

## **Natural Sciences and Mathematics Council Meeting Minutes 18 September 2018 in MH4009 3:30-5:00 PM**

### **Call to Order**

- Presiding: Kathy Shan
- Present: Alessandro Arsie, John Bellizzi, Terry Bigioni, Maria Diakonova, Kathy Fisher (secretary), Michael Heben, David Krantz, Brenda Leady, Tom Megeath, Kristi Mock, Von Sigler, Rebecca Sturges and Sibylle Weck-Schwarz
- Absent: Song-Tao Liu (excused), Song Qian (excused), Qin Shao (excused)
- Others: Brian Ashburner, Karen Bjorkman, John Plenefisch

### **College Report by Dean Bjorkman**

- Thanks to everyone serving on this council.
- College Enrolment:
  - College graduation rate was up but that brought our enrolment down by just a little - about 20 students or so.
  - We're working on initiatives to bring more students in and to retain, and reduce DFW rates while maintaining rigor of our courses.
  - Our majors aren't easy, we may need to give our students extra TLC – we would like to help them succeed and will be working on initiatives related to that.
- Research Funding:
  - Good news: College research funding up by 25%, University as a whole by 21% - thanks to everyone who is working hard on proposals, grants and spectacular research
  - We are all very happy and proud of all the work we're doing and that we're getting our students engaged in that process. That's what we want to see happen and is an important part of our mission.
- Retention Rate is also up.

### **Challenges**

- Maintaining our course of increased research funding
- Hiring good additional faculty: I will continue to advocate to the provost for where we can, our new faculty are off to a great start
- Budget:
  - University enrollment is down by about one percent, for the last 2 years we were relatively flat – we don't know yet how that might impact our budgets.
  - Finance bottom line for FYI 18 (which just ended we are now in FY 19) we had a positive balance at end of year, beginning to see bit of an upturn.
- Dropped a few spots in US News
  - They use a 6 year baseline (had a group 2010-12 which were very underprepared, many didn't last a year) but 6 year grad rates should improve once we turn the corner from that.

- Fully expect that in the next few years our 6 year graduation rates and our retention rates will improve.

#### Tasks for Council

- Faculty Senate passed new set of Promotion and Tenure guidelines, few small things we will want to tweak in our elaborations for consistency.
- We have a few new programs under development – Data science and Data analytics. Math (minor eventually major) and a degree that is pan-collegiate. Big data is here and we need to prepare our students for that.
- Continuing to get the word out about all the great things happening at the university and our college.
  - I'm working on getting a communications person hired for this – hopefully they will be in place by January.
  - We'll be having open forums for faculty once we have some candidates.
- All 3 areas of excellence are heavily tied to this college – we have already received resources from this.
  - Cell architecture group will be getting a high resolution microscope.
  - Astronomy and astrophysics group will be building a remote observing facility.
  - Water/sustainability – a lot of initiatives going on at the Lake Erie Center.

#### Faculty Senate Report (David Kranz)

- Dr. Gaber had a discussion at first meeting, Provost Hsu at second.
- Faculty Senate close to revised bylaws and elaborations – we'll see this sometime this fall (review and vote will be coming through).
- New curriculum tracking system coming through Spring 2019 that should function much better
- First year Experience – University going to a more hands on approach with a steering committee.
- University level student success is the #1 goal (Denise Bartell in Provosts office working with student success)
- Sibylle: New research misconduct policy is posted for comment
- Blackboard Ally now on Blackboard – designed to help improve digital documents files/images for accessibility. We'll hear more about it.
  - John P: Make sure you use headings and tagged image – click on those things and will tell you how to correct this – not meant to be a punishing feature.
- Provost Hsu said everything pointing upwards -freshman retention above 75%, target is around 80%. Huge improvement from 10 years ago when it was 60-65%.
- Improvement in total research dollars brought in (these are new awards, not renewals).

- Karen: Research office getting help, fulltime grant writer, getting ready to hire second, more people who work on research activity – there will be new resources online to help attract more research funding and better tell our story so we get better known internationally for some of the work we're doing.
- Faculty 180- as more and more research info available they can extract research data
  - Karen: Training for dept available, also sessions at library. Becomes easy to upload information from data for both administrators and us – all teaching assignments, grants, research proposals already there. Makes easy to report without having to contact faculty.
  - Kathy F: Will lecturers eventually be on Faculty 180?
  - Karen: No plans at current time but wouldn't be surprised. Want to be able to account for teaching lecturers are doing, as well as other service, and research that some lecturers are doing.
  - John P : ARPA must be completed online as of this year for all T/TT faculty. (due the end of this week.)

