

Lewis & Clark College
College of Arts and Sciences
Faculty Meeting
December 7, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 3:16 p.m. by Clerk of the Faculty Daena Goldsmith.

- I. Approval of Minutes: November 2, 2011 – The minutes from the November 2 meeting were approved without additions or corrections.

II. Announcements

- A. Andrew Bernstein announced that poster sessions for History and Environmental Studies were taking place this afternoon.
- B. Cari Coe reminded faculty to make students aware of the DACOR Bacon House Fellowship, which is available to students applying to graduate school. Although the award was originally intended for prospective graduate students in International Affairs, the organization has expanded eligibility criteria so that students pursuing graduate degrees in any discipline may apply. The award is \$10,000 towards tuition, and Dr. Coe stressed that the organization would give a scholarship to an LC student if we found a good candidate.
- C. Kathy FitzGibbon announced that Research News & Brews would take place on Friday, December 9, from 4-5:30 at the Lucky Lab on Hawthorne. Speakers were Becko Copenhaver, Heather Smith and Peter Kennedy.
- D. Dr. Goldsmith announced that the advising office would be organizing dinners with first-year advisees in the week of February 6-10. The agenda for the dinners is to reconnect with first-year students who have just finished the first couple of weeks of the new semester. This year, dinners will take place in the Bon, and Advising will send out an e-mail identifying various time slots. Passes will be available for faculty. Ninety percent of students eat in the Bon, but first years without meal plans will receive passes as well. Information will be sent out the week before classes start.

III. Reports of Standing Committees

- A. Committee for Promotions and Tenure (Paulette Bierzychudek, chair) – Members this year are Jens Mache, Rishona Zimring, Stephen Weeks, Tom Schoeneman, Arthur O'Sullivan, and Dr. Bierzychudek. Dr. Bierzychudek reassured everyone that the committee is doing its best to read, discuss and make decisions in an expeditious way. They are limited by the speed with which files come in but pledge to be prompt with their responses
- B. Budget Advisory Committee (Cliff Bekar, chair) – Dr. Bekar stated that the BAC and Finance Committees have been briefed on the current budget cycle, and the news is not particularly good. In the working budget for 2012-13, costs exceed revenue by \$1.9 million. Costs in the working budget were roughly 9 percent higher than in the projected budget. This assumes a 0 percent increase in the salary pool. The cost increases were \$2.8 million higher than projected. Many of these overruns are non-personnel costs driven by things that have a counterpart on the revenue side: food

service costs more, for example, but we also take in more revenue. Some cost increases are expected, such as those resulting from new budgeting rules for equipment under \$10,000.

On the personnel side, the working budget shows a 1.1 percent increase relative to projected figures. This is due to an unexpected increase in faculty compensation, which has risen by more than 3 percent. Dr. Bekar pointed out that this figure refers to compensation as a whole rather than salary and that its root cause seems to be less successful communication between Human Resources and individual departments regarding sabbatical planning, replacements, and staffing in the Core program.

Dr. Bekar also reported that revenue is down \$300,000. New classes are expected to be larger but also to have relatively high discount rates, with more financial aid allotments driving down net tuition. Last year's graduating senior class had a discount rate of 38 percent, while the new freshman class rate is 47.2 percent. The college's target is 42 percent, and Dr. Bekar observed that that might be difficult to achieve. This is a serious and systemic issue that the college faces going forward.

Three more issues face the college into the future, and the BAC anticipates spending time on the following issues this spring

- Class size will continue to be higher, as the college's target adds 25 first-year students and 20 transfers, for a total student population of 1,986 (the previous high was 1,910). This represents a decrease relative to this year's 2,035, but overall it is a worrying trend for faculty. Currently a 5 percent increase in tuition is planned, but a net tuition loss is still expected. The BAC will be working on coordination and communication between enrollment management and budget offices. At present the BAC is not really involved in the process.
- Dr. Bekar reported that the current budget has a 0 percent increase in faculty compensation and that it is safe to assume that we could be facing a salary freeze. Given the method by which we budget faculty raises, the issue of cohort inequities arises, since factors determining cohort gaps tend to be exacerbated by inconsistent salary raises (high, then low, etc.). It might therefore be wiser, Dr. Bekar noted, to increase salaries at a 1 percent/1 percent/1 percent rate rather than 3 percent one year and 0 percent the next.
- Dr. Bekar addressed one more issue: the *Piolog* recently reported on a plan to transition from an "all you care to eat" meal plan to an "à la carte" menu. In the process, it was discovered that there was an overcharge on students of \$1.8-2.4 million. This amounted effectively to a subsidy by students on campus of off-campus students without meal plans. À la carte menus make that kind of overcharge far more obvious. The college may not implement the transition to à la carte service in this budget cycle at all, but the BAC has several concerns pertaining to the process. First, the committee was not properly briefed about the costs of implementation; it turned out to be a surprise to a number of people in the budgeting process; and it was not clear who made the decision. Second, the BAC thinks the transition is better done gradually by working the subsidy down to a more manageable size. Third, the BAC recommends calculating the costs of such decisions before they are announced.

