

**COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
FACULTY ASSEMBLY
Minutes
February 21, 2020
Kinard 018, 2:00 p.m.**

- I. Approval of Minutes from January 17, 2020, meeting Jo Koster
Meeting commenced (with a quorum, 55 faculty members) at 2:00 pm, and Dr. Koster welcomed all. Minutes from January 17, 2020 CAS Assembly were approved unanimously.
- II. Chair’s ReportJo Koster
Dr. Koster announced that elections will be held at our next regular meeting on March 6, which is our final scheduled meeting of the year, and anyone interested in being nominated for an office or committee can inform the CAS Faculty Assembly chair, the Dean of CAS, or the Faculty Assembly secretary Dr. Maria Gelabart. Dr. Koster thanked Dr. Hye-Sung Kim (PLSC) for acting as Secretary for today’s meeting.
- III. Special Orders: Question and Answer with Dr. Adrienne McCormick, Provost (Appendix II)

Dr. Ginger William (IDST—CAS representative to FCUP) presented three questions to Dr. Adrienne McCormick, the Provost, which were consolidated based on more than 125 responses to our Faculty Assembly Survey (September 2019).

Dr. McCormick began her remarks by framing the discussion as a sharing of ideas and discussion of her leadership approach. She wants to bring in the Deans (and Departments) to these discussions. She noted that she was not necessarily making promises but was “here to explore ideas.”

Question 1. Faculty workload in CAS is currently at 4-4 (with certain exceptions), which differs from some assignments in other Colleges. We’ve been told this conforms to “national norms.” At the same time we’re told that we must lessen the use of adjuncts and have tenure-stream faculty teach more classes, and that we’re being evaluated on a cost/benefit basis. While we are recruiting and retaining students in our majors and program areas, mentoring undergraduate research, and attending to our scholarship and stewardship responsibilities, College faculty are also asked to shoulder the greatest part of the General Education program teaching load, participate actively in advising, and “add value” by advising student organizations, coordinating Cultural Events, etc. What can be done to relieve some of this burden on faculty? Is it possible to pilot solutions (e.g. 1-3-4 contracts or other possibilities) in the College? How does the Provost see the future of workload for the College of Arts and Sciences?

Dr. McCormick’s Answer to Question 1. Dr. McCormick said that she is open to many innovative approaches including various ways to implement the reduced 4-3 teaching load, while considering other important factors such as equity across colleges. She also pointed out there are other innovative ways to bring “workload” rather than “teaching load” down to a more manageable level. For example, she is looking into “how to effectively navigate and share information” more systematically, which can reduce our constant dependence on

emails and increase efficiency by allowing the faculty members to do more “focused work.” In addition, she is looking into two areas of innovation: the first is restructuring committees. By re-evaluating all committees, which can add to the faculty workload, the committees that are not working effectively can be considered for restructuring or removal. Second, the Provost is open to supporting the department level implementation of the teaching-load reduction as the specific solutions may differ by departments’ needs and realities. She noted it was important that each department have a role in determining what “an appropriate contribution” looked like for its faculty.

Dr. Adolphus Belk, Jr. (Political Science) asked a clarifying question whether a course relief (a change to a 4-3 or 3-4 load) will be implemented with certainty or it will remain as a possible change. Dr. McCormick replied that the discussion would have to revolve around teaching the same number of students.

Dr. Jennifer Disney (Chair, Political Science), also raised a question on whether departments that have already identified a revenue-neutral approach to implementing a 3-4 or 4-3 load can start implementing this change as a pilot. Dr. McCormick welcomed such a pilot effort. She also encouraged each department chair to look at various factors such as the potential impacts of the change on credit hour production and setting a maximum enrollment per class while implementing a pilot. She gave the department of Economics at her previous institution as an example. They have a 3-3 teaching load for accreditation reasons but also have a certain publication requirement and therefore teach fewer courses than other faculty members. Dr. McCormick used a Microeconomics class from her former institution, in which approximately 300 students were enrolled, as an example of teaching fewer classes while maintaining the credit hour production.

Professor Hope Lima (Human Nutrition) brought up an issue of teaching graduate classes whose sizes are smaller than undergraduate classes. She raised a concern that using credit hour production as a key determinant of course-load may not be applicable. Dr. McCormick answered that in such a case a simple credit hour production may not work well and other factors have to be taken into consideration.

Dr. Jo Koster (English) also asked whether the Provost would recommend changing the writing requirement for General Education courses if course caps were raised to reduce course load. Dr. McCormick reasserted the need for a flexible model where multiple measures are taken into consideration.

Dr. Greg Oakes (Associate Dean of CAS, Philosophy) also added to Dr. McCormick in addressing Professor Lima's question, saying that credit hour production metrics are evaluated at the departmental level by the College. Hence, department chairs will examine the metrics for individual faculty at their levels.

Question 2. *The College has had a record turnover in faculty and staff over the last three years, driven both by retirements and by the lack of competitiveness in salary in many departments and ranks. How will these valuable resources be replaced, and what will be the process for allocating these slots? What does the Compensation and Classification study suggest about the replacement of these valuable members of our College? How will the*

Provost's proposed "sunsetting" actions affect the College's ability to deliver our programs and provide the high-quality educational experience that our students expect and deserve? Are there proactive steps the Provost can recommend to the College to ensure our ongoing excellence?

Dr. McCormick's Answer to Question 2: Dr. McCormick started with the Academic Master Planning Process and shared that the incoming president Dr. George Hynd showed excitement about this work. She used the University of Kentucky as an example. There, the planning process was informed by collaboration with the faculty, which analyzed the data and determined that about 25 programs should be "sun-setted" or eliminated. How such a process can be translated to Winthrop University needs to be clarified. She noted that such a process would need to provide support for the faculty and indicated that the Center for Professional Excellence might play a role in such support.

Dr. McCormick acknowledged the challenges facing smaller institutions without the state support on recruitment and retention. She shared that that Admissions Office is currently partnering with a consulting firm (Carnegie Dartlet) to conduct some profiling of Winthrop's brands by identifying how various communities (alumni, students, faculty, etc.) perceive Winthrop University (e.g. word association) and how they identify Winthrop's values. She referred to a "coming demographic cliff" and changes in the rules for recruiting students who have already committed to an institution as ongoing challenges to recruitment and retention.

Staffing. In allocating and approving the faculty search lines, various measures are taken into consideration in determining the starting salary (Student CHP Data, Student Enrollment Data, Contributions to Gen Ed, Alignment with Institution's Goals Class and Comp Study). For example, the budgetary condition -- the full-time tenure-track faculty salary decreases the vacancy savings, and hence decrease available operating funds -- and finding the appropriate comparison group by ranks in determining the competitive/equitable salary comparable to similar institutions are two important considerations. The Provost noted that there will be changes to that process in upcoming academic years. She stated that the results of the Classification and Compensation study have been received by the institution, and that discussions were underway on how to disseminate that information and to begin addressing the problems the study has identified, over a multi-year period.

Question 3. While faculty members are evaluated constantly and thoroughly (e.g. student evaluations, annual reports, promotion and tenure processes), some members of our College believe that the evaluation of chairs, deans, and higher administrators seems less rigorous. These faculty members are concerned that there seems to be less accountability—that concerns raised by faculty about leadership do not seem to be acted upon, and in some cases few changes or improvements are perceived. How does the Provost envision the evaluation process for academic leaders in our College working, and how can faculty confidence in these processes be improved?

Dr. McCormick's Answer to Question 3: Winthrop is currently doing policy reviews across the institution including the area of evaluation of the administrators. At the chair level, the evaluation area is fairly similar to faculty evaluation, and the policies are well established

except for a chair appointment policy when it comes to the re-appointment or hiring after each three-year term. As for the Provost's evaluation, Dr. McCormick wants more of ALC's feedback, though she is currently being evaluated by the President. She stated that "processes are infinitely perfectible" and that there should be a place for implementing departmental feedback and making the processes clearer.

Dr. McCormick emphasized the importance of "restoring confidence" among the faculty members and asserted that confidence comes from shared ownership in governance. In her opinion, our faculty Conference government structure "puts faculty in a reactive stance," and raised the question of what might put the "shared" back in "shared governance." She referenced the Faculty Senate model at her previous institution. We, all faculty, can identify the gaps in our own policy documents at the department level so that each faculty member can have "agency" and "feeling of ownership" in governance.

Dr. Disney said although she agrees that in some areas faculty members feel empowered, there are other areas that they do not. She asked the Provost's views on what parts of governance can be truly shared by all, what is limited to the administrators and leadership, and what can be shared with students.

To address Dr. Disney's question, Dr. McCormick, gave "a chair appointment policy" as an example where faculty members should have their voice in setting the policy.

Dr. Jo Koster thanked Dr. McCormick for coming.

IV. Remarks from the DeanDr. Takita Sumter

Dr. Takita Sumter, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, shared some highlights on the chair's meeting discussions on student retention and recruitment efforts. At the meeting, chairs shared the ideas including highlighting some high-impact areas to students who intend to transfer to other institutions, and this effort was particularly successful with the first semester freshmen. Dean Sumter also shared about the "ghosting" problem raised at the chair's meeting that students who stop coming to class or stop engaging in learning.

To that end, this points to change in the behaviors of the new student demographic that may impact the work of faculty in the classroom. To that end, Dr. Robert Prickett (CAS Associate Dean, English) recently attended a meeting with several sessions on Student Success. The CAS, together with the Provost's office and Shelia Burkhalter (Student Affairs), are hoping to offer professional development sessions that identify the attributes of the current incoming student and how we may best position ourselves to serve them.

Dr. Sumter also shared that the Academic Advising Task Force also started working toward restructuring the academic advising processes and shared the Sociology department's successful change in their modifications to existing academic advising practice. This new efforts, together with others, have resulted in an increase from 2.77 in Fall 2018 to 3.09 to Fall in freshman GPAs for Sociology majors.

Dr. Sumter also shared about and congratulated several success stories across the college: Dr. Amanda Hiner (ENGL), for signing a contract for her book on 18th century women satirists with Cambridge University Press; Dr. Eddie Lee (HIST), for receiving an award from the Palmetto Council of the Boy Scouts of America; Dr. Wanda Koszewski (NUTR), for being appointed to the Board of Directors of the Human Nutrition accreditation organization; to the Winthrop Poll, for being recognized by MSNBC and others for its work on the upcoming primary elections; and to the Department of Social Work for its RAP program series that brings professionals and students into contact with each other.

Dr. Sumter reminded the upcoming Travel Authorization submission deadline in early April and that all travels should be completed by June 30, 2020.

In response to Dr. Wanda Koszewski's (Human Nutrition) question about the SC state's budget that is newly available to the faculty support, Dr. Sumter shared that there is a likely 2% increase for the South Carolina state employees in the coming year, similar to last year.

In relation to a recruitment and retention effort brought up earlier, Dr. Margaret Gilikin raised a question about the "Bridge" students who wanted to be admitted to Clemson University can be our potential recruits. The CAS's associate dean, Dr. Robert Prickett, shared his views that although the "bridge" students for Clemson may not be the most effective targets, Winthrop is already making a focused effort on students attending York Tech who intend to transfer to Winthrop later.

Dr. Sumter, in relation to Dr. Gilikin's point, shared her views that the UNCC and USC's "Bridge" students can be potentially effective recruitment targets in the future.

Dr. Belk (Political Science) also brainstormed the idea that students who did not get admitted to a specific program within the University can be admitted to another program with a conditional admission to the intended program in the following year given that the students will meet the requirements.

Dr. Takita Sumter asserted that Winthrop University is making a focused effort to those who are rejected so that they can consider reapplying to Winthrop as York Tech bridge students.

Dr. Brandon Ranallo-Benavidez (Political Science) noted that sharing about the S/U deadlines with students as well as about "incompletes" policy can save "at risks" students from withdrawing from the program.

Dr. Takita Sumter shares about the upcoming searches in Psychology, Human Nutrition, Biology and Mass-Com. She also shared about an upcoming listening session that she will be holding on Thursday, February 27, at 11:00 am and encouraged the faculty members to attend.

V. Announcements / Adjournment

- *On behalf of Dr. Robin Lammi, Dr. Jo Koster reminded the Faculty Assembly the upcoming SOURCE abstract submission deadline (March 4).*

- *Dr. Disney (Political Science) asked to the Assembly whether we want to bring to attention at the Faculty Conference meeting regarding the need to raise a collective concern regarding the (lack of) faculty representation at the Board of Trustee's meetings that are held in Columbia. In particular, regarding the interim president's nomination process, the general sense among the faculty showed that the faculty did not have "voice report". She asked if we want a resolution before the Faculty Conference taking place next Friday. Dr. Guy Reel (Mass Communications) suggested the interested individual faculty members to reach out to Dr. Disney by email. Dr. Disney also invited the faculty to reach out to her to brainstorm about the possible resolution at the Faculty Assembly to publicly acknowledge and appreciate the President Mahony's work.*

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:20 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Hye-Sung Kim, on behalf of Maria Gelabert, CAS Secretary*