Arts and Science Faculty Council

Minutes of Council

Meeting #: 20
Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2016
Time: 4:00 p.m.
Location: Room 9-323 (Kule Theatre)
Initial Motion #: 126

Present:
C. Monk (Chair)        M. Degner,  M. Jarick,  R. Mewhort,  T. Smereka,
B. Snejflella          N. Digdon,  K. Judge,  C. Panjvani,  A. Spah,
(Secretary)           S. Digweed,  S. Jung,  A. Penney,  J. Stepinsky,
L. Amundson,           P. Farvolden, K. Kim-Bernard, H. Pick,  C. Striemes,
C. Bailey,             K. Friesen,  R. Knos,  R. Powell,  P. Sullivan,
N. Beke,               L. Gelmini,  S. Krys,  J. Robinson,  A. Taciuc,
C. Blatz,              D. Grant,  R. Lepp (Student),  M. Ross,  K. Thurairajah,
F. Boag,               T. Hamilton,  J. Llano,  C. Ruiz Serrano,  J. Toth,
JC. Boucher,           K. Harcombe,  M. Mark,  M. Schalomon,  T. Vongpaisal,
M. Carroll,            V. Henitiuk,  D. Martin,  R. Schmalz,  D. Watson,
C. Colonescu,          M. Hills,  D. McGugan,  M. Sekulic,  J. Withey,
S. Copland,            A. Howell,  V. McLean,  R. Shaw,  R. Wiznura,
K. Corrigall,          B. Irwin,  R. Meleshko,  J. Skeffington,  R. Wojtowicz
J. Davis,              S. Islam,  C. Mensah,  A. Skye,

Regrets
E. Beltaos, E. Ferede,  D. Locky,  N. McKeown,  M. Perschon
N. Bernstein, E. Hollis-Berry,  E. Lorkovic,  D. McMann,
I. Bica, L. Honey,  S. Manouchehri,  B. Migaj,
K. Bitner, Indratmo,  D. McFadyen,  S. Mills,

Move into Session: The meeting was called to order by Craig Monk at 4:03 p.m.

Item I
Motion #126 Adoption of Agenda
That the Agenda be approved without additions.
Motion: carried

A. Skye / R. Powell
Item II  
Approval of Minutes of Faculty Council #19, December 2, 2015 (Enclosure 1/p.1)

Motion #127  
That the Minutes of Faculty Council #19, December 2, 2015, be approved as presented.

M. Carroll / S. Islam  
Motion: carried

Item III  
Items Arising from the Minutes

- None raised.

Item IV  
AGC Update

- Approved curriculum changes for Faculty of Arts and Science recommended in Fall 2015
- Added Group D subjects under the Admissions General Criteria
- Revised Admission Criteria for: Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science,
- Received an update on the proposed co-curricular record (Arts and Science was presented with the approach in Fall 2015)

Item V  
Dean’s Report

- Cynthia Zutter, Department of Anthropology, Economics, and Political Science, has been appointed Vice-Provost. Council Executive Committee has appointed Mike Seredycz, to complete her term on Research and Professional Development Committee.
- Performance Evaluation was completed during December and January. 152 colleagues were rated “satisfactory,” 18 received either a “meritorious” or “unsatisfactory” review. Our approach to performance management continues to mature.
- Feedback on the Performance criteria document has been received and is being incorporated by Dr. Jeff Stepnisky, as Co-Chair of Executive. It will return to Council for approval in April.
- 13 promotion applications have been forwarded to the University Promotion Committee from our Faculty. UPC nominations are open and Senior colleagues not serving on an ARPC are encouraged to put themselves forward for election.
- Colleagues could be better supported in preparing their annual reports and promotion dossiers. We continue to talk with Café about how this can be done, and Faculty Research and Professional Development Committee has been charged with formalizing/improving our mentoring with regards to career advancement, and preparing annual reports and promotion dossiers which demonstrate our Faculty’s achievements.
- Chairs Jillian Skeffington in the Department of English and Jeff Stepnisky in the Department of Sociology have applied for reappointment. After departmental feedback is received and reviewed, I will meet with Dr. Skeffington and Dr. Stepnisky to discuss, and then make recommendations to the Provost.
All six recommendations for sabbatical in 2016-17 have been approved: congratulations to Elaine Beltaos, Shelley Boulianne, Mike Carroll, David Grant, Trevor Hamilton, and Jeff Stepnisky.

The first Alberta “Sunshine List” will be published in the summer. The salary ranges for administrators were provided at a previous Council meeting. Those with over $125,000 reported in Box 14 of their T4 are expected to have full details of their compensation revealed.