Following his report, Dr. Bekar responded to a number of questions as a lively debate ensued.

Todd Lochner asked if the expected revenue deficit already assumed the change in meal plan. Dr. Bekar answered that it did not. Dr. Lochner then asked how, given the current discount rate and potential salary freeze, the college can make this budget work and contain costs. Dr. Bekar responded that the BAC does not make those decisions.

Vice President for Business and Finance Carl Vance offered further insight into the issue of how the college might rectify this situation. He has been meeting weekly with the CAS Budget Committee and Operations Council, which is in charge of the Common Services budget. Vice President Vance said that they have asked the Council to make reductions to Common Services, acknowledging that we must look beyond reductions in the CAS budget and make improvements to budgets for operating and capital costs. The parties involved may need a month or six weeks to work through this. Vice President Vance stated that he hopes to be able to implement salary increases but shares Dr. Bekar's concern that this may not be possible; all is dependent on enrollment figures in September and net tuition revenue. Over the last 5 years, the college's net tuition revenue has dropped by 11 percent, and this is the essence of our problem. We cannot turn something like that around overnight.

Dr. Bernstein noted that a few years ago the strategic initiative fund was used to help fill gaps and asked if there has been any discussion of doing that this time around. Vice President Vance responded that the SIF is still a rainy day fund and that it is best to keep it in reserve until we see net tuition revenue in the fall.

Martin Hart-Landsberg pointed out that in the past the college has started the budgeting process with net faculty increases included and that he finds it problematic that this budget assumes a 0 percent increase. Having been on the BAC and having tried to shape a budget, he said that he was very concerned to find that lack of clarity about the salary compensation pool, which suggests that something is going wrong with the budget process. He noted that one of the biggest things that every unit of the college is facing is a budget process that works; it is difficult to plan for contingencies, and each year we find ourselves thinking about what to do rather than having a plan in place. Dr. Hart-Landsberg expressed concern about the budget process not being very well grounded.

Vice President Vance replied that the higher food service costs were understood, that they feel there is a cap in the market and that the college cannot go over a 5 percent increase in tuition. What they did not understand or expect, however, were deep discounts made to this year's class given the discount rate of the graduating senior class. They also still do not understand the differences between compensation numbers; they know that the HR accounting system is not really working, and Interim CTO Keiko Pitter has been working with Vice President Vance on this system. They are putting pressure on Datatel to fix problems in the system to get

more accurate reporting. The college is still in a difficult position with respect to salary increases, and it was never their intent not to have any increases. They keep track of the costs of providing increases but were first trying to establish other factors. If it is possible, Vice President Vance is a strong supporter of salary increases.

Dr. Bekar added that there was uncertainty among BAC members regarding the cost of the food services plan, and that the BAC was trying to determine whether the decision had been formalized. He stated that discussions about delaying implementation were still going on and that there was real uncertainty about where the costs came from and what the amounts would be. While evaluating this situation, the BAC struggled to obtain answers to what seemed like simple questions.

Dr. Hart-Landsberg remarked that he was not sure why the salary issue came up this year, since one of the highest budget priorities has to be getting a plan in place, and faculty compensation was supposed to be one of the most important elements.

Dr. Bierzychudek shifted the discussion to the anticipated increase in the size of the incoming class. She expressed her concern about increasing class sizes and thus reliance on adjunct instructors and asked about faculty representation on the enrollment management team, which used to be the norm.

