

Drake University Faculty Senate Minutes

January 26, 2022

President Matthew Zwier called the regular meeting of the Faculty Senate to order at 3:30 pm, Wednesday, January 26, 2022. The following senators were present for all or part of the meeting: Rachel Allen-McHugh, Eric Barnum, Hope Bibens, Michelle Bottenberg, Megan Brown, Debra DeLaet, Matt Doré, Catherine Gillespie, Anisa Hansen, Matthew Hayden, Sandy Henry, Paul Judd, Chris Kliethermes, Kevin Lam, Natalie Lynner, Erik Maki, Joan McAlister, Lynn McCool, Charlie Nelson, Jimmy Senteza, Priya Shenoy, Carol Spaulding-Kruse, Neil Ward, Greg Wolf, and Shelley Fairbairn.

The December 1, 2021, minutes were approved on a voice vote, motion by Debra DeLaet, seconded by Michelle Bottenberg.

Contents

Report from President Zwier	1
President Martin's report	1
Provost Mattison's report	2
Unfinished business: None known	3
New business	3

Report from President Zwier

- Report from Board of Trustees Meeting:
 - University CIP: Assessment efforts have been helpful and are appreciated.
 - Approval of small increase to tuition and fees: During discussion the Board expressed deep concern about faculty/staff pay. The Board agreed to deficit budget to make sure there is a pool for merit pay raises.
 - Student mental health plans: During discussion the Board expressed strong support for the plans, and explicitly expressed concern for faculty/staff mental health.
- COVID: Decision was made to go fully online the first two weeks of spring semester to minimize any disruption to classes and to make sure Drake does not and exceed its capacity to isolate on campus students. Former Holiday Inn Expressed has now been made available for isolation, as well.
- News item from Colleges and Schools: Joan McAlister worked closely with Shannon Hilscher, online instructional design, in December and January. "What she did for accessibility and clarity was stunning." The online office has a deep commitment to making sure students have the best experience they can.
- There was no report from the Student Senate, as the semester is just getting underway.

President Martin's report

- Campaign update: Currently at \$121 million with a strong pipeline. The goal is \$132

million by end of this fiscal year, and indications are we will exceed that.

- Board of Trustees report
 - Holiday Inn Express: The property is owned by Drake and was leased out. The hotel is no longer operating, and the Board looked at either keeping the property or selling. The Board wants to keep the property as an asset, and convert it to a student residence hall.
 - Revision of the by-laws were adopted, and included:
 - Creation of Leave of Absence provisions.
 - Revisions of conflict of interests policy.
 - Updated committee language to reflect current structure.
 - Adoption of term limits for trustees
 - Approved an MOU for the Ross block: This includes Ross Hall and the Norman and McCoy Apartment Buildings. Ross is not being used as residence hall, but is used for COVID isolation. The cost to renovate it for use as residence hall would cost up to \$6 million, for a gain of only 110 beds. Drake has made no commitment to sell the Ross block, but the MOU allows us to explore this.
 - Merit pool: The Board approved a deficit budget to fund merit increases. Admission and retention results will determine the amount available in the pool.
- COVID Update
 - 15 students in isolation in Ross Hall
 - 20 students in isolation off campus
 - 43 students are in quarantine.
 - Some students are staying home for now and will test when they come back.
- Missouri Valley Conference: The University of Illinois, Chicago, just joined the conference, bringing membership up to 12 for next year.
- CUSP: Conducting a gap analysis and business process alignment. The ERP vendor to be chosen will be common for all four institutions, and we need to have business processes aligned so little customization will be needed.
- Admissions: Moving applicants into admits and on to yield. We need to do our best work to bolster these efforts.

Provost Mattison's report

- Move-in testing: 4.6 positivity rate.
- Board of Trustees, Teaching & Learning Committee Report
 - Catherine Staub – approved as new dean of SJMC.
 - Gratitude and praise for retiring Dean Kathleen Richardson. Her leadership has kept SJMC sustainable and relevant in a changing media landscape.
- Discussion: Clarification on current status of ABA and the proposed online program.
 - Low enrollment – program was not sustainable and below what was proposed to the Board
 - Having both F2F and an online program would not be sustainable because of the duplication of classes
 - Very recently received additional information on funding, so a decision to suspend enrollment in the program has been tabled until April
 - The decision to move the program totally online came from market research. Capella University continues to have a large share of this market

- Drake will develop an online program if the funding is received. The faculty are agreeable to the transition to online, as it is a way to continue the program.