Tamara Bruins-Smith and Bronwyn Snefjella in the Dean’s Office are working on a more coordinated approach to communications on Faculty events. Chairs will keep you updated.

There will be searches for 13 new hires in Arts and Science this year. Thanks to the search committees for their work on this major task.

The University Budget Advisory Committee has approved one-time funds to upgrade delivery of first-year Psychology courses and for four new hires (of the 13 slated). By 2018-19 these initiatives need to be self-sustaining. Finances are tight given the implications of oil price decline. Chairs have been asked to update their -3% budget exercises.

With help from Executive Committee and the Dean’s Advisory Group, members of the Dean’s Cabinet working on an approach to our Field Course offerings. Colleagues interested running a field course in summer 2017 should contact Rob Wiznura as soon as possible. The early deadline is at the request of departments which want more certainty.

Workload and course assignment are now separate. Workload has been determined, however, course assignment has been delayed and now falls outside the schedule set out in the Collective Agreement. Department Chairs are working with the Dean’s Office to assign teaching for 2016-17 as soon as possible, and will update their departments with information regarding progress.

We continue to work with Occupational Health and Safety on making Mac computers an option for members. No current, available Mac configuration meets OHS standards, so we need to develop a contingency approach where an OHS accommodation may be made by switching colleagues back to a desktop PC if they encounter issues.

The Faculty was asked by individual faculty members about making, from operating funds, a donation to the MacEwan Community Refugee Project. After speaking with members of Dean’s Cabinet, I have decided that this is not an appropriate use of discretionary funds. I will make, personally, a donation, and take this opportunity to encourage you to contribute. Information is available via the Café website.

Later on this agenda, I am facilitating a discussion about Course Release. This item was identified with Council Executive before I received a letter petitioning for a wider discussion of research support. I think open discussion is profitable. I have, recently received email from colleagues who advise that they felt hesitant to speak in opposition to course
release, not wanting to appear unambitious, and from colleagues who have advised they felt pressured to sign the letter. This should be a safe space for discussion, regardless of viewpoint. I ask of the rest of you to support and accommodate the full range of views on this matter, and encourage anyone with an opinion to express it.

**Item VI**  
**Items for Action**

*Item a)*  
*Curriculum and Program Planning Committee items (Encl. 2/p.7)*

**Motion #128**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body changes to the Program of Study and Degree Regulations for the Bachelor of Science

J. Withey / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #129**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body changes to the Program of Study for the Bachelor of Science Honours.

J. Withey / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #130**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body changes to the Program of Study and Degree Regulations for the Bachelor of Arts

J. Withey / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #131**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body changes to the Program of Study for the Bachelor of Arts Honours.

J. Withey / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #132**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body CLAS 398, CLAS 498, FREN 398, FREN 498, HIST 398, HIST 498, LATN 398, LATN 498, PHIL 398, SPAN 398 and SPAN 498.

B. Irwin / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #133**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body changes to PHIL 498.

B. Irwin / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #134**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body ECON 289.

S. Islam / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*

**Motion #135**  
That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body EDUC 100.

R. Powell / J. Skeffington  
Motion: *carried*
Motion #136

That Arts and Science Council approve and recommend to Academic Governance Council or its designated subsidiary body PABA 386, PABA 485, and PABA 486.

R. Powell / J. Skeffington

Motion: carried

Item VII

Items for Discussion

a) Emeritus Policy – Revisions for Consultation (Encls. 3/p.63 & 4/p.65)
   - The Council discussed the proposed policy in general
   - The recommendation that only full professors be eligible may limit deserving colleagues.
   - The easiest way to allow an application to go through without further vetting is to have only professors eligible; at other institutions, career associate professors are generally vetted somehow.
   - Retirement benefits like library privileges and institutional affiliation as a co-author should be retained as it also benefits MacEwan.
   - There are existing research resources available to people on retirement – a decision is needed whether this should be maintained for only Emeritus or for retired generally – Research Services should be consulted on implications.

b) Teaching Award Policy – Revisions for Consultations (Encls. 5/p.69 & 6/p.72)
   - The Distinguished Teaching Selection Committee is revising the existing Distinguished Teaching Award policy. The goal is to ensure a wide range of qualified faculty are able to receive these awards, including an emphasis on sessional faculty members.
   - Participants raised a number of questions and concerns: what is the rationale for having different tiers of awards in the proposed revisions? Would there be one primary winner, or would all six categories be celebrated at convocation? (The distinguished teaching award committee will award). Is the winner be given a different award? Suggestion for multiple provost medals for teaching and then a distinguished teaching award. Is the intent to replace the former four first place awards with one prize and five “consolations?”

