Department Chair Meeting Minutes

College of Arts and Sciences

September 1, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 1, 2009. Dr. Vagn K. Hansen, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, presided. Department Chairs present: Ms. Chiong-Yiao Chen, Dr. Paul Kittle, Dr. Brent Olive, Dr. Gregory Pitts, Dr. Phil Bridgmon, Dr. Ron Smith, Dr. Robert Garfrerick, Dr. Craig Christy, Dr. Bill Strong, Dr. Christopher Maynard, Dr. David Muse, LTC Wayne Bergeron, Dr. David McCullough, Dr. Brenda Webb, Dr. Ed Joubert, Dr. Joy Borah, and Dr. Craig Robertson. Debbie Tubbs took the minutes.

1. Approval of Minutes from July 21, 2009. The minutes were approved by consensus.

2. Report from COAD. Dr. Hansen stated that after the discussion of curriculum proposals, the rest of the agenda would cover what was discussed at the COAD meeting. The only other item discussed follows.

-The deans are in favor of an award for the top student who has transfer work to be presented at the Awards Gala, not commencement. This award will be much like the Keller Key Award.

3. Curriculum Proposals from the Department of History and Political Science. Dr. Maynard made a motion to add to the catalog the requirement to achieve a 28 reading score on the ACT and a 670 reading score on the SAT. He explained that he was modeling the scores of the English Honorís Program. Dr. Hansen pointed out that the required scores were not in the same percentile for both tests and Dr. Maynard stated he would amend his proposal so that both scores were in the 85th percentile.

 Dr. Maynard made a motion to create a new course, HI 699 Thesis Defense, which will carry no credit hours but will be a way to document on transcripts when students complete their thesis.

 The motions were seconded and unanimously adopted.

4. Flu Planning. Cindy Woods came to talk with the COAD on August 31. They are expecting two waves of the flu; H1N1 followed by the seasonal flu. Suggestions on what departments can do to prepare for this are: 1) talk with their faculty and staff, 2) use hand sanitizers, 3) keep computer lab keyboards wiped down with disinfectant wipes, 4) make accommodation for absences of both students, faculty and staff (with Angel and Blackboard use this might make it easier for both students and faculty), and 5) make a plan in each department in case of faculty illness (this could include making a plan for faculty to cover for each other). Dr. Hansen asked Debbie to email the department chairs information from Cindy Conlon regarding the purchase of hand sanitizer and computer keyboard disinfectant wipes.

5. Reporting Nonattendance of Students. Dr. Hansen stated that all Arts and Sciences faculty members have received an email from him asking them to keep records noting any student that fails to show up even once. This will be especially important for students that receive federal financial aid because their failure to attend must be reported by the financial aid office. On September 9 Dr. Hansen will email more specific instructions and Sue Wilson must be notified by September 18 with the list of nonattendance of students.

6. Department Chair Role in SACS Compliance Report. Dr. Hansen stated that we are two years away from submitting the compliance report to SACS and that there is a great deal that has to be done in that time. We can document the preparedness of our faculty who teach courses. Dr. Hansen suggested going to the SACS website (SACS.org) and clicking on Commission on Colleges [Accrediting Standards] where you will find a wealth of information. He would like department chairs to download and familiarize themselves with this before the September 29 or 30 department chair workshop with Dr. Thornell. There is discussion by the COAD on either modifying the current Faculty Credentials Checklist or developing a faculty roster that would be adding specificity to which courses faculty would be eligible to teach (lower division, upper division, graduateÖ).

 Dr. Hansen stated that he will be in touch with each department to look at assessment and learning outcomes for each of our programs. He also mentioned that Area II assessments should be complete and work on Area III assessments should begin this year.

7. Department Chair Evaluations. Dr. Hansen has asked Debbie to email department chairs a draft department chair evaluation document and he noted this draft was based on the evaluation that was developed for deans. Dr. Hansen asked the department chairs to look at the draft document and see if it covers areas that need to be covered, is missing areas that need to be covered, or has items that need to be removed. There was a question that there was earlier discussion of deans evaluating department chairs and this draft document looks as though faculty will be evaluating department chairs. Dr. Hansen stated that when there was a desire for all evaluations to be done uniformly across campus, this is the document that resulted.

8. Faculty Evaluations. Dr. Hansen stated that he is assuming that all written department criteria on the process for faculty evaluations will be complete by December. September 15 is the date that all written evaluations should be given to the faculty and they have until October 15 to reply and have all materials sent to Dr. Hansen. He noted that these written evaluations can build upon the goals and summaries that faculty turn in each year. The written evaluation should show evidence of whatever your department decides is criteria for teaching, scholarship and service.

9. Learning Outcome Assessments. Learning outcome assessment can be a simple system and Dr. Hansen will be in touch with each department individually.

10. Donor Agreements. Dr. Hansen stated that in an effort to be more transparent, Dr. Medders had supplied donor agreements for the following departments: art, biology, chemistry/industrial hygiene, English, foreign languages, geography, history/political science, mathematics, military science, music/theatre, and sociology. Dr. Hansen asked if Drs. Muse, Garfrerick, and Pitts could meet briefly after the department chair meeting to discuss some ambiguous donor agreements. Some of the department chairs noted some missing agreements.

11. Other

 -Bill Strong reported on President Caleís response to the question of roll-over funds. President Cale said that all departmental monies would be rolled back into the department account in full and if additional proration occurs, they will prorate base monies, not the addition of rolled-over monies.

 -There was question of debt rolling over and that led to a discussion of summer school profit and should we have collective guidelines for offering high profit courses. Dr. Hansen stated he would like to discuss this further as a future agenda item. He stated he will ask Jerri Bullard for data from summer school and that we will only have to figure salary costs.

 -Craig Christy shared a handout on the ACHE approved Option III in Foreign Languages for departments to consider for a minor for their advisees.

 -Paul Kittle remarked on how amazing it is to be able to roll-over departmental monies without having to just spend money at the end of the fiscal year. He stated this was a change for the good.

 -There was a question as to on-line access to foundation accounts and Dr. Hansen said he had not been informed by Alan Medders of this access.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Debbie Tubbs on September 4, 2009. Minutes approved by Vagn K. Hansen on September 8, 2009. Minutes will be presented to department chairs for approval on September 15, 2009.