

Faculty Council
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2007

Present: Julio de Paula, Dean of the College; Jane Hunter, Associate Dean; Cliff Bekar, Associate Professor of Economics; Dinah Dodds, Professor of German; Deborah Heath, Associate Professor of Anthropology; Elizabeth Safran, Associate Professor of Geological Sciences; Mervyn Brockett, Assistant to the President; and Terri Banasek, Executive Assistant and recorder.

Guests: Thomas Olsen, Associate Professor of Physics and chair, Committee on the Curriculum; Carl Vance, Vice President for Business and Finance and Treasurer.

The discussion of charging students for tuition overloads continued. Dean de Paula noted that Diane Crabtree, who could not be present at this meeting, recently sent additional information about tuition overloads. Some of the outstanding questions center around the topic of retention – to what extent would charging for overloads affect retention? These data are meant to address the issue. The Faculty Council now has a better breakdown of how many students have graduated early because of overloads. There are also data on students who took longer to graduate relative to those who graduated in eight semesters or fewer. The bulk graduated in eight or fewer semesters, and a relatively small amount will take a longer time primarily because of taking time off between semesters on campus.

Dr. Bekar pointed out that for the number of students overloading, this is a very low margin cost for the institution to provide a form of financial aid to students and is very flexible. These seem to be mostly our best students. We are keeping our best students here, offering them flexibility to complete their degree on time, and it doesn't cost much. Dr. Bekar believes this policy should not be change and that the College should not charge for overloads. Dr. Heath agreed.

Dr. Brockett was unsure that, if we had an additional fee for overloading, the impact on retention would be high. Rather, it enables a few students to graduate in four years who would not be able to do so if we charged for overloads. Dr. Safran added that, of the group of students that did do overloads, the vast majority only did it once. It seems that it is mostly an option that is being used for strategic reasons. Dr. Brockett pointed out that some students bring in with them a great deal of advanced-placement credit. It seems inconsistent that we allow them to bring in credits and then want to charge them for overloads.

Dr. Olsen noted that, if there were a problem, it would be that students were not performing well. That doesn't appear to be true for this group of students. We are successfully filtering out the students who would be damaged by attempting an overload. There is no reason curricularly to put in this financial impediment to our best students. Dr. Brockett added that most of the students taking overloads have significant financial need. If we charge them, they couldn't possibly afford it. In the final year, some students (even though they are high need) may take an overload even if we charge for it rather to come back for another semester.

Dean de Paula noted there is a revenue loss. When you compound all the effects, in 2005-06 it is

a loss of \$278,000 due to a total number of 235 overload credits taken that year. That doesn't take into account the early graduation effect. Early graduation could result in additional lost revenue. Dr. Brockett responded that it is lost only if they would take the overload with the additional charge. They have the option of taking it elsewhere at a much lower charge, and then Lewis & Clark would lose that revenue.

Dean de Paula stated that there is an average of \$250,000 per year in lost revenue. Could those funds be put to better use? If so, it is worth considering. The total pool of dollars associated with a 6 percent faculty salary increase for next year relative to this year comes to about \$500,000, and \$250,000 is about half of that pool. Dr. Bekar believes student response to another charge would be dramatic.

Mr. Vance pointed out that this has to be a curricular decision – it cannot be an economic decision. He agrees that the number is not a perfect number; what the total cost is in foregone revenue is very difficult to estimate in this situation. He is encouraged by the data provided by Ms. Crabtree that these are students who are succeeding. He is not opposed if the Faculty Council were to decide to maintain the program as is. What he was trying to do is to raise an issue and to understand the implications. He is happy to support whatever conclusion Faculty Council comes to from an academic perspective. Dr. Olsen noted that no curricular issue was raised during the March 8 discussion – the concern was more one of improved satisfaction on the part of students and alumni. Dr. Bekar added that, in the current context, to add this would rub the students the wrong way. When a student is granted the ability to overload, it should be pointed out to them that this is a benefit. We don't want to encourage the practice.

