

Enhancing information exchange in CALS

CALS Faculty Council
26 May 2017

The CALS Faculty Council (FC) is an advocate of faculty and shared governance, and supports CALS missions by recognizing the rights and responsibilities of each faculty member. Enhancing the information exchange between CALS administration and the faculty is a critical step for empowering the faculty to support the administration in reaching our goals. The FC believes that enhanced, sustained, and open communication within CALS will benefit from the varied strengths of the faculty accommodating their diverse priorities. At the same time, this communication will provide an opportunity for the administration to articulate clearly and concisely to the faculty, the challenges and opportunities of CALS and will efficiently forge more unanimous solutions to the problems faced by CALS.

In this respect, the FC recognizes steps has taken by Dean Burgess to enhance information exchange within CALS, including hiring of Heather Roberts-Wrenn (Organizational Development and Effectiveness Specialist tasked with helping make CALS the most sought-after place to be a part of), as well as the Dial-the-Dean and CALS Grapevine programs designed to provide opportunities for the Dean to answer questions and address the issues and concerns voiced by CALS faculty, staff and appointed professionals. We would like to offer additional suggestions and commitments to further enhance information exchange in CALS:

1. A quarterly town hall, “**Questions and answers with the Deans,**” for faculty, staff and appointed personnel, and facilitated by the FC. The Councils representing these groups will solicit questions from their respective groups, and provide them to the Dean/Associate Deans prior to each town hall. Anyone who attends the town hall may also ask additional questions or request clarifications based on the discussions. These sessions are recommended to be no more than 60 minutes long (perhaps held on a Friday morning in an informal setting with coffee/tea). The town hall will also be made available online for remote participation.
2. A quarterly “**Dean’s Newsletter**” compiled by the Dean and the Associate Deans addressing CALS faculty, staff, and appointed professionals. This could serve as a regular source of information related to policies, operations, and changes occurring in the College. Emphasis should be on brevity, cogency, and clarity, with perhaps no more than 500 words of text per issue. Although other modes of communication are available to respond to questions, this forum provides the administration with an opportunity to choose the information they want to share and to provide appropriate context.

3. The Dean, Associate Deans, and HODs should routinely be invited to attend FC meetings to promote productive and efficient discussions. This also provides the FC an opportunity to request clarification(s) on their assignments.
4. The FC will provide regular updates on their activities and solicit input in faculty/unit meetings (or similar venues), on their [CALs web page](#), and via emails to their constituencies.
5. The FC will organize a meeting in the beginning of each fall semester to assemble the leadership of advisory councils in CALS (DRAC, FC, Bart Cardon Academy for Teaching Excellence Fellows, Appointed Professional Advisory Council, and Staff Advisory Council) to discuss matters relevant to faculty, appointed professionals, and staff in CALS. This will help inform each entity about the current challenges in CALS and help each entity in coming up with their agenda for the upcoming year.