Unfinished business: None known

New business

Discussion of conversion of January-term to a May-term. No motion is on the table at this time.

- What are our choices?
 - No change – leave J-term as is
 - Convert to May-term
 - Retain J-term for now, until we have time to consider more fully
- The idea came out of a broad conversation on how to move forward, while living with COVID
- COVID presents some particular challenges with J-term
 - J-term happening right after holiday (lots of gatherings with family and friends), and at the peak of winter.
 - There has been a disruption of classes because of the number of positive cases.
 - International travel this year: They did well, completing 7 trips with 120 students. There were two students who tested positive and couldn't go. While on trips, 16 student and 3 fac/staff tested positive, which is 13.9 percent positivity rate.
 - (Shout out to Global Engagement staff. They worked 24-7 over winter break, including their holidays, and right through these first weeks of spring semester to allowed this J-term to happen.)
- Other considerations that have emerged
 - Travel courses sometimes have difficulty with January travel from Iowa. It's hit or miss.
 - Student financial planning: J-term is connected with spring semester for financial aid. If a student takes a 3-credit J-term plus a 9-credit spring semester, that totals 12 credits for a full schedule for financial aid. However, if a student takes a 3-credit J-term and 18-credit spring semester, that totals 21 credits, so it changes their financial aid and they must pay for an overload at \$1100/credit-hour. Moving J-term to a May-term, May could be counted separately, with no overload fee for students.
- What might it look like?
 - Spring semester would start Jan. 9-10.
 - Spring semester would end and commencement would be the end of April.
 - Seniors who need the May term to graduate could still walk.
 - Spring break can still align with DMPS.
- Benefits
 - Internships and jobs could start mid-May (if not taking May-term), which would give students an advantage on getting those placements
 - Allows FY students to take a May experience
 - It will avoid peak COVID times
 - It would provide for more outdoor activities while traveling and for field work, reducing the risk of COVID

- There would be a consistent length for May-term
- Without the long 5-week winter break, it could improve retention

Clarification Questions

- Relative cost per student: Will May-term be different than Summer? Currently, J-term is part of spring semester. We can keep May term the same. There would be no additional tuition for May term; it would be part of spring semester.
- Could May-term still be paid or course release for faculty? Yes, this would be the same. What if a faculty member chooses a course release, taken in spring semester, and then the May-term does not fill? Maybe the course release could be held over to fall – would have to look at that.

Jenny Tran-Johnson shared example calendars

Discussion

- Graduate weekend classes in the summer. They do not want a change in the summer schedule. If spring semester starts the 3rd week of January, it does encroach on summer.
- Preference for the calendar option that avoids overlapping finals/graduation with relays weekend.
- Budget question: J-term is offered to students with no tuition, while they pay for summer classes. Students may opt for a May-term experience, rather than a summer course. Are students going to stop taking as many summer classes, which they pay for? Shifting the “term” experience so close to summer may blur lines and alter the budget models. Response: Don’t feel there would be a budgetary impact. Summer courses would be the same.
- If there is a higher demand in May, will there be enough faculty? Response: We want to maintain the integrity of the purpose: to provide an extraordinary experience for students that they wouldn’t get in regular semester or summer courses. We’ve remained true to that for the most part, except for retention efforts.
- Comparison to another institution that had a May-term. Summer classes were not typically a popular option, but May-term was. Students were able to use May-term to boost GPA/credit count.
- CBPA faculty comments:
 - May term would be less popular because students will want to get started on internships.
 - Could we lower semester tuition and charge for J-term?
 - Travel is cheaper in January than in May.
 - Some students work over winter break, and shortening that break reduces what they can earn.
 - Some faculty appreciate the 5 week break.
 - Would first years be allowed to take May term for credit?
- Concerns and comments shared with Senators via email:
 - J-term is successful and travel seminars are only 10% of the offerings.
 - Travel disruptions depend on location, with some places listed as destinations (on website) more impeded in May rather than January (according to international data).

