College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Faculty Council Meeting
February 03, 2011

Members Present: Mark Baskaran, David Coleman, renee hoogland, Charles Parrish, Caroline Morgan, Allen Goodman, Mark Ferguson, Elizabeth Lublin, Geoff Nathan, Anne Duggan, Marsha Richmond, Avis Vidal, Robert Reynolds, Boris Baltes, Markus Friedrich

Attending: Donald Haase, Christine Chow, Caroline Brzuchowski, Paul Clemens, Joe Rankin, Robert Thomas

Absent With Notice: Fred Pearson, Mark Vanberkum, John Klein

The meeting was called to order at 9:30.

The minutes of the December 02, 2010 meeting were approved.

Robert Reynolds distributed a handout with the results of the college-wide faculty survey on the proposed move of the Computer Science department to the College of Engineering. Sixty percent of respondents were in favor of the move, with forty percent against it or undecided. Various rationales from respondents for and against the move were also included in the handout.

Allen Goodman asked if the move was a done deal. If so, he said, it's a waste of time to discuss it.

Charles Parrish wondered what the intellectual, as opposed to political or bureaucratic, justification for the move might be.

Mark Baskaran said that he thought that the logic for the move seemed reasonable.

Geoff Nathan said that he liked having Computer Science faculty as colleagues within the college and that the move to Engineering would add a barrier.

Elizabeth Lublin asked about the department's Strategic Plan and wondered what the department's vision for the future was.

Dean Thomas filled in a bit of the history of the Computer Science department in the former College of Science and the current College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He noted that the college has invested heavily in the department, which had struggled for a time.

Charles Parrish asked again what the intellectual argument for such a move might be. There's been too little focus on that, he said, and too much focus on the politics of it. He noted, too, that while it's clear that the move will strengthen the College of Engineering,

there hasn't been enough discussion of the possible impact on CLAS—which, as the dean noted, has invested significant resources in the department.

In response to a question from Avis Vidal about what CLAS will lose should Computer Science move, the dean said that the department has twenty-three faculty members (including lecturers), which would make for a five percent decrease in the college's faculty size should the department go to Engineering. He noted, too, that college faculty members have won twenty NSF/NIH Early Career Awards since 2000, and that five of those have been in Computer Science. In FY10, the college had $21.2 million dollars of external funding, with $2.3 million, or nearly eleven percent, in Computer Science.

Charles Parrish agreed with the dean's assertion that Engineering has been a weak college for a while. He said that the question, from the provost's perspective, was how to find the resources to shore Engineering up. Parrish wondered if taking those resources from CLAS was a good answer, and said that our Computer Science department would not be well-served by moving to a weak college.

David Coleman said that one component of recruiting faculty candidates in Chemistry is showing them that they are being recruited into a strong college. The proposed move, he said, would cause us to lose a strong department, and a weak college to get one.

Allen Goodman moved to ask the provost and Professor Fotouhi to meet with council to explain the proposal for Computer Science to move to Engineering. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert Reynolds said that he'd contact the provost and try to arrange a special meeting of council with the provost and Fotouhi before the regularly-scheduled council meeting of March 3.

David Coleman requested that a straw poll be taken to see how many council members had reservations about the proposed move. Most of council did.

Avis Vidal, as chair of the Curriculum Committee, asked how engaged the full council wanted to be in committee matters. Mark Ferguson suggested a yearly report. Marsha Richmond disagreed, suggesting greater participation on the part of the full council. Allen Goodman made a motion asking the Curriculum Committee to consult with council electronically, and to give council a forty-eight-hour window to provide input and comments on all curricular matters. The motion passed 6-5.

Dean Thomas noted that, should Computer Science move to Engineering, the CLAS Bylaws will need to be amended accordingly.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10.