**CLAS Council Meeting**

**March 12, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**Attending**: Masoud Asadi-Zeydabadi, Jennifer Boylan, Michelle Comstock, Gabriel Finklestein, Mia Fischer, Nick Fisk, Pam Jansma, Marjorie Levine-Clark, Darryl Mehring, Annika Mosier, Gary Olson, Florian Pfender, Sarah Tyson, Maria Andrea Velazquez, Anna Warrener

**Guests**: Chloe East, Hani Mansour

**Recording**: Karen Fennell

**Welcome and Introductions**: *Sarah Tyson*

**Dean’s Updates:** *Pam Jansma*

*Campus Status*:

* The campus is open and people can come to campus. As of 3/30 all instruction will be remote, no gatherings of up to 75 people before 3/30 and after 3/30 no gatherings will be allowed. If there is a coronavirus outbreak later then the campus will likely close then.
* All meetings with students are encouraged to be by phone or electronically from here on and especially after 3/30.
* Be aware that if all employees are working remotely there could be challenges of accessing the campus electronic infrastructure.
* The computer labs on campus will remain open for now and will be disinfected well.
* The Office of Digital Education is hosting an online/digital instruction seminar.
* CLAS IT is working on websites and videos on how to do remote instruction.
* Be thinking about tasks that student workers can do remotely as well so they can continue earning hours.
* We are looking at ways to loan computers to faculty, students and staff that don’t have them at home.
* There is software available for online lab learning and we will explore those options.
* We will need to be flexible around completion of assignments and allowing incompletes for courses because of the current situation.
* We are working on a CLAS website with more information.
* **FCQs**: *Chloe East, Hani Mansour*
* We have been having discussions in departments about the role that FCQs play in instruction and promotions.
* We have looked at what other universities have been doing with looking at FCQs and what they are doing to address these concerns.
* Research has shown FCQs are not correlated with student learning in a class. They are not looking at the quality of learning, instead they are correlated with how easy or hard the class is and time of day the class is offered.
* We need to thoughtfully use the info that FCQs give and think about how they can inform our teaching.
* There is documented bias in FCQs mostly based on gender and some issues of diversity. Female faculty consistently get lower scores then male faculty in identical classes. Students are not actively discriminating against female faculty but we need to be aware this bias exists. The gap in FCQ scores seems to be driven by male students in the class.
* The question was raised whether we can correct for this bias statistically, but it would be difficult to figure out how to do this.
* We’re not saying don’t do or use FCQs, but instead consider other ways of assessing teaching and faculty in addition to FCQs. We are required to do multiple means of assessing teaching and FCQs can be at the end of that list of items assessed.
* We can use FCQs as a source of information, but they should not be the primary source of information about the course and instructor.
* In tenure reviews we have to put in all the student comments and this can be odd when students comment on things about their instructors that are unrelated to the actual course, such as comments about instructor’s clothing, not their teaching.
* Mostly FCQs measure the likeability of the instructor and how the student feels about the instructor.
* The response rates of FCQs also don’t give a clear picture of an instructor’s teaching as you have the students who either really hate or really like the class who are the ones who are responding to the surveys and the feedback from the middle-ground group of the class is lost.
* We should not be giving people evaluations based on biased metrics. This creates issues of equity. There could be future issues with potential lawsuits around FCQs and how they are used to evaluate instructors and who is promoted or not.
* When being evaluated for research we get letters from multiple peer experts in our fields to asses us. However, when we are evaluated on our teaching it is by a student population who has a very different picture of what they are evaluating and what they look for in an instructor.
* It would be helpful if we can convince the campus to change its policies on not relying on a biased metric, which is FCQs, in making decisions about promotions and tenure. Having a more holistic approach of instructional assessment is what we need.
* Can we change the questions we use and consider the information what we are relying on from FCQs? We need to realize what FCQs measure and how that information can be reliably used.
* We are not getting rid of FCQs, but there are inherent biases and issues of equity that we will need to address.
* It was suggested that we be clearer on our standard of assessment and create more clear goals.
* There is an initiative at CU Boulder that aims to use more specialized assessment for each department and look at how to go about improving classes and learning in a more individualized way.
* We have nheard about proposed changes to the language around evaluation of teaching at the system level and it emphasizes FCQs as the primary way of evaluating instruction. That policy wording is open for discussion right now. We are considering what is the best way to provide feedback.
* It was suggested to contact Kathleen Bollard and David Tracer to find out more about the policy changes and how to respond. CLAS Council, Faculty Assembly and UCDALI might be good bodies to provide commentary and coordinate responses.
* The Council will discuss this issue more at a future meeting.

**Strategic Plan**: *Sarah Tyson*

The whole faculty will have the opportunity to discuss the strategic plan more. We are looking at the plan draft in segments.

Student Success:

* Developing good metrics on this will be crucial.
* We should be aware that there will be a new Chancellor and that person will develop a new system-wide strategic plan that ours in CLAS will have to align with.
* Whatever our plan is, we should not have one that will not be constantly changing in response to new campus initiatives.
* Retention and teaching effectiveness are main points for the plan that we can focus on. If we have effective teaching then it would seem we should have good retention.
* However, it seems that no matter how inclusive our classrooms are, that our diverse first-generation students are the ones who don’t do well and drop out of the class and the university because they don’t know about or how use the resources on campus that could be helpful to them.
* It might be helpful to have an expert come talk to us about retention.
* Creating inclusive classrooms isn’t about teaching down to the struggling student, but about finding methods of instruction and getting students in touch with resources and supplemental support to bring these students up to speed.
* The purpose of the strategic plan is to identify and address these kinds of issues.
* The Learning Resource Center doesn’t offer tutoring for every subject matter area and all departmental specialties. Students also need to make better use of departmental resources internally, including faculty and TA office hours.
* We also need to consider how to serve our transfer students to enhance their retention rates as well.
* The timeline for sharing this document and posting it for public comment is up to this body.