

Meeting with President and Provost

1.) CAA Review

a. Reduction of 2 faculty lines

- i. Matthew asked about reductions of 2 lines, is this driven by general reduction, or reallocation to more productive areas?
 1. Provost: The process is driven by policy. Policy says to shift faculty to areas where they are qualified. As a result, only 2 lines were actually not needed in the case that all programs were suspended.
 2. What we have heard about retirement: one of the humanities faculty qualifies for retirement. Both could be redeployed. Geography does not, and so they are discussing re-deploying their program towards GIS
- ii. When faculty are moved into a new area, what will happen to quality? Are we talking about eliminating adjuncts, or are we talking about larger classes.
 1. This will depend in large part on the faculty members.
 2. Some professional development may be needed to re-specialize.
 3. Program closures happen all the time due to changes in curriculum, demand for programs, and standards of curriculum.
 4. Normally closures are done through attrition and retirement. The difference this year is that budgeting forces all of them to be done at once.

b. Open conversation

- i. President Benson: the quality issues are being forced on us by cuts from the legislature. And also the quality metrics. We have to come up with these metrics by 1 December –and we have to earn the last quarter of our budget via performance measures
 1. Main measure is looking at graduation rates.
 2. That means programs need to produce graduates.
 3. Also emphasis on first generation, minority, and STEMH
- ii. Deborah asks whether this is 4 year or 6 year rates. It's 6 years.
 1. We've doubled 4 year rates, but are still low for 4-year liberal arts degrees
- iii. Beth asks is this a first step in efficiency –what's the next step?
 1. CAA The prototype for this is Geography and Journalism trying to adjust their programs, and find creative ways to help the programs through collaboration with the public and private sectors
 2. Programs are starting to look at ways to improve and make programs more efficient

- iv. Matthew asks if the scholarship increase is related to improving graduation rates
 - 1. Yes and no. Partly driven by performance model
 - 2. Also partly driven by competition from neighboring institutions, like UK going after out-of-state students and need based students.
- v. Beth brings up how we use academic quality to attract students
 - 1. We need to worry about gaming of the system, and we need to use quality to attract students
- vi. Kim asks about the 6 year rates given our region has a lot of instability –students entering and exiting for family reasons.
 - 1. We will be getting aggressive in targeting students at the 70-90 hour mark to get them to come back to complete
- vii. Kim asks about dual appointments
 - 1. We usually appointment based on area of specialization, but it is possible.
- viii. The provost returns to discussion of the efficiency and quality
 - 1. AoL is our answer to focusing on graduation to the exclusion of all else
 - 2. It helps us guarantee that students are learning
 - 3. It also helps us ensure that faculty are being deployed in the best areas
- ix. Gil asks how we make the staffing decisions under the threat of a performance metric
 - 1. Case by Case, basically.
- x. Provost and Beth discuss various ways to keep up academic quality.
 - 1. We do it through the annual reviews, workshops, and pushing accreditation beyond just SACS
- xi. President points out that the board happily matched the President’s \$100k in faculty development and research
 - 1. Development of faculty
- xii. Matthew asks about the STEMH emphasis of the performance metrics
 - 1. The President, as an historian, opposes. It is, however, what the state wants, so we do have to deal with that.
 - 2. We are committed to maintaining the broad offerings of courses – possibly making use of those cross-disciplinary options.
 - 3. Provosts have also pushed back against weighting different degrees
 - 4. Provosts are now trying to think how to show and explain that the liberal arts and broader education is important to the state.
 - 5. Provost Vice notes that any time we’re pushed into an either/or proposition, bad things happen –and so a STEMH or LA paradigm is a bad position to be in.
 - 6. Gil brings up that this shows up in our recruitment issues. The liberal arts don’t have a clearly proposed career path, but once they take the courses, students learn the importance of them and switch over.
- xiii. Deborah brings up that a lot of smaller communities are starting to look at quality of life –and for that reason are now primed to hear about the benefits of education, an argument we need to be making now.
- c. Issues brought up by the President and Provost
 - i. They appreciate our work, but have no particular pressing issues.

- 2.) EXplorance Blue discussion with Tanlee Wasson
 - a. Gil is given the task of explaining the issue
 - i. Departments are unclear about how to use eXplorance Blue in their annual evaluations
 1. Response Rates
 2. Polarized Responses
 3. How is this going to compare to existing evaluations
 - ii. Provost discusses the history (see attachment)
 1. Some of the problems have risen on account of changes in staffing
 2. Others are coming up from issues such as labs, cross-listed classes, and so on.
 - iii. Concerns brought up by committee members
 1. Some of the questions are not liked, they are not phrased well
 2. There is concern over the inability to choose courses to evaluate
 3. There is a concern over establishing baselines for P&T
 - iv. There will be more instructions for how to deal with this change over coming
 - b. What can we nail down:
 - i. The provost will be communicating more to faculty
 - ii. The change was coming because of the costs and the shift of IDEA to electronic
 - iii. Faculty have the discretion not to forward some courses to the chair, though all courses will be evaluated for the purposes of aggregate numbers
 - iv. Suggestions will be offered for improving response rates
 - v. Departmental discussion on how to use the reports should be explored
 - vi. And no, we can't do this ourselves (we've actually tried for Math, bad result)
Tanlee has tried it elsewhere and it was bad there, too.
 - c. How we get higher response rates
 - i. We're looking into it
 - ii. Explain to the students why it is beneficial
 - iii. Group percent complete incentive
 - d. Committee Actions
 - i. Maybe less a resolution and more an informational thing. Inform departments that they should be thinking about how to incorporate eXplorance Blue into their evaluations
 - ii. Suggest that the Core Instrument Development Group be reconstituted (invite past members to continue) to evaluate the questions after the roll-out.

3.) Adjourn

4.) Deborah brings up Community Action Groups to help communities, but this is for another time.