Faculty of Arts and Science Council

Minutes of Meeting #12, April 29, 2014

1.0 The Chair, Craig Monk, called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.

2.0 Craig Monk requested that items 6.0 (Program Committee – recommendation for honours in Political Science) and 7.0 (Program Committee – amended Terms of Reference) be taken in reverse order.

MOVED THAT the Agenda be approved as amended (Bob Irwin/Karen Buro). CARRIED

3.0 MOVED THAT the Minutes of the Council Meeting #11 (February 27, 2014) be approved as circulated (Melike Schalomon/Karen Buro). CARRIED

4.0 Dean’s Report

• As this was the first Council meeting since the reorganization in the Dean’s Office was announced on March 17, Dr. Monk thanked publicly Dr. Manouchehri and Dr. Sullivan for their distinguished contributions over the years. He then reviewed the new structure, noting that emphasis had been placed on continuity across the three divisions of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences, commonality of purpose, and eliminating duplication in administration. He noted that the search was underway for an Associate Dean, Administration and that Dr. Rob Wiznura would hold the position of Associate Dean, Students for one year in advance of the search for that position.

• The new Faculty Governance Coordinator is Mark Wheller; his experience includes government, administration, research and teaching, as well as website development.

• With respect to recruitment, offers were made to five successful candidates for continuing positions in Biology, English, Earth and Planetary Sciences, Psychology, and Sociology. The search for a chemist was unsuccessful. Two limited-term appointments in Engineering and History were also made. The Dean requested that departments submit their staffing plans for the 2015-16 academic year by September 1. Faculty members who plan to retire in the near future might consult with their chairs so that recruitment for their position could be built into the upcoming plan.

• Seven probationary faculty members applied for continuing status. Of those, six were appointed, and the probation period of the seventh was extended.

• Nineteen applications for titling were submitted; of those, 14 were recommended to the University Rank and Title Committee.

• The Provost has indicated that he would like 20% of all academic activity to take place during the Spring/Summer session. Activity in the upcoming Spring/Summer session has been increased by 60%, and 73% of that increase has come from the Faculty of Arts and Science.
• Enrollment in the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science Programs has increased, in contrast to general trends elsewhere in Canada. It was noted that enrollment in Humanities programs, in particular, seem to be falling.
• Eleven applications for funding were submitted to the Tri-Council Agencies (comprised of SSHERC, NSERC, and CIHR). Of those, four were successful, and $395,000 was awarded to MacEwan University faculty by NSERC. MacEwan University is attempting to secure internal funding for applications that were recommended to Tri-Council but that were unsuccessful in receiving funding. Faculty members are urged, in general, to continue to have their applications vetted by their colleagues to demonstrate and support the value of their research.
• On April 16, the Preparation for University and College Program and the English as a Second Language Program moved from the Faculty of Arts and Science to the School of Continuing Education. Dr. Heather McRae, the School’s founding Dean, and Dr. Monk thanked the faculty and staff of the Program for their contributions.
• The Integrated Strategic Plan will go to the Academic Governance Council on May 20 and to the Board of Governors on May 22.
• Collective bargaining appears to be tense across the country, and budget reform is one of the issues rising to the forefront. There is clearly an appetite at these institutions to coordinate program planning and priorities.
• The Dean indicated that he would attend the New Western Universities annual conference in May, hosted by Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo.
• The Dean is chairing a Facilities workgroup whose goal is to ensure greater access to buildings to accommodate students and faculty during off hours.
• In response to a question, Dr. Monk explained that the title of Director of Program Services would be reviewed as part of the ongoing process to harmonize functions. He also mentioned that there will be opportunity for increased scope for the advisors.

5.0 Faculty Annual Reports – presentation by MacEwan Human Resources and discussion

Sharon Richardson spoke to the automation of annual reports. She outlined some of the difficulties prior to automation and explained that the entire process has now been standardized and built into PeopleSoft. Following extensive consultation, the template was launched school-wide in January 2014.

A number of questions concerning apparent glitches in the software were raised; the technology team is working to rectify problems as they arise, and any problems should be brought to Sharon’s attention.
6.0 Program Committee – amended Terms of Reference

The name has been changed to point clearly to both program and curricular matters, and the Terms of Reference have been amended to reflect this and other changes. It was pointed out that the Director title in the Membership section needs to be updated to the current one.

MOVED that the revised Terms of Reference of the Program and Curriculum Committee be adopted with the noted amendment (Melike Schalomon/Jonathan Withey). CARRIED

7.0 Program Committee – recommendation for honours in Political Science

The program proposal was discussed. No new courses are necessary at this time beyond what was already planned. This includes the summative research project whereby a student will work with one faculty member for the duration of a semester, and the topic will be based on the experience that student has garnered over the four years of study.

MOVED that Council recommend to APPC that Political Science be listed as a discipline in which Bachelor of Arts students can seek to acquire an honours designation (Shahid Islam/Gaelan Murphy). CARRIED

8.0 Faculty Budget

Heather Pick provided a budget update, projected to be $29,952,367 for the 2014-15 academic year. Budget allocations for the Preparation for University and College Program and ESL have been transferred to the School of Continuing Education. The Faculty of Arts and Science will have to bear the cost of increments for the upcoming year. The cost of living adjustment is not yet known, and neither is the revenue from the current Spring/Summer Term. Although there is a shortfall of some $840,000 for the upcoming year, there will be some mitigation through faculty absences, retirement, and position vacancies. The budget has been submitted, and approval is expected by the end of June.

9.0 Adjournment

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned (Lynne Honey/Karen Buro). CARRIED

10.0 Question Period

An unminuted question period was available for interested faculty members.