Dr. Bekar replied that there used to be better coordination but that that was essentially gone. Provost Jane Atkinson then responded that there used to be an enrollment management committee with administrative and faculty representatives, but that the college determined a year ago that this was an ineffectual process. CAS enrollment is currently managed by a group including members from Institutional Advancement, the Provost, and the Office of the Dean as well as the chair of the Budget Advisory Committee. By combining budget and enrollment management rather than maintaining separate committees, the process is more streamlined. She stressed that everyone in the group is sensitive to the challenges of this year's large class. The upcoming target is for a smaller first-year class, but the question is how much smaller. The committee must make best guesses about tuition and discount rate in order to attract students and simply work from there. She stated that she anticipates an incoming class smaller than last year's but not smaller historically. The hope is that the large class will be retained and that smaller classes will come in behind it.

Dr. Bierzychudek then asked if the student population would be going up or down, and Provost Atkinson replied that it would be staying the same; we do not want to get any larger.

Brian Detweiler-Bedell expressed concern about the current situation with enrollment management. When the enrollment management committee was disbanded, faculty asked how enrollment decisions would be made; and answers were unclear. He remarked that BAC and other representatives are now deciding enrollment targets and that it was not clear how and where decisions are being made.

Dr. Bekar responded that he represents faculty for the enrollment management group but supports Dr. Detweiler-Bedell's point of view, agreeing that enrollment decisions should not be driven by budget concerns and that the faculty is not sufficiently engaged in the decision-making process.

Deborah Heath commented that, as a member of the Curriculum Committee, last year's Gen Ed task force, and one of the larger departments on campus, she was concerned that the college does not have a general mechanism for coordinating the efforts of standing committees. As examples she described the process of implementing the General Education program, which was approved without consideration of resources; the E&D review that did not dovetail with Gen Ed revisions; and the use of adjuncts in relation to General Education and larger departments.

Kurt Fosso remarked that the discussion feels like "the tail wagging the dog:" that the college's mission is not informing decisions, but rather that we must adjust our mission to fit the current budget issues.

Susan Glosser stated that she had the impression at the most recent Trustees meeting that there was good news, a surplus. She asked how the unexpected cost overrun in employee compensation related to exempt and non-exempt employees. She also asked where the overcharge related to the meal plan comes from. Dr. Bekar replied that students are being overcharged for the cost of delivering the food plan. He stated that this was not a mistaken charge.

Kellar Autumn pointed out that the discount rate is a key variable, more important than class size or anything else, and that it is not entirely clear how it works. He observed that a sustainable Lewis & Clark would seem to require the discount rate to go down. He asked whether there are plans in place to bring it down and what our competitors do to keep their discount rates down.

Dr. Bekar replied that it is market determined. To Dr. Autumn's question of why we missed our target so badly, Dr. Bekar explained that the college targets a discount rate, but that market events ultimately determine it. We do not choose whom we admit based on financial considerations, and the mix of students determines the discount rate. Students are definitely challenged by finances; those who pay most are also most likely to stick around, while others are trying to save money by graduating early. Dr. Bekar stressed that this is not a transitory or temporary issue but rather a challenge that the institution will face going forward. The college either has to increase price or lower costs.

Provost Atkinson added that Lewis & Clark has worked for years to keep the discount rate low and that we have been lower than others, but this is not a virtue. The college has tried to keep the discount rate in the low to mid 30s, but in recent years it has gone up into the 40s. Lewis & Clark has a low yield rate; we need to accept five to six times more students than we matriculate. We have not discounted as much as some of our competitors, which negatively affects yield. She stated that the Board of Trustees is very concerned about this and is asking how we can change.

The previous Dean of Admissions kept a tight leash on the discount rate, but now the college is looking at ways to make a Lewis & Clark education more attractive. Twenty-five percent of incoming students are Pell-eligible. Some of these effects emerge from how the college targets prospective students, and some of it is chance; but now we must consider what to do about it. She described how the college has engaged an outside firm to help develop ways of designing aid packages that will ensure yield in certain areas based on what students can bring and their ability to pay. She pointed out that the Pell-eligible students are now some of our strongest students. The key going forward is to switch strategies from keeping the discount rate low to using resources externally. She noted that it has been difficult in this market and with limits on families' ability to pay.

Dr. Lochner made a request to the Budget Advisory Committee, noting that although we do not have much control over the revenue side of the budget and do not control freshman class size, we do have control over how we budget our money. If the presumption going forward is 0 percent increase for faculty, he hopes that the college will be equally parsimonious in every other way that the budget allocates money.

