

# CALS Faculty Council meeting, 23 January 2017

Present:

Roger Dahlgren, Nancy Driscoll, Melanie Hingle, Ed Martin, Jean McLain, Marc Orbach, Ravi Palanivelu, Steve Smith, Patricia Stock, Gayatri Vedantam, Muluneh Yitayew

## 1. Announcements

- a. Steve Smith briefly explained progress in Dean Burgess' five-year review and encouraged faculty to read the Dean's self-study document. A survey has been distributed to students, staff, appointed professionals, faculty, and stakeholders of the College and must be completed by 28 Jan. Opportunities to meet with the review committee will follow that committee's next meeting on 15 Feb.
- b. Steve Smith reported that he has informed CALS staff who are responsible for maintaining College websites about broken links associated with the Faculty Council (FC). Please pass additional web problem reports related to FC materials to Steve.
- c. Steve Smith and Kitt Farrell-Poe (Chair of CALS Unit Heads) met 12 Jan. to discuss cooperation among the group she leads and the FC. Monthly meetings of this sort will occur throughout the spring semester.

## 2. Old business

- a. The Council discussed the 11 Jan. letter from Jeff Ratje and Heather Roberts-Wrenn related to the proposed Professional Ethics Commitment document that was provided to the FC for consultative review in our 8 Dec. 2016 meeting. The consensus of the Council was that the letter addressed some of our prior concerns, but many concerns remain. These relate primarily to potential duplication of commitments in the proposed document and those already described as conditions for employment in the University Handbook for Appointed Personnel. Council members expressed that the formal description of ethical commitments addressed in the proposed document should occur at the University level as is quite common at many institutions. Many expressed that describing and especially requiring commitments at the College level could in fact lead to unnecessary confusion. A motion was made, seconded, and was approved unanimously:

The Faculty Council supports the intent of the Professional Ethics Commitment document, but believes this should be addressed at the University level, through the Faculty Senate.

Many excellent models for professional ethics commitments/statements exist at [University systems comparable to ours](#). Using these models, Faculty Senators present expressed their willingness to take this issue forward to the Senate. **Actions:** The FC will monitor their progress, advise as necessary, and report this to the faculty.

- b. Ravi Palanivelu developed a draft document that describes possible problems in information flow within CALS and how we might help to address these. Emphasis here is primarily on improving communication between Deans, Department Heads and Directors, and faculty. Most of the suggestions in the draft address actions that

the Dean or Associate Deans might take. Some of the solutions suggested include a quarterly Dean's (Associate Dean's) Newsletter(s), similar to what Jeff Silvertooth now does weekly. Steve Smith reported that the Dean is apparently quite willing to address individual faculty member's concerns and does recognize that problems in information flow exist. Steve will talk with Heather Roberts-Wrenn regarding Q & A from the Dean that was first done in December. Questions were raised regarding intended frequency of Q & A's and the need for anonymity more generally. **Action:** The Council will work together on this document before our next meeting focusing on developing discrete action items, including those things that faculty could do to improve communication.

### 3. New business

- a. Steve Smith reported that there are apparently no on-going efforts to revise the procedures used for Annual Faculty Review (APR) within CALS or the University. Dean Burgess has expressed a desire to improve the process. Steve Smith expressed that this is relevant, and that faculty may be concerned about both the APR procedures but also how the results of APR are being used to make decisions about individual faculty and entire units. Kitt Farrell-Poe is collecting all documents that describe APR procedures used by units in CALS and her hope is to make these available to all faculty. She discussed the idea of a survey of faculty with Steve Smith. **Action:** The Council will continue this discussion at our next meeting.
- b. Steve Smith suggested that it might be a good idea to have Associate Dean Mike Staten attend an upcoming meeting to discuss instructional issues we have discussed. **Action:** In advance of that meeting, the Council will develop a list of questions/topics for Dean Staten to address.
- c. The next meeting of the FC will occur sometime during the week of 27 Feb. Certain Council members cannot attend on Monday afternoons because of teaching commitments. Steve Smith will try to find a time that week when these members could participate in the meeting.