c) Course release (Encl. 7/p.74)
   - The floor was opened by Council Vice-Chair Dr. Jeff Stepinsky for an open conversation based on a discussion paper prepared by Dean Monk after consultation with Council’s Executive Committee.
   - Discussion also raised a letter sent to the Dean, signed by several faculty members, recommending, primarily, course release (a reduction of the “3/3” teaching load required of faculty members with a type 1 teaching workload) for holders of major external funding to provide additional time to pursue research; reduced or modified schedules for new faculty to allow them time to develop courses; and, increased tangible recognition of effort in supervising students.
   - Participants provided a range of perspectives, recommendations and considerations: noting that other institutions take different approaches,
such as a point redeem system for course release based on student supervision; a desire to clarify the research expectations at the institutional level; recognition needs to be tangible – the main constraining factor on research is lack of time; it has been communicated to Faculty that internal grants are seed funding for pursuing external funding; the likelihood of maintaining major external grants is significantly reduced if another application is not successful in the two years following; desire to know “how much” research is required to be meritorious; mentoring students in research requires significant time/effort and should be recognized; the primary focus of faculty should remain on serving students and classroom time; work duties should be shared equally among faculty members; concern that faculty are not achieving service/research and work-life balance; any approach should be cautious not to privilege some disciplines over others given some are more amenable to external grants; the funds the university receives from Tri-Council grants could be reinvested towards course release in recognition of the time/effort of the members doing this work; and, more discussion and communication on this issue would be helpful.

- Dean Monk advised that, for the purposes of Annual Reports, supervision of students who are working on members’ research, can be credited as research and teaching.

- The discussion included consideration of the scope provided by the Collective Agreement. Members noted that it is unclear how solutions would be implemented given the document covers all faculty at MacEwan and because course load is a collective bargaining element.

- Dean Monk noted that the Collective Agreement contains two clauses to account for limited course release where there’s extraordinarily service or research (12.3.5.1(e)), or via workload averaging over a period of time (12.3.5.1(d)). These have rarely been used. Faculty members were not generally aware of the terms. Course release for service only applies to Department Chairs under a transparent process.

- Dean Monk indicated that hiring more sessional instructors as a way to allow release courses is not possible and that the current priority use of resources is reducing class size, and hiring more continuing faculty unless or until Council indicates a change of priorities.

- Faculty members were invited to send further comments based on the discussion paper to FASgovernance@MacEwan.com.
Item VIII

Items for Information

a) Minutes of Executive Committee #10, November 23, 2015 (Encl. 8/p.76)
   - No comments on Executive minutes

b) Budget Update
   - Director of Finances, Heather Pick, advised that the Faculty has a preliminary budget allocation of approximately $32 Million total; with $440,000 allotted for new hiring. The University is awaiting confirmation from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Innovation. After salaries and operations costs, the discretionary budget remaining is $900,000, however scholarships are a major item coming from this pool.
   - The Dean’s Office will try to maintain Departmental discretionary funds at current levels, however the large number of hires this term entails additional costs to the Dean’s Office. Based on current projections, the Faculty is short by $200,000, however this is typical at this stage in the fiscal cycle and generally is corrected by year end.

c) BSc Action Plan Update
   - Curriculum changes are underway. Changes to the Bachelor of Science program of study which were just passed by Council will proceed to AGC in March; all majors will require revisions to fit within the frame of the program of study; Computer Science and Mathematics and Statistics will need to increase course offerings; Physical Sciences is making larger changes; and Psychology will add new PABA (applied behavioral studies) courses. Curriculum changes will come to Faculty Council in April.
   - Blended learning and innovation aspect of the plan require further work to implement and will have a later roll-out date. All involved departments will need to look at this.
   - Workload assignment and instructional assignment – Dean’s office, under Collective Agreement
   - Student initiatives – making declaration in the spring;
   - A competitive declarations process for Psychology has boosted the quality of applicants; Biological Sciences will also implement a competitive declaration in 2017.
   - More work is required on the communications aspect of the plan. We are now advertising speaker series events monthly at the faculty level. Strategy will be in place by end of May.
   - Work on the recruitment strategy is in progress.
   - The Research and Faculty Development Committee is examining how we might enhance support for research, and a survey will be sent to Faculty Members following the Council meeting. The survey is for everyone in the faculty including non-instructional members. It is completely anonymous and will be made available as aggregate data only, with a summary brought back to Faculty Council.
Item IX  Other Business

Item X  Adjournment
  Motion #137
  Move that Faculty Council adjourn.
  A. Skye / S. Islam  Motion: carried

Item XI  Question Period
  • Not minuted.

Future meeting dates: April 25, 2016