

FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 7, 2024

Members present

Eric Kessell, Pramod Khosla, Alina Cherry, Jaime Goodrich, Sarah Swider, Chuanzhu Fan, Edward Golenberg, Robert Harr, Shelly Jo Kraft, Zachary Brewster, Fernando Charro, Yuson Jung, John Klein, Victor Figueroa, Christopher Trentacosta.

Attending

Stephanie Hartwell, Paul Clemens, Claudio Verani, Caroline Brzuchowski, Jennifer Wareham, Lori Pile, Lisa Ze Winters, Donovan Hohn.

Absent with notice

Andrew Newman, Ty Partridge, Hien Nguyen.

Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.

The minutes of the Feb. 1, 2024 meeting were approved.

Caroline Brzuchowski announced that there are now enough volunteers for the CLAS Election Committee. She distributed lists of the committees (P&T, Budget Advisory, etc.) for which candidates are needed.

Donovan Hohn presented the proposed changes to the creative writing minor, which were approved.

Lisa Ze Winters presented the proposed changes to the English minor, which were approved.

Marc Wolf provided CLAS budget updates and an overview of the current higher ed landscape. He noted campus closures and consolidations around the country, along with program and department closures at campuses running budget deficits. He noted that

such action is what CLAS is trying to avoid through various efficiencies and cost-cutting measures and through growth in M.A. programs.

In the context of concerns over high DFW rates, Ed Golenberg presented graphs showing the grade distribution in three BIO 1050 sections in Fall 2023. Grades in all three sections were nearly identical despite different teaching styles and grading schemes, with a high peak of F grades in all three. The uniformity of grades indicated to Golenberg that many students are ill-prepared for even pre-introductory college-level BIO classes and/or have skills, interests, and strengths that would lead to better success in other areas. Rather than viewing these courses and their DFW rates as a problem, then, he suggested that an honest assessment of students' performances early in their university careers is beneficial to both the university and the students themselves and that a combination of better screening (ACT, SAT scores) and preparatory academic skills classes may be a better solution than targeting individual classes as problematic.

Lori Pile noted that there are plans to use summer orientation sessions to help students better acclimate to and navigate college and that the First Year Experience courses, while no longer a requirement, can help with college readiness as well.

Robert Harr spoke of his membership on the University Budget Planning Council. He thanked the college for sharing its plan for CLAS's 3% budget cut with Faculty Council.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15.