Dean de Paula will take the issue back to Executive Council, stating that Faculty Council came to a consensus to stay the course and not charge for tuition overloads for a number of reasons. Taking overloads appears to be a strategy taken by our better students to get more out of their time at Lewis & Clark. We have the capacity in our classes to do it.

Dr. Olsen and Mr. Vance left the meeting.

Announcements

- The agenda has been distributed for the all-chairs meeting to be held on April 13. Agenda items include a discussion of fund-raising led by President Hochstetler and a discussion of new lecturer and senior lecturer positions. Immediately following the meeting, there is a reception for faculty and staff in the J.R. Howard Hall foyer.
- Dean de Paula distributed a list of vacant committee positions. He asked for a concerted effort to fill the vacant positions. One way to do it is for each of the representatives to convene faculty in the division to discuss the issue. There needs to be a conversation about the topic of service to the institution and what the division can do to fill in these slots. Ms. Banasek will provide a separate sheet on who has served in the past.

Agenda Items:

1. The staff position requests decision continues to be a somewhat fluid situation, and Dean de Paula hopes to resolve it very soon. There has been conversation about the gender studies position, and Dean de Paula and Associate Dean Hunter had a discussion about how to structure the position. It is a split between teaching and directing the symposium, and a very good parallel to that is the theatre technical director position. It is now a little more firmly designed between the shop and teaching courses associated with the shop. Dean de Paula would like to structure the gender studies position in a similar way so that we have some degree of consistency across the institution. We should be able to do for the incumbent what we have been doing for Kim Brodtkin, and it will be somewhat budget neutral. This is a new position, so it requires a PDQ and classification from Human Resources. Dr. Heath and Elliott Young should meet to draft the PDQ; the position will have to be posted for 10 days and can include language that there is a qualified incumbent. Associate Dean Hunter will help with the draft.

Regarding the other staff positions, we can take advantage of some people leaving at fairly high salaries who will be replaced with people with less experience at a lower salaries. It may give budget relief to other positions in the department. The College also is likely to receive a NCAA grant for the assistant trainer; this position also will be budget neutral.

2. Three departments have requested to be reviewed next year: English, philosophy, and biochemistry and molecular biology. Last year, Academic Council came up with a list of departments that might be put on a queue; and, acting upon that list, physics and political science were reviewed this year. The following was noted:
 - a. Biochemistry and molecular biology has never been reviewed.
 - b. Foreign languages has not been reviewed in over 10 years. There won't be any new hires after next year's search, so the department probably could wait until 2008-09.
 - c. Philosophy will be ready to go in November. Dean de Paula is comfortable with reviewing three departments, but it may be difficult with the accreditation review in April. If we are going to do three departments, one must go forward in the fall; the philosophy department is fine with that in principle. The other two would have to occur early in the spring. If outside reviewers are found in time, the reviews could begin late in the fall rather than early spring.

Faculty Council agreed with this strategy. Ms. Banasek will distribute a history of department and program reviews along with a projected timeline for future reviews. It was noted that perhaps it would be a good idea to extend the time period from 10 years to 12 years.

At the next faculty meeting (May 2, 3:15 p.m.), the loop should be closed on the new process for department and program reviews. Thomas Olsen introduced it from the Curriculum Committee at the April meeting. In essence, the duties of the departmental review subcommittee would be spread between Faculty Council and the full Curriculum Committee. Issues related to resource allocation would come to Faculty Council, and curricular issues would go to the Curriculum Committee. Faculty Council would approve the charge and

would receive the report of the reviewers, involving one meeting with reviewers. Faculty Council approved the new process. The other proposal from Dr. Olsen on collaborative teaching should be discussed before the May 2 faculty meeting.

3. Dr. Bekar will present a brief report on the activities of Faculty Council for the May 2 faculty meeting.
4. Dean de Paula reported that we are behind on registrations for the fall. Dr. Brockett distributed a list of students not yet registered. It was agreed that Dr. Brockett should forward the list to Kurt Fosso next week and that he will continue to track registrations.
5. Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Next meeting: April 20, 3:15 p.m.