

Council of Chairs and Program Directors

Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2019

Present: Oana Armeanu, Shelly Blunt, Manfen Chen, Sara Christensen Blair, Tori Colson, Cindy Deloney-Marino, William Elliott, Abbas Foroughi, Leigh Anne Howard, Jessica Garces Jensen, Julia Kiesel, Kenneth Purcell, Todd Schroer, Jack Smothers, Sarah Stevens, Kenneth Walsh, Amy Wilson, Gabriela Mustata Wilson, and Emilija Zlatkovska.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair Elliott.

President Rochon provided several updates and announcements to the Council:

President Rochon stated that he is visiting with elected State officials and traveling to various districts across Indiana. During these visits, President Rochon is sharing his appreciation for State funding of higher education with legislators, and discussing their perceptions of the University of Southern Indiana. It is vital to build relationships with State legislators and to educate them about USI. There is a lot of competition for State funding, such as the “Red for Ed” campaign to provide K-12 teachers a salary increase. Although the amount of State funding will be about the same, we need to consider how the pie may be divided differently in the next biennium.

Next, President Rochon discussed the importance of recruitment and retention to funding for the University of Southern Indiana. He mentioned Faculty Senate Chair, Kenny Purcell, is involved with a committee to evaluate making standardized testing (SAT and ACT) optional for admittance to USI. Instead, admittance to USI would be based upon the academic profile of the student in High School. President Rochon mentioned that Ball State University made standardized testing optional for admittance, and they saw an increase in applications and admittance to their institution in Fall 2019.

The University is moving forward with the development of a new Strategic Plan. Provost Khayum is leading this effort, and has populated a committee to move forward with the process. The Board of Trustees (BOT) will be involved with the Strategic Planning process, which will be a topic for the BOT meeting on December 7, 2019. The upcoming Strategic Plan builds upon the Core Values and Context of our Organization (e.g. Mission and Vision) that has been established in previous strategic planning cycles. Finally, an online portal is being developed so that everyone will be able to receive updates on the Strategic Planning process.

Provost Rochon then discussed the importance of Online Education to adult learners. He recently met with a student from Jasper, Indiana that benefited from the flexibility and convenience of our online MBA program. After the holidays, President Rochon will be arranging a visit of Academic Partnerships to campus to meet with Chairs to discuss the online MBA program. Aspects of this partnership will be important to consider in strategic planning, and to focus on creating broader

abilities of faculty members to teach in the online environment. Provost Khayum is particularly interested in effective design and its translation to other online programs. Ultimately, online education needs to be convenient and relevant – something for which our online MBA program is recognized. Online programs make positive impacts on enrollments, as evidenced by the recent enrollment growth at Northern Kentucky University.

In the past training session, some Chairs and Directors asked about documentation and narratives about faculty evaluation. To this end, I have asked Andrew Lenhardt to join us this morning to answer questions. Most important to this discussion is to build a narrative – positive or negative – that enables a faculty member to build toward success. If a faculty member is not performing well, it needs to be documented. Please be mindful of how you document your observations and feedback to faculty members. Avoid third party communication, and instead, be direct with the faculty member.

Andrew Lenhardt then provided information about documentation and the importance of keeping records. Because a Chair has responsibility for reviewing faculty members, it is important that you have documentation that supports annual evaluations and assessments included with faculty portfolios. For each faculty member, you should maintain a management file for the length that an employee is on campus, and until five years after the employee leaves or retirees. You need to document relevant conversations, especially those involving behavioral issues and/or expectations that address behavioral issues.

President Rochon then addressed the recent occurrence of inappropriate flyers being distributed on campus. If you see someone posting flyers with inflammatory content, please contact Public Safety. These types of incidents make our students anxious and stressed and it is important to discuss these incidents with students as needed. He finished his comments by reminding the group that the end of the semester is a stressful time. In the past few weeks, several of our students have brought harm to themselves. Be sensitive to student needs, and if you recognize a student that needs help, please get them connected with resources on campus.

Other Updates:

Sarah Stevens, Director of Honors Program and Living Learning Communities, made an announcement that the Honors Symposium begins this afternoon at 2 pm in UC 2219-2220. In addition, the LLC website goes live with application materials on Dec 2, 2019 for the next academic year.

Lee Ann Howard, Director of Master of Arts in Communication, shared information about the JUMP program for the MA in Communications. This pathway for students will permit them to start their graduate coursework their senior year, and then complete the MA in Communications in five years. This is not a typical 4 + 1 program, as graduate courses completed by the student will satisfy requirements for their undergraduate degree in Communications.

Kenny Purcell and Bill Elliott briefly described the charge submitted to the Faculty Senate about the summer workload of Chairs. A committee will be convened with two representatives from each College to discuss workload expectations in the summer.

Announcements:

- Honors Student Symposium today, Wed, Nov 20 at 2 pm in UC 2219-2220
- Proposals for the Teaching and Learning Symposium sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning are due by Wed, Nov 27.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

William Elliott, Chair