

CALS Faculty Council meeting, 28 October 2016

Present:

Shane Burgess (*ex officio*), Nancy Driscoll, Charles Gerba, Ed Martin, Matthew Mars, Jean McLain, Marc Orbach, Sadhana Ravishanker, Patricia Stock, Steve Smith, Bob Steidl, Gayatri Vedantam, Richard Wood, Muluneh Yitayew

This meeting involved a wide ranging discussion with Dean Burgess regarding the roles of the Faculty Council and other issues of CALS management. Topics could be placed within four general topic areas. (Unless otherwise noted, statements below are based on comments by the Dean.)

1. Shared governance and Faculty Council functions

Shared governance at the University operates under State statutes (ABOR) as well as University rules. By law all faculty must participate in shared governance, but only a minority of faculty (<20%) participated in recent elections.

The Faculty Senate is the recognized faculty shared governance body in co-governance. The Faculty Senate largely determines unit creation, dissolution, and consolidation. The Faculty Council is not recognized above the level of our College and so the Dean's advocacy and support are important. Some faculty senators may not fully approve of the Faculty Council.

The Faculty Council represents a group where the Dean can practically discuss issues with elected representatives of the faculty. Importantly, this includes informing him of inequities among units. The Council may also be asked to undertake special projects.

Faculty Council may wish to consider what kind of representation it ultimately wants. Perhaps representation based on the number of faculty members within a unit.

Only about 50% of the Dean's activity is local administration of CALS. The remainder is fiduciary and with the legislature.

University final examination scheduling may complicate our instructional mission. Would the Dean support our actions that are at odds with such rules? (Richard Wood) The Dean will support any best practices that enable faculty that impact best options for students so long as they do not conflict with ABOR mandates.

2. Making CALS the most sought-after work place

There are discrepancies among units, for example in how merit increases were (are) distributed. Emphasis must be on being equitable, not equal.

Concerns regarding research support for junior faculty should be discussed with Deans Research Advisory Committee and brought to Parker Antin. (Chairs and Vice Chairs of Faculty Council and DRAC will be meeting on 8 Nov.)

3. Understanding RCM and making it work better

RCM monies stop at the College. Decisions regarding dispersion are tied to mission and not necessarily revenue generation. Eliminating inequities among units is a primary concern. The position of Entomology was used as an example of a critical unit whose mission is subsidized by CALS.

Tension exists between units wanting to maintain or improve instructional quality and increasing SCH. Unit Heads (HODs) provide support for faculty fulfilling the unit's mission, but also must insure that standards are maintained. This is something that the Faculty Senate is also discussing.

Should non-tenure track faculty be additionally compensated for teaching large or especially demanding courses? 100% FTE in instruction = six courses per semester. Graduate training may involve significant instructional experience and is therefore linked to RCM.

The Faculty Council may continue to develop a model for determining equitable FTE expectations in instruction across units and course types. (Steve Smith) This is also being discussed by the Faculty Senate, and perhaps by the Cardon Fellows.

Time demands of simultaneous online and in-person presentation of a single course are not being recognized. (Patricia Stock) Need to better leverage technology in instruction, but recognize the time demands of online instruction. Percent time in instruction should be doubled if in-person and online sections are being taught simultaneously. Support exists for faculty who are undertaking major course revisions, e.g., creating new online courses or online sections. See Mike Staten. The key importance of online instruction (budgetary and otherwise) is well-recognized throughout the University, but not all students and not all courses are suited to online instruction.

4. Improving communication within CALS

There is concern regarding the importance of and apparent ineffectiveness of communication between HODs and faculty. He asked whether faculty were seeing quarterly budgets (i.e., RCM returns) from their Unit Head.

Different CALS units have different organizational styles. Could the Faculty Council meet regularly with Unit Heads? (Marc Orbach) The Council's Chair and Vice Chair will meet regularly with HODs.

The Faculty Council may submit "Key Questions" monthly for review and answers. Also willing to meet with the Council as much or as little as required.

Information may be passed on even when HODs may not wish this to occur.

After the meeting, Steve Smith received this message from Dean Burgess:

After meeting with the Faculty Council today, it occurred to me that none of the members referenced any unit strategic plans when talking about some of the issues concerning them and other faculty. I've consistently urged the unit heads as a whole to use their strategic plans <http://cals.arizona.edu/about/strategic-planning> regularly as tools –to centrally revise

them, to use them as communication aids to identify the most important challenges and new opportunities. To build on as we iteratively improve. Surely some of the strategic plans were developed with some these really important new teaching issues in mind.