**CLAS Faculty Council Agenda**

**December 9, 2021**

**Meeting via ZOOM**

MINUTES

**Participating:** Masoud Asadi-Zeydabadi, Soumia Bardhan, Sasha Breger Bush, Michelle Comstock, Benjamin Crawford, Candan Duran Aydintug, Nick Fisk, Xiaofei Gao, Pam Jansma, Darryl Mehring, Annika Mosier, Florian Pfender, Sarah Tyson, Andrea Velasquez, Anna Warrener

**Guests**: Rich Allen

**Recording**: Karen Fennell

**Welcome and Introductions:** Sarah Tyson

**Minutes from November**: Approved with no changes.

**Dean’s Updates**: Pam Jansma

*Merit Reviews:*Faculty Assembly approved not doing academic year merit until fall 2022 and materials are due next November.

*COVID Updates:*

* There’s a high plateau for Covid in Colorado. Staff are 98%+ vaccinated and only 36 people are not vaccinated on the campus. There will be continued free testing on the campus through the spring.
* The campus is offering 2 free home testing kits to be sent to faculty and staff if you requested online: <https://covid19.colorado.gov/covid-19-testing-at-home>
* In his recent speech, the State Governor showed charts indicating how much of a difference vaccinations and booster shots make in helping with protecting against Covid in Colorado.

*Budget Initiatives:*

* There was a call from Central Administration for one time funding proposals. Pam and Rob Stiner submitted proposals for CLAS.
* The highest priorities were money for recycling tuition for PhD students and also continuing funds for Learning Assistant support.
* They also requested funding for postdoc positions for visiting professors of color, with the intention of converting those positions into tenure lines or CTT positions.
* Other items they are hoping to fund include the Access and Equity Through the Student Journey, Math skill training and capstone experience for STEM students and Psychology DEI programming.
* We also asked for a staff member in the Dean’s office to support Jaimie Carrington’s Admissions, recruitment, Puksta Scholars and other efforts relevant to her position at the work she does for the college.
* Additional requests received included funding for Compass Training for faculty and PhD students and monies to help pay Department faculty in the summer to develop grant proposals.

**Single Stop Program**: Sarah Tyson

* This is a program that connects students through the Wellness Center to help students to apply for support for food and other forms of assistance as a one-stop shop. Providing students more of these types of support helps with their retention.
* <https://www.ucdenver.edu/wellness/services/basic-needs/single-stop>
* This is the first semester of a two-year pilot program and we need to spread the word about it widely.

**Enrollment and Retention**: Sarah Tyson

* Enrollment is down for spring in CLAS about 4% over last spring, and last spring was down about 16%. So we are down in enrollment even more now.
* Sarah created a Google Doc to collect ideas and brainstorm what to do to enhance enrollment in the college.
* <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tn6H3om21DDM6iAKJz_7KAusRHmjZQQQGUrS5mpiHJ0/edit>

*What practices has your unit used to recruit and retain students? What has worked?*

*Biology* has implemented inclusive pedagogy training. This has been eye-opening and created new conversations in the department and made an impact in the classroom as students are sensing a change in the dialogues they are having.

*Communication* is changing our website and how we portray ourselves and the career prospects for our discipline. We are also planning to do a survey of our students to see what our students are thinking.

*Anthropology* has started a mentorship program to connect undergraduate students with graduate students to help the undergraduates understand what they are future careers could look like. Although this is a very heavy lift to keep this mentorship program moving forward.

In *Physics* the number of students who want to come to this discipline is very low. Our Chair has done a lot of work to try to talk to students, email them and invite them to connect.

*Economics* has started a DEI committee and is looking at data to determine what are the classes that are influencing students to choose a different major, where the curriculum could be made more inclusive and what are the trends and key demographics among our students.

We need to work with our faculty to make sure we have an inclusive pedagogy in our classes. We need to explain what all of the different things are that involve Economics. Each faculty member is going to make a five-minute video to introduce themselves and their research in Economics.

We are also going to recruit some alumni to be inspiring role models in the same way. We want to pull in some good female role models and mentors for students to meet and connect with also.

*Math* is looking at their courses and creating some workshops to help people to keep up with the material and stretched out some classes to span two semesters to give students more time to work with the material.

Gary Olson is doing a lot of initiatives at the 1000 and 2000 levels to keep students engaged and enrolled.

We are talking about having events for students to come and meet each other and the faculty to better engage with each other and the department.

*History* hands out a careers sheet each semester of what you can do with a History degree. They have a “ROAR” committee involving Dale Stahl that showcases what careers our students have gone into and highlights famous people who were History majors, including Joe Biden and Kareem Abdul Jabbar. We need to put his on the front of our webpages to attract our students to the major. We need to emphasize the link between the majors and the careers, especially in the Humanities to highlight what our majors can go into as careers.

*What would it mean to become less tuition dependent and what’s the picture with the state level of funding?*

* This would require other buckets to be more full, including making connections with donors through the Advancement office. We could get money through philanthropy for scholarships for students and for endowed Chairs, which would help free up funds in the College to be used in other ways.
* We could partner with industry and employers to gain internships for our students and this might ease the burden a bit.
* We are unlikely to get funds from the state as the governor does not seem to be supportive of higher education in general and the CU System in particular. Funding for buildings that were previously approved have now been removed from the current budget.
* Dependence on tuition is here to stay, and this makes the emphasis on student retention even more important.

*The impetus for growth seems to be put on Departments, what is Central Administration doing to help with our efforts?*

* Central has made a permanent change to fund the 3% merit raise this year.
* There have been initiatives to try to standardize and centralize systems that we use as an institution to create economies of scale.
* One such attempt was centralizing ODE to grow that pool centrally, but his didn’t work out as planned.
* Centralizing procurement for purchases and rental agreements are other efforts they are trying.
* The All Four One campaign has ended. Interim CU System President Saliman is moving towards marketing each institution for its unique merits, which looks to be a good thing.

*Are there ways to streamline registration and other processes to make it easier to retain students?*

* The course registration process seems to be more difficult than it could be. Trying to understand the degree audit process and pre-requisites is hard and I think we lose some students along the way because of this.
* We are looking at our strategic enrollment management processes to focus on areas that could be improved. Rich Allen attended a focus group recently on this run by Monique Snowden and he can bring more details to these ongoing conversations.

*How can we train and support our faculty to help and support our students better?*

* It’s hard for faculty who feel like it often falls to them to directly help students who are experiencing hunger, homelessness and mental health issues, among other problems and to try to connect the students to resources.
* Students know their faculty more and come to talk to them more. So how do we help faculty to navigate these issues when we aren’t trained in mental health and other areas? It is not just the time, but also other resources and knowing where to send students and how to respond to students. The other person who should also be involved as the advisor. We can brainstorm as a College how we could improve on this and how we can support our faculty.
* How do we support faculty more and acknowledge this as an important role that faculty are playing when we consider faculty promotions, merit and other areas where they contribute? We could communicate with Chairs about how they could take into account the additional work some faculty do in a student advocacy role and acknowledge that as part of their reviews.
* Increasingly, students look to faculty for support. Other than the Phoenix Center, we don’t have 24-7 resources to direct students to call or send them to at all hours. There may be things we could do to train faculty on how to respond to our students and provide them with information.
* A lot of first-generation and traditionally underrepresented students are hesitant to reach out to and utilize campus resources but it helps to remind them that they have already paid for these services as part of their student fees.
* Faculty can put lists of resources in their syllabi for students to refer to, however, it might make sense to add a button to the Campus website for every class, to send students to a central hub of information and resources rather than just putting the information in the syllabus.
* One of the concerns is that there are critical shortages in staffing for mental health counseling across the state. There will be more funding coming from the governor’s office to help train people in mental health services, but in the meantime a lot of our campus services are backlogged.
* We are working on being designated a Healthy Minds campus.

Additional Notes: 10:15-10:30am

*How flyers are distributed*

*A disconnect between effort expected in class versus effort put in:*

Students with many burdens outside of school.

How much do students understand workload ahead of semester?

How to set them up for success?

*We need to talk more about this with students and faculty:*

What if we knew every student had to work a full time job to be here?

What does the path through the institution look?

What do classes look like?

What will best prepare them for their lives and careers?

*How do we approach our mission with our student body and demands on their lives in mind?*

Help our institution and students succeed

These things stack—mental health—why?

We need to look at our system and the pressures it’s putting on all members of the institution.

*What are the expectations of society at large? Our institution?*

What does success look like?

Is 4 year grad rate reasonable? 6 year?

It’s okay to take fewer credits if you’re working.

How to help students with internships, etc. so they can work less.

Financial aid time-limited.

*Sometimes enrollment and retention work at cross-purposes:*

Short-term enrollment versus long-term retention.

*FAFSA requiring 12 credits:*

What are internal financing mechanisms that we don’t have credit minimums?

*It’s on students to understand how much work it is:*

Helping students understand what’s required to be in school.

*Do we have data on how much work students are doing this semester versus previous semesters?*

NESI survey has this kind of data.

Help us understand structurally what is happening.

How much of this is pandemic effect?

We could see national picture here.

*Multi-year contracts for IRC faculty:*

Supporting faculty and staff to help student retention.

Giving benefits to folks to help them stay with us teaching.

Priority for us.

Requires continuing funds.