CAS Dean’s Council Retreat Summary
May 14, 2014

Admissions:
-The chairs recently went on a campus tour through admissions to see what our potential students are seeing, and gave feedback about the experience to Wendy Dorman (CAS Admissions Liaison).
-Department-specific tours: We had a handful of students choose to participate in these tours. The chairs discussed the best way to handle the logistics of making the tours available and publicizing them.
-Talking points meetings: Admissions will meet with the chairs to discuss the best talking points for each department. Chairs will also get to meet with the student ambassadors at some point.

Announcement: There's a shortage of FTEs on campus, so there will be an additional layer of scrutiny before all searches, and an additional consideration for how the position will benefit the university.

Course evaluations via Blackboard
-There were 99 sections in the pilot. Overall, the average response rate was about 60%; there were just a few classes that had very low rates. The gadget day people had an 80-90% response rate. Taking students to a lab during class also had a really high rate, as did the incentive system. One instructor didn't do any incentives or reminders, but got an 86% return and thinks it had to do with the fact that the course already used Blackboard a lot, so students were already in the site fairly often.
-All summer classes (other than internships) will use blackboard evaluations. These evaluation reports probably won't get to faculty until the fall, because we still have to train the admins on compiling them.

Banner activity codes
-The university wants to be able to measure how many students get "hands-on" experiences. This is measured using banner codes, which are underutilized, so we are underreporting the experiences. Chairs need to go into the course listings and make sure they're coded correctly, with the lecture/lab course hours and the banner codes. The chairs discussed the possibility of adding to the list of codes, if possible, and what other types of codes would be useful; they also discussed whether or not courses could be double-coded, and how to quantify the amount of hands-on experience in a particular course.

Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree for nontraditional students
-The chairs continued their discussion of this degree program. It's meant as a degree completion idea, and meant to be done at the off-site one-stop location that the university wants to add, so it’s not geared for traditional students. The chairs discussed issues such as the amount of transfer hours, the way transfer credits are evaluated and processed, the requirements for admission and for completion, the ways that the general education core will need to accommodate these students, the types of courses/concentrations to offer through this program, the way that cultural event requirements can accommodate these students, the services that will need to be offered (food, childcare?, advising, technology support) outside of regular business hours, and the possibility of social events or other ways to help these students feel like a cohort.

Faculty evaluation
-We've gotten feedback from personnel committees that chair comments aren't always helpful, or that they sometimes miss very obvious things. The chairs discussed a chapter out of a book on faculty evaluation, and specifically talked about the difference between formative and summative evaluation. They also discussed how the chair comments should be used, and the issue of classroom observation.
-Other colleges have college faculty handbooks, and we don't. Ours could include things like what we do with the course evaluation data, and how/when faculty should be evaluated by peers in situations like classroom observation. We also need to figure out how best to evaluate online teaching.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm