

Liberal Arts Council
November 27, 2012

Present: M. Aakhus, T. Bordelon, M. Dixon, J. deJong, S. Spencer, E. Wasserman, R. Priest, M. Felton (for J. Evey), S. Rode, R. Gennaro, MT Hallock Morris, W. Rinks, I. Philips, B. Christie, and P. Moore
Guest: M. Kearns
Absent: J. Hardgrave, C. York

The meeting began at 9:00 a.m.

I. Chair Evaluation Report

T. Bordelon submitted the Chair Evaluation Committee's final report and summarized its recommendations noting that more than a dozen changes were made to the chair evaluation form in current use, other evaluation forms were examined and deemed on par with our own, and that the committee recommended the use of the IDEA System for its ability to render an interpretative score that suggests areas of professional development for chairs. E. Wasserman speculated that this instrument might be more effective for larger departments and that smaller ones might not wish to utilize it. R. Priest asked how the data is normed. T. Bordelon responded that the data is compared and evaluated against chairs at other universities. Several chairs expressed discomfort at this and S. Spencer added that whatever instrument is used that the data should not leave the college. M. Aakhus stated that he views data collected from the evaluations as fragment of the information he includes in his report to the provost. He requested chairs to have a closer look at the IDEA Center evaluation to determine if it is something we should pursue; he wants complete buy in from chairs if we are to use it. Lastly, he thanked the committee for its work and its report.

II. Penalties for Academic Dishonesty

M. Aakhus reported that a number of issues pertaining to academic dishonesty have arisen this semester and he solicited input from chairs about practices within their departments. He reviewed the procedure, stating that faculty who believe a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty should report to their chair and that academic dishonesty reports should be submitted to M. Dixon, who will hear any appeal that students may file. S. Rode asked if all faculty could use the software that English faculty use currently. I. Philips and several others recommended using SafeAssign, which is available to all faculty through Blackboard.

III. Southern Hospitality Day Format

M. Dixon requested input from chairs as to whether or not they would like to change the format used at Southern Hospitality Days throughout the fall 2012 semester. Most chairs acknowledged that attendance has been lower this semester than previously. One suggestion discussed earlier this semester was to have a single Liberal Arts session and individual tables or nearby rooms for individual departments/programs. Tours of the

college's facilities could also be coordinated. A format such as this would permit perspective students to acquire information about multiple programs, something the current format does not allow. Suggestions included modeling Southern Hospitality Days on the Liberal Arts fall convocation or the Exploring Majors fair. Such a model also would provide an opportunity to advocate for the Liberal Arts and to instill a sense of community among students. R. Priest expressed a desire to see data concerning Southern Hospitality Days, specifically how many perspective students who attend actually enroll at USI and whether or not sessions they attended affected their choice of major. S. Spencer noted that students are not being directed to the correct session. English teaching majors, for example, have been sent erroneously to the Teacher Education sessions. M. Aakhus would like to discuss this again at the next LAC meeting so that a recommendation can be made and implemented for spring 2013.

IV. Open Items from Chairs

W. Rinks posed a question pertaining to the feasibility of moving toward a 3-3 teaching load. S. Spencer requested that the college work internally as it approaches this question. M. Aakhus would like to begin by increasing Liberal Arts Research Award (LARA) funding to offer a one-year award with a one-course reduction per semester.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.