### **Grad Council Report (Brian Ashburner)**

- We are one of 3 colleges where Responsible Conduct Research Training required for all new graduate students.
  - Online CITI training – must be completed before face to face
  - Face to Face training – Oct 20 – all first year grad students
  - NIH and NSF require 8 hours (we will require 4 hours so better than we've done in past)
  - Looking for faculty volunteers (especially who have had federal funding) and senior level graduate students who would be good in scenarios in breakout sessions
  - Discussed in Graduate Council that maybe we need this for new faculty also.
- RSP 100 form must be completed prior to submitting with all signatures filled in and each P.I./Co P.I. must be assigned percentages (makes difference in overheads and how divided up)
  - Mike: Having the form filled out prior to submitting is going to hamper work flow in terms of getting grant proposals submitted.
  - Karen: We need those to sign off on commitments including faculty release time before those proposals are submitted.
    1. Research office looking at completely online proposal process, and the IRB process is moving online.
    2. New RSP 100 form -make sure to use correct one.
    3. New Budget form with space for funding for core facilities – please include funding if using these facilities.

- Brian: Now there is one budget form for both campuses. Also add in costs for health insurance and tuition for fees grad students are paying – Jamie Fager can help with that.
  - Tom: For this RSP policy change we'll need everything clarified in terms of timing and guidelines – I don't want to see grants are not submitted because of this
  - Mike: This is going to impede submissions. I think we need to brainstorm these issues so we can understand their needs and we can understand theirs.
  - Karen: I'll talk to Frank and Connie to see if we can have an open forum with the researchers to talk about these issues and research in general.
  - Terry: If there are no real dollars for matching and this form shows up late will anyone turn down the money if the grant is funded?
  - Karen: I don't think so. But I do understand what they're trying to do – the university is making a commitment that we'll do this research.
  - David K: One of the issues has been understaffing of the research office.
  - Karen: They've hired several people to help out with the IRB 's, they're hiring another grant writer. I go to a large group research meeting each month please tell me if there are things you want me to bring there.
- SPIN– allows you to search for funding opportunities in your area – Rick Francis oversees and willing to do training sessions. We are trying to do some this fall.
  - The South East Michigan Postdoctoral Symposium at University of Michigan on exploring career opportunities outside academia. Grad students or postdoctoral students can give poster or 3 minute talk – conference Oct. 6.

### **NSM Chairs Meeting (Kathy Shan)**

- Faculty development funds up to \$750/ year (from \$500).
- Colleen Strayer from bookstore talked about digital content access where digital materials loaded into Blackboard, go talk to her if you're interested in that.
  - John P: Model where student pays a fee so that student has all course materials available right away - it must cost less than purchasing at the bookstore, set up for one semester classes only.
  - Karen: Board passed a blanket policy that we could add fees for this sort of thing.
  - Kristi: My concern, is it just the digital portion? Or are they required to get the book as well?
  - John F: They have to be allowed to opt out as well. They do get the E book.
  - Karen: They opt out on their bill.
  - John P: You have to talk to the publisher to decide what you want.
  - David: What is a typical cost for this?

- Kathy S: Physics is 70 dollars for 24 months without the ebook.
  - John P: They can retain access for a certain amount of time, but not if they go to another course.
  - Terry: I typically don't use the most current book because they can buy large books for little money.
  - Kathy S: It's really for the online homework not for the E-book.
  - Karen: If you put in your required text as an older edition and put it in early, the bookstore will stock them in used version- they can scoop up all the books and make them available cheaply.
- New forms for hiring post docs and grant funded positions
    - John P: links on the NSM page
    - Karen: it's a checklist and includes an email with blanks
- STEM Graduate Students recruitment day – Nov 3 - need grad student posters and volunteers
    - Brian: Chemistry has done this before, now doing college wide recruitment day. Students split into departments, students can explore multiple programs, poster session, lunch, students talk to prospective students, break out sessions for lab/facility tours. Can't increase our numbers too much but can increase quality. Engineering doing one the same day. COGS knows about it too.
- Career Conference Oct 9
    - Brian: this is a career/major fair, all undecided majors required to go. Breakout sessions on what to do with various majors.

#### **Curriculum Committee (John Belizzi)**

- Just submitted the schedule with deadlines to Council.
- Need a biology member.
- John B will be in touch with committee with first batch of proposals.

#### **Elections Committee (Sibylle Weck-Schwarz)**

- No elections right now

#### **New Business**

- Promotion and Tenure elaborations (Kathy S)- Need to look at aligning our elaborations with what was done in Faculty Senate.
- WAC Workshops (John P) - Faculty should be aware WAC committee is going through proposals. We approved all the WAC courses being re-certified and faculty being certified. If you had a proposal for a WAC you'll be getting a reminder about process and when workshops are going on.

- BA Course requirements (John P)- for future discussion - We require 5 humanities and 3 social science courses while Arts and Letters only requires 3 and 2. We may want to consider reducing this.
- New academic grievance procedure (John B) - For future discussion we should consider putting together a handout of best practices for faculty / procedure to follow when they come up with a situation of academic dishonesty.

**Adjourn 4:40 pm.**