- May term would reduce summer enrollments and shorten breaks in both Winter and Spring.
- Adding May-term to J-term is the best way to create options without ending a successful program.
- Students have frequently expressed that J-term is important for their mental health. Some students are going home to an environment that is not ideal, and the January experience is good for them.
- What do students prefer? Student Senate will work on getting this input.
- Some faculty have done both J-term and May-term. Let's be sure to include those who have taught both in this discussion.
- Quick transition from J-term to spring semester is hard on students and faculty.
- Can't have a J-term trip to South Africa because the time from travel to the start of spring semester class is too short to allow students to process their experience.
- Could we agree to be flexible and see how it goes. When we started J-term, we didn't commit to it forever.
- Admissions has said J-term has a been draw. Can they market May-term the way they do J-term?
- The current calendar is good for environmental science. There is a narrow window for doing field classes in spring semester and completing Capstone projects in spring. If we move the semester up two weeks, we won't be able to conduct those field classes. It probably affects Biology as well.
- COVID is a concern. We have students stuck in quarantine in Hungary right now.
- It will be important to keep spring break after mid-term, and aligned with DMPS.
- Would like to hear more about the health-based reasons for making this change. In particular, let's look at the local data, at Drake here on campus. If the reason is COVID, I want to hear more about that.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm, on a motion by Deb DeLaet, seconded by Megan Brown.

Chat Discussion

From Megan Brown to Everyone 04:40 PM

In the interest of time I will place this constituent's comment in the chat for the minutes—it is similar to what Deb has just said: "Expanding May offerings would likely reduce enrollment in summer courses, because I suspect that a student who takes a class in May is less likely to want to then take a class in June as well. I know several students who have taken J-term classes and also taken summer classes. They've all told me they enjoy the short break between the end of the spring semester and the start of summer classes. I think losing that break would not benefit them."

From Charles Phillips to Everyone 04:41 PM

I believe tuition was raised by 1% for all students when J-term was implemented, so that was a baseline increase that has moved forward every year. So I believe they are paying for J-term (although it might not cover costs any more). Am I missing a piece of information on that?

From Sandy Henry to Everyone 04:42 PM

Do we have data on the number of students who take J-term, who take summer classes, and who

take both?

From Debra DeLaet to Everyone 04:45 PM

It seems unlikely that graduating seniors would want to participate in May term.

From Rachel Paine Caufield to Everyone 04:46 PM

Congress would not be possible during a May term. It is only possible if we can be in Washington in January. I may be the only one for whom this is an issue, but it's a popular class and an important opportunity for my students to have an immersive experience that significantly enhances students' professional networks and prospects. I'm not sure I would move it to May simply because Congress is often in recess in May and there's no big centralizing event like those that exist in January. In addition, a significant number of my students do summer internships, so a May trip would be difficult for them.

From Melisa Klimaszewski to Everyone 04:50 PM

Just some points of information: I have had seniors take May travel courses for their final credits in order to graduate. Airfare and hotels have not been less expensive in January than they were in May. I have had multiple students mention that going home for the long J-term is detrimental. Just a few thoughts.

From Jennifer Harvey to Everyone 04:52 PM

I also have many students @MKlimaszewski who don't do J-term for whom so long at home over break is very difficult, and can impede academic focus when they return.

From Shelley Fairbairn to Everyone 04:53 PM

It's very hard to teach a J-term travel seminar and go right into the spring semester — you may still be grading J-term work during the first week of the spring semester.

From Rachel Allen-McHugh to Everyone 04:53 PM

Very intentional conversations will need to be had with graduate programs such as the OTD program that may not be able to shift dates for Fieldwork Experiences that are embedded within the spring semester and span the Spring semester.

From David Courard-Hauri to Everyone 04:57 PM

One quick thought about travel seminars: I use the fact that students return to campus to hold our post-travel reflection. I suppose that could be done online, but it will be a very different conversation in May when students have gone home.

From Amber Guzzo to Everyone 05:00 PM

I am not a senator, however, from a student perspective I have a few concerns about students mental and financial health. Many students are burnout by the end of the semester and I have concerns with students turning around and taking a time-intensive course. Additionally, Drake West Village is a common housing place. If students have the opportunity to end their lease at the end of the semester vs. the end of May term, I worry some students might choose to not take advantage of the wonderful May term opportunity in order to save money on rent. Of course, I will have more student feedback to come.