

**Liberal Arts Council Meeting**  
**August 30, 2011**

**Present:** M. Aakhus, R. Priest, M. Dixon, K. Waters, S. Spencer, W. Wasserman, J. Evey, S. Rode, R. Gennaro, T. Hunt, T. Bordelon, MT Hallock Morris, W. Rinks, I. Phillips, and B. Christie.

**I. Faculty Mentor Requests**

The Dean will appoint mentors from outside the departments, informal mentoring is done within each department. A list of faculty needing mentors was distributed; please forward the names of additional faculty who need a mentor to M. Aakhus and C. York.

**II. Policy: Dean's Signature to Drop/Add Classes**

M. Aakhus has authorized Chairs to sign drop/add forms in the Dean's space after the end of the first week. He encouraged all departments to allow students to add a class in the second week if they have been attending.

**III. Academic Decisions Calendar**

M. Aakhus has the list of faculty members who are up for review and will share it with the chairs and directors. The two up for tenure are WR Mack and M. Strezewski. Faculty for second-year review: M. Hanka, N. LaRowe, A. Montz, M. Stacer, J. Wells, and K. Shefvland. Fourth-year reviews will be done in January 2012. M. Aakhus needs this information by November 1<sup>st</sup>. C. Franks in the Provost's office is working on the Academic Decisions Calendar for 2011-2012.

**IV. Graduation Check-Out**

This is a busy time of the year for processing applications for graduation. The turn-around time for these is very short and the information is critical. Chairs and Directors are asked to complete these in a timely manner.

**V. Faculty Searches**

Members of the council expressed concern regarding HR's implementation of the new online recruiting system for faculty searches. The chair of the search committee will be entering the search data online and will be the only person who can manage and track the search process. T. Hunt expressed concern that the requisitions are not moving forward until the new system goes online. It is scheduled to go into effect tomorrow (August 31 2011).

Council member raised questions about ads submitted for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

There has been no confirmation from HR that the ads will be in the next issue. M. Aakhus advised waiting to see if the new system goes "live" tomorrow as scheduled. He will send out notice whether or not the system is working.

**VI. Faculty Supplies for Departments**

Some faculty members have been coming to the Dean's office for office and other

supplies. Please have faculty direct requests to their administrative assistants. The only faculty supplies in the dean's office are scantron forms. And paper for the lab printers.

#### **VII. Course Schedules**

Administrative assistants are struggling to get scheduling information into the system before they lose access. Schedules for Spring and Summer 2012 should have been submitted to the administrative assistants before the summer sessions. Some council members asked that they receive a reminder of these deadlines. Some chairs also wait for months to receive enrollment numbers.

A. Fortune has information on the numbers of new students ahead of time and can share it with the chairs and directors. M. Aakhus will contact C. Stoen and D. Duvall to see if these issues can be resolved.

#### **VIII. Incentives for Students to Complete Online Teaching Evaluations**

W. Rinks reported on an issue that was raised in his department regarding online teaching evaluations. Some faculty members have reported that students have asked for extra credit to complete these. Faculty members receive a report from OPRA with the names of students who have completed the online evaluations. Department of Communications faculty have requested a policy statement on this practice. Further discussion of SETs included the following suggestions. A class (if small enough) could complete the SETs in a computer lab. Concerns were raised also about the low response rate for online SETs. Some departments might also administer paper copies of the SETs, particularly to accommodate junior faculty who will apply for tenure soon.

Other council members also raised concerns and there was some general discussion about the reliability of the methods for these evaluations. Because the process is not a reliable indicator for faculty effectiveness, S. Spencer suggested that such information should not be the only factor in the evaluation process. A chair's evaluation letter, for example, needs to place SET results into the context of the whole department.

#### **IX. Academic Probation/Dismissal Issues**

W. Rinks and R. Priest agreed that getting the lists for academic probation and dismissal during the Christmas break is problematic, but no effective solution was reached. To address the problem in Communications, W. Rinks takes care of the dismissals while the advisors are responsible for the students on probation. To handle the two-day turn-around time, R. Priest does a resubmit for the entire list. She takes dismissal of students very seriously and wants the Registrar's office to honor the deadlines she allows students before dismissal. Concerns about students who were readmitted for fall, but who were then placed back on probation or dismissed after completing a summer course that did not raise their GPA sufficiently, although they did well in the course were discussed.

#### **X. End-of-Meeting Comments**

M. Aakhus - Future council meetings will start at 9:00 a.m. instead of 9:30.

K. Waters asked if there would be another Town Meeting and M. Dixon said, "yes".

B. Christie - Minutes from the Chairs and Directors Retreat (August 11, 2011) will be distributed this week.