

## Minutes: Department and Program Chair meeting, Feb 13, 2014

### **1. Spring term functional fire drill (Campbell/Beckwith)**

There will be a functional fire drill on Friday April 4. The scenario will be that Andreen has a fire at 8 pm Friday night with several serious casualties

### **2. Assessment: Ellen Hay**

Chairs were provided with a chart that presented an overview of the two-year assessment plans for the programs that have completed the first three steps. (Several departments/programs have not submitted plans.)

Chairs were reminded that by May 1, the results of their 2012 question and intervention were to be reported, and the question for 2014-2016 should be submitted.

### **3. FWC (recommended changes to grading tendencies requirement): Steve Klien**

Faculty Welfare has been in discussions with Mark Salisbury regarding the use of grading tendencies data in faculty reviews. FWC's intent has been to use GPA data as a starting point for conversations regarding potential grade inflation and level of rigor in evaluating student work. However, it has come to our attention that (a) the data are more complex and difficult to compile than we realized, requiring days of effort by scarce ITS resources, (b) the data have occasionally been inaccurate, without an easy programming fix, and (c) evaluating teaching rigor through evidence of student learning samples might be more meaningful. FWC presented a possible alternative: providing department chairs with GPA data for their faculty by course section, which may be easily added to existing course load data reports. Faculty and their chairs would then be responsible for providing and interpreting this data as part of the primary report for faculty reviews.

Several concerns were voiced by chairs at the meeting; broadly summarized: (1) the current system provides a basis for comparing GPAs that is valuable and still less potentially uncomfortable than intra-departmental comparisons, especially for smaller departments or departments where faculty are less likely to share common courses; (2) some departments do not currently look at grading tendencies data at all when evaluating faculty colleagues; (3) placing the onus on department chairs to assess and report data places an additional administrative burden on already overworked chairs.

- As a result of the chairs' feedback, FWC will consider proposing a Faculty Handbook amendment that will eliminate the current institutional grading tendencies requirement and make the use of faculty GPA data for departmental

courses optional, as part of the larger evaluation of teaching. IR and ITS will provide department chairs with GPA data as part of their regular teaching load reports, and chairs may or may not make use of that data at their discretion. Draft language of amendments will be prepared and disseminated to the faculty early in Spring term, with a Faculty Forum to be scheduled for further discussion.

#### **4. Updates: Douglas**

Grade Feedback: This year's First Year Survey conducted during winter term shows that students who reported having access to grades and feedback early in the term in their courses also showed a higher likelihood of working harder than they have in the past to meet their instructor's expectations. Providing early feedback in courses helps to set conditions for student success and should be considered in course design.

Director of Advising: Dr. Ned Laff will join us in early June as our Director of Advising. Ned will work closely with departments to develop advising outcomes for students who have declared a major. He will also lead our transfer advising efforts and participate in advising related professional development for faculty.

#### **5. Updates: Farrar**

Celebration of Learning: Will be the third Symposium Day: May 7<sup>th</sup>. Please help by **nominating students, young alum, and fellow faculty members to serve as featured speakers**. Also, we'd love to hear your ideas for being more welcoming to disciplines not well-represented at COL (e.g., the fine and performing arts.) Finally, we'll be coming up with an alternative to the Honors Ceremony for underclassmen during COL.

Budget Matters: Submit your budgets before March 5<sup>th</sup>! For most departments, there should be no increase in your budgets for this year. If you have a request for a budget increase, **please email your request to me and get it approved before you submit your budget**.

#### **6. Lawrence**

Commencement reception by buildings: This year we hope to begin a new graduation tradition at Augustana College. We know some departments plan events with graduates and families between Baccalaureate and Commencement so that students have the opportunity to introduce their parents to their faculty advisors and mentors. This year, we'd like to extend this opportunity to all of our graduates and their families. Please plan to attend **a reception between 11:30 am and 12:30 pm on Sunday May 25, 2014** to host graduates and families at four venues across campus, housed in different buildings and representing all of our majors and programs. The Office of Academic Affairs will provide light refreshments at each of these four venues.

The locations are as follows:

- For departments housed in Old Main and Denkmann: [Wallenberg Hall](#)
- For departments housed in Olin, Hanson Hall of Science, Swenson Hall of Geosciences, and Brodhal building: [Hanson Hall of Science Atrium \(Second Floor\)](#)
- For departments housed in Evald: [Evald Great Hall](#)
- For departments housed in Bergendoff and Abbey Studios: [Bergendoff Ensemble room \(we are exploring Centennial Lobby as an alternative as well\)](#)

If your department has another event for graduates and their families at the same time as **this event**, we hope you'll welcome the opportunity to broaden the celebration and participate in this college-wide event. However, it is perfectly OK for your department to continue with your usual established process but please check with catering to make sure that they can accommodate your event. As some students will graduate with multiple majors, we anticipate there will be some drifting between locations during the campus-wide reception.

Please help us make this a memorable time for your graduating seniors and their families to connect with you and other mentors who have been so important to them throughout these four years.

Courses and adjunct load for next year: Because of continued financial pressures and constraints please make sure to let your part-time and adjunct faculty members know that if department courses do not fill we may be combining sections that have multiple offerings or reallocating load to full time faculty members. We hire adjunct and part time faculty to meet excess demand in certain fields or provide specific specialty courses. However if there is no excess demand this will be reflected in their course assignment for 14-15. Please make sure that no one is surprised when we make these adjustments as necessary in 14-15. If there are any questions please direct them to me.