darcie Vandegrift, Chinh Dao, Jeff Karnicky, Dan Alexander, Megan Brown, Sarah Plum, Leslie Marrs, Joseph Schneider, Melisa Klimaszewski, Michael Haedicke, and David Courard-Hauri.

Meeting began at 3:30 PM

Dean Lenz updated Faculty Council on the discussion from Cabinet meeting of the week prior. Items of discussion included:

- Teacher of the Year Selection Committee
- Divisional Meetings
- Changes to the Faculty Handbook

A proposed amendment to the Faculty Handbook would change the service commitment on the promotion and tenure (P and T) committee from three years to two years.

The rationale for the change was that very few faculty serving on the P and T complete all three years of the appointment. Of seventeen recent members, only three served the entire three year terms. Assuming department chair makes individual faculty ineligible for P and T, and sabbaticals also reduce committee membership. Changing length of service will make it less of an imposition and burden on faculty.

David Courard-Hauri moved to pass the Faculty Handbook amendment. Dan Alexander seconded this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Additional updates from Dean Lenz included:

- This year as last, The University is preparing a contingency plan and a contingency budget. This prepares Drake with a course of action if enrollment goals are not reached. As part of this process, colleges are asked, "If you had to cut 10% of the budget, what would go and in what order?" Among the first things to go would be expenses from the Dean's office. Department operating budgets and instructional budgets would be protected. This is repeat planning from last year.

- There have been approximately 5500 applications to Drake for academic year 2010-2011. This is at record or near-record levels. In terms of students admitted, the number is about even with this same time last year. There are about 1000 applications that have yet to be processed.
- Faculty are encouraged to attend a staged reading of *Inherit the Wind*. Dennis Goldford, Elizabeth Robertson, and Craig Owens are among some of the members of the college that will be involved. Following the performance, there will be a round table discussion which will include Muir Eaton, Stephen Faux, and others. This event is being hosted as part of the engaged citizen theme for this year.
- Starting July 10<sup>th</sup> 2010, The University must comply with the Higher Education Opportunity Act. Provisions require that instructors make available to students when they register for classes, a list of textbooks so that students may anticipate these costs. At Drake, this will be in effect for the spring registration. When students register, there will be provided a link to the bookstore listing the books with the pricing. Faculty are asked to put in their orders with the bookstore. This is anticipated to improve book buyback programs and enable students to shop national markets for their texts. Disclaimers may be used to inform students that additional materials might be used and required for class. There was concern expressed about what would happen between the time following registration and the start of the fall term if new textbook editions were released. This should not keep faculty from using newer editions.
- Renovation of Harvey-Ingham Room 104 will happen this summer with the goal of having the newly renovated classroom available for fall classes.
- Drake will be the beneficiary of another generous gift from the Turners. In 2008, the Turners provided an endowment for a professorship in jazz studies. This year they will be providing the largesse for a Turner Jazz Center to be located near the Fine Arts Center.

#### Discussion of the Drake Curriculum Proposal

Faculty Council expressed concern over the timeline for consideration of the Drake Curriculum proposal. The proposed changes are sweeping and can have tremendous impact on how The University operates. Sufficient time should be permitted for an increased awareness of the changes and for full opportunity to provide feedback. The timeline provided by the UCC has it making its recommendations to Faculty Senate near the end of February.

Council members suggested ideas to increase and facilitate the dialogue on the proposed reforms. 1) The major divisions in Arts and Sciences should be solicited. The humanities would meet to discuss the proposal. The natural sciences faculty have met to discuss the potential impacts of the proposal. 2) The wording on the questionnaire/survey could have been worded to facilitate more of a discussion. 3) There should be more public forums available for discussion.

It is critical that the new curriculum be embraced and strongly held by the faculty. The faculty own the Drake Curriculum.

Comments, criticisms, and questions originating from the discussion:

#### Process, Implementation, Resources

- Resources dedicated to proposal are not sufficient – reforms will demand smaller classes and require more faculty
- New faculty hires should be contingent on commitments to the general education curriculum, this is not unprecedented on campus – new hires in English, for example, are obligated to teach a first-year seminar
- Excited about the proposed reforms – “Lots of great stuff” in the proposal
- How much of the plan is already being done without us even knowing it?
- The implementation plan needs to be clearer and to make certain that “ducks be in a row”. For example, there should be concrete proposals to fill the J-term. There should be an accurate estimation in the increases in faculty workload and an explanation on how these increases will be handled.
- There has not nearly been enough discussion from the faculty
- There should be a more detailed plan available before it is taken to a vote – a more substantial two or three year plan should be provided
- There should be meetings across colleges about the potential impact of the changes
- What is being ‘fixed’ with the new proposal? We must be doing something right. Proposal should not be considered in haste.
- There should be a full faculty vote.
- Unsure about the long-term affects – How will this affect what we do?
- Concerned over the amount of ‘central planning’ that was involved
- Desire to have longer and more systematic discussions of the proposal, a year is perhaps too much because it might stifle improvement, the proposal has been out there a long time, favors a spring discussion