- C. Curriculum Committee (Bruce Suttmeier, chair): Dr. Suttmeier reported on those CC activities that are done and in progress. Gender Studies will undergo a review, with a self-study in spring that will be passed on to the Dean and Faculty Council. The committee also approved changes to the Psychology major: the Methodology course PSY 300 will now culminate in individually written sophomore theses that students must pass in order to continue with the major. The prerequisite for the Methodology course will be a B- in the Statistics course.

The committee also expects a response from the E&D Steering Committee in spring regarding Gen Ed implementation. At this point, the CC is generating lists of courses from departments that will fulfill Gen Ed requirements. The default lists will include 100- and 200-level courses, and departments can discuss what they want to include and exclude.

Dr. Fosso asked if the CC had concerns about the B- "gate" for Psychology. Dr. Suttmeier replied that the committee asked a lot of questions, but that there is some precedent in the college. The Psychology department projects that twelve students a year will be affected, and there will be mechanisms in place by which students can petition. This was a targeted measure to increase rigor and contain the size of the department; currently Psychology majors make up 17 percent of the entire college population, and there was a need for containment.

IV. Dean's Report

Dean Tuajuanda Jordan gave her report following those of the standing committees. She reminded faculty to submit nominations by January 27 for the President's Scholarship for Student Engagement. Nicole Aas-Rouxparis, Jean Ward and Roger Nelsen will serve as the committee making recommendations.

At its next meeting, the Board of Trustees will convene a panel of students from all schools, highlighting student research and scholarship overseas. Dean Jordan asked faculty who would like to apply to be part of the panel to send her, as an e-mail attachment, details about where and when research was conducted, objectives, the number of students involved, and accomplishments. The deadline for submission was December 19.

Dean Jordan reported that she has received the E&D report in hard copy. She noted that she prefers an electronic copy and will forward it to the CC.

There will be a national search for a permanent library director. The search committee includes Ted Vogel (Arts), Ben Westervelt (Humanities), Peter Kennedy (Sciences) Janet Davidson (Social Sciences), Jim Proctor (Interdisciplinary), Keiko Pitter, and Kate Rubick. Screenings will take place through mid-February, with campus visits by candidates in March and a decision by April.

Rob Kugler has been named Director of Strategic Initiatives. He will be convening six groups, and the faculty will have various opportunities to contribute to and hear about the process. A website will have postings on the groups' progress.

Dean Jordan then briefly addressed budget issues:

- A. The Dean's office is asking those colleagues who have startup funds to use them, since holding those funds available indefinitely makes accounting more challenging. The office will institute deadlines after which startup funds will go back into the funding pool.
- B. With respect to departmental operating funds, the Dean stated that most departments had made progress towards the given 4 percent reduction, but that there was still a need to cut back because the college has to decrease its operating budget. Most of these cuts will involve "tweaks" such as postage, entertainment, and printing. The plan is to send budgets back to chairs with cuts in place, and departments are free to redistribute funds as needed but cannot have more. The Dean's office was planning to send them back on the day of the meeting, but because the funds were still a bit uncertain, she pledged to send them out as soon as she knows more.
- C. Applicants for sabbaticals will receive a letter soon. The Dean was concerned about departments that would have people on leave simultaneously, particularly with respect to the quality of instruction for students, what it means to colleagues and advising duties, and budgetary questions. The Faculty Handbook has guidelines for the allowance of sabbatical leave, and the Dean stated that we need to think about prioritizing sabbaticals. Some department chairs will need to meet with her. If a semester, that can usually be covered, but full-year sabbaticals are costly to the college. The Dean stressed that she is trying to reach a compromise, not to deny sabbaticals.

Dean Jordan then announced her selections for the two new Associate Dean

positions. Jim Grant will serve as the Associate Dean focused on student issues, and Gary Reiness will focus on faculty development.

As at each meeting so far this year, the Dean then announced recent accolades received by Lewis & Clark students, faculty and staff. Several student athletes were named to All-West Regional teams, and one student was the Northwest Conference basketball player of the week. Football coach Chris Sulages was named the West region's Coach of the Year for Division III, and the women's basketball team was currently ranked 15th in the nation.

Martin Hart-Landsberg was recently quoted in the *New York Times*.

Greg Hermann received a major grant from the NSF Research in Undergraduate Institutions program.

Greta Binford was named Oregon Professor of the Year for 2011 by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

The Dean then named the recipient of this year's David Savage award: Paulette Bierzychudek. She emphasized in particular Dr. Bierzychudek's outstanding record of service to the college, not only as a member of many committees but also as chair.

As there were no other reports, the meeting was adjourned at 4:42 p.m.