

Arts & Sciences Chairs Meeting
Tuesday, April 7, 2020
9:00-10:30 am, via Zoom
Minutes

In attendance: Vandana Kohli, Cindy Wyels, Stephanie Guerrero, Chanda Cunningham-Spence, Sean Kelly, Mary Adler, Liz King, Christina Smith, Frank Barajas, Kiki Patsch, Beatrice de Oca, Antonio Jiménez Jiménez, Lynette Landry, Dennis Downey, Michael Soltys, Ivona Grzegorzczuk, Nancy Mozingo, Sonsoles de Lacalle, Geoff Buhl, Jose Alamillo, Blake Gillespie

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes approved from March 3, 2020.

II. Information Items

FTES/SFR Updates

Dean Kohli thanked the Chairs for their efforts in collectively accomplishing this year's SFR and FTES targets. For the 2019-20 academic year, the school was given an FTES target of 5,175 and came in at a total FTES of 5,134 (less than one percent short); the school was given an SFR target of 22.4, and came in at a total SFR of 22.3. Dean Kohli also mentioned that although there are no final budget numbers, the preliminary data show that the school is within budget but may be slightly overspent.

Search Updates

Dean Kohli provided the following update on searches: at the beginning of AY19-20, the school of Arts and Sciences was allocated a total of seventeen (17) tenure-track faculty lines. Several (four) of these searches were postponed until the next year: English, Art, Psychology and Sociology. Later, Political Science also decided to postpone their search. This left twelve (12) searches. Four of these resulted in new hires in Nursing, Communication, History and Global Languages; there was a failed search in Biology. There will be more information about these successful searches at our Fall meeting. Then, as a result of Covid-19 and the CSU Travel Ban, four programs decided to postpone their searches because they were unable to conduct on-campus interviews: Math, Chemistry (two lines), and Physics. The remaining three searches in Health Science (two lines) and Anthropology, had to be stopped due to Covid-19 and the CSU's hiring freeze. Only one Associate Dean and the Lab Safety Officer position have been approved. Dean Kohli agreed to distribute a copy of the CSU's memo regarding the announced hiring freeze following the meeting. New tenure-track faculty lines for next year have not been announced.

Face Mask Requirement

Kohli referenced the recent campus memorandum about the requirement to wear a facemask (or other mouth and nose covering) for anyone while on campus. This document has also been posted on the A&S Covid-19 webpage.

COVID-19 Code

Chanda reminded Chairs to make sure that their program staff apply the program code for any expenses related to Covid-19 so that we can capture every additional dollar that is spent as a result of the pandemic.

III. Discussion Items

First-Year Quantitative Reasoning

Four programs within A&S that offer first-year quantitative reasoning GE courses Biology, Computer Science, ESRM, and Mathematics, shared some basic information about their course content to help other chairs make more informed advising decisions for their students.

Biology: Chair Mozingo shared that Bio 203 is designed mostly with Biology majors in mind and offers limited sections. This course is also taken by student majoring in Nursing, ESRM and Health Science.

Computer Science: Chair Soltys gave an overview of Comp 105, which is for students who have little to no knowledge about the discipline and enables them to learn how to write simple programs using common programming language, use basic data structures and algorithms, and provides experience for jobs working in code. Chair Soltys shared that another goal of this course is to teach programming skills for use in the community service region. Computer Science has built a strong offering for this class with 5-6 sections in the fall.

ESRM: Interim Chair Patsch spoke about ESRM's 203 course that provides students with an introduction to environmental statistics. Students learn how to use ESRM data and basic statistical views, open-source coding, and data visualization within programming. Individuals with no prior background can leave the course having gained valuable coding language and skills.

Math: Chair Grzegorzczuk outlined the various offerings in the Mathematics program. She explained that students are able to add a Math 99 1-unit course to any QR offering should they require additional support: Math 97 is algebra for statistics students; and Math 98 is for pre-calculus science and business students. Math 103 and 104 are stretch pre-calculus offerings designed for incoming science students, and Math 108 is a general course that introduces mathematical thinking with a more artistic approach which may appeal to humanities students. Math 137 might interest Art, Psychology, English, and Computer Science majors and generally anyone interested in computer games. Chair Grzegorzczuk noted that the program would gladly course substitution for those students who opt to take a stretch course and suggested that students who are thinking of going to graduate or professional schools take a statistics.

A question was raised about whether programs have an opportunity to discuss these offerings so that they can strategically place their student majors. AD Wyels stated that class placements are made by Enrollment Management only after receiving placement feedback from programs. Dean Kohli added that it may be better, perhaps, to approach the issue from the standpoint of what courses *shouldn't* take. There is an equity dimension for what is happening with student success at the very entry point of students coming to campus. She also recommended that Chairs meet with AD Wyels to review the options and find the best selection for their students. This will also help with scheduling and planning regarding course needs. AD Wyels will confer with Enrollment Management whether chairs can recommend more than one option.

Chairs' Check-in

History: Chair Barajas expressed appreciation for the messages that they've received. He shared that another aspect of communication should assure faculty (untenured and lecturers) that mistakes will be made but they should be encouraged to take risks and try new things knowing that it won't all be successful. Messages should also give faculty a sense of reassurance as they move forward.

English: Chair Adler noted that things were going well in English and she hadn't received any complaints. However, some faculty have noted that a few confirmed students are completely "off the grid". Adler recommended that faculty write a personal email to the students and this proved to be effective. Additionally, Adler is getting information about how to use canvas metrics to see which students are accessing the material and then can reach out to students who aren't active. Dean Kohli suggested that missing students' names be sent to Academic Advising.

Psychology: Chair de Oca said that she had received messages from students not coping well. It would be nice if CAPS had more targeted information on their website since they have now gone completely virtual.

Chicana/o Studies: Chair Alamillo shared concerns about students having issues with internet connectivity. Many of his students still do not have access. He expressed additional concerns that some students may not be able to participate on Zoom synchronously and suggested faculty accommodate accordingly. Dean Kohli said that while not an ideal option, students may come to campus and sit in their car to use the campus wifi.

Computer Science: Chair Soltys shared his thoughts on the importance of projecting optimism and confidence to students and using this time to help them develop their discipline and accountability. He also suggested that faculty communicate with their students frequently and give them a systematic approach to each week, as well as building community with online tools. He is currently working with AWS to provide faculty with resources.

Political Science: Chair Kelly noted the lack of preparation time that faculty and students had for online transition. Online courses require more effort on behalf of the students, and faculty are doing what they can to adjust the amount of work that equates to the amount of time students would have spent in class. Chair Kelly shared that faculty are humans too and shouldn't be blamed for issues or complaints.