#### Electronic Portfolios

- Workload issues surrounding assessment of the portfolios
- Concerns over combining the writing and critical thinking AOs
- Questions over the outcomes and purpose of the e-portfolio
- Uncertainty over how e-portfolio classes will be taught, especially by faculty with no prior experience with the technology and uncertainty about using undergraduates to instruct portfolio construction
- E-portfolios should be optional

### Areas of Inquiry

- Faculty are troubled by the ways writing is being talked about, in particular with the idea that written communication can happen anywhere
- Students need more writing classes and opportunities to do good writing
- Engaged citizen requirement isn't working the way it ought to work
- The critical thinking AOI should not be lost
- Current curriculum lacks meaningful outcomes for each of the AOIs, and new proposal is an attempt to making teaching in areas more intentional

### Integrative Seminars

- Council expressed concerns about the staffing needed for the integrative seminar. Finding the faculty to teach the First Year Seminar has been difficult. Who will teach the integrative seminar? If there are no volunteers, will there be mandates? How will this be fair?
- If there is an intentional attempt to sequence the curriculum, this should be phased in and piloted.

### January Term, Experiential Learning

- Travel seminars must be faculty driven and there should be faculty representation on the risk assessment task force with regard to these travel seminars. These classes are part of the curriculum and faculty need to be the dominant voices.
- The idea of having an option of a concentrated class is a good one
- Appreciation over the flexibility of a reduced semester

Council proposed a resolution to delay the timeline of consideration of the Drake Curriculum.

*Faculty Council: Resolved that the timeline be extended for the duration of the spring semester, with a decision taken in Fall 2010. In order to hold more systematic, planned conversations across the A&S faculty to discuss the proposed curriculum changes in due course but without haste. We encourage UCC to also sponsor cross-college meetings to discuss the curriculum changes. Faculty should set the curriculum of a campus, and this cannot be done without sustained conversation. We also call for the UCC to recommend that the proposed changes go to a full faculty vote.*

Resolution moved by Leslie Marrs, and seconded by Dan Alexander. Measured passed with unanimous vote.

4:26PM Representatives from Uganda program were invited into faculty council.

Glenn McKnight from history and Jimmy Sentenza and Tom Root both from the College of Business and Public Administration generously offered to address questions from Faculty Council.

Questions from council members had been forwarded to program representatives electronically and were directly addressed during this meeting.

#### Background on the bill in question

The bill was introduced in October to the Ugandan parliament. The sentiment from representatives is that the bill is unlikely to pass: 1) The bill is a private members bill and is not parliamentary sponsored. Most private members bills are defeated. 2) The bill doesn't have much traction and the executive has distanced itself from the bill. Cabinet members have distanced themselves from the bill. 3) There is foreign pressure to reject the bill. Uganda is largely dependent on foreign aid and it constitutes approximately 50% of Uganda's budget.

The general opinion is that the bill will not pass, even though there is some popular support.

#### Background on the Uganda program

The safety of students on the program is of primary concern and a great deal of emphasis is placed on safety. This is an important learning experience for students and a wonderful experience for students who go. In previous years, students were made aware of these issues. They met with the head of a human rights initiative and were able to ask this individual questions and discuss important topics with them. Students also met with the editorial board of two newspapers and discussed issues surrounding freedom of press. Students comment on these discussions and issues in their journals. The bill has been discussed in class.

Students discuss the role of foreign aid and how this can change the culture and add pressure. There are pre-trip meetings in which topics of safety, sustainable development, and travel are discussed. We talk about what you do and how you are expected to behave.

#### *What if the bill passes?*

It is an unfortunate situation, but there is little possibility of its passage. The sentiment is that a few individuals are using this for political gain. Some measures are already being taken and we are talking about what happens if this passes and we continue to be mindful of the situation and assess the it over time. We are explicitly addressing overall safety issues in preparing students for the trip. We go over how to act in any context.

Discussion raised larger issues about travel courses among council members

- Concerns about placing students in an environment where there is explicit homophobia
- Care needs to be taken in applying certain labels to countries
- There has been a boycott of certain countries -- Darfur and Sudan being examples.

- Cannot dismiss the risks to students. Risk assessment stage covers a whole range of items. Who is on the risk assessment task force? Are there faculty on this committee?
- Are we scrutinizing this more because this Africa?
- In some countries there is general danger. Are we sending to the country where the official policy would put students under arrest?
- Consideration in changing credit hours. What does service learning in terms of service learning? What about internships? How is a grade assigned for it?

Faculty Council tabled discussion of strategic plan until the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by David Courard-Hauri. Joseph Schneider seconded motion. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:58P

Minutes respectfully submitted by Chinh Dao