

CLAS Faculty Council Meeting
Thursday, September 14, 2023
9 AM to 10:30 AM
Zoom Only

Attending: Rich Allen, Masoud Asadi-Zeydabadi, Yvette Bueno Olson, Emma Bunkley, Michelle Comstock, Nick Fisk, Rodney Herring, Katherine Kelsey, Pam Jansma, Betsy Jose, Florian Pfender, Anna Warrener, Barton Willage, Margaret Woodhull

Recording: Karen Fennell

Executive Committee Session: Private Executive Committee Session of the Council was held from 9 AM to 9:30 AM

Minutes: Minutes from the May 11, 2023 meeting were approved with no changes.

EPCC and Faculty Council Policy Reviews:

- What documents and policies should come from the EPCC to the CLAS Faculty Council for review and decision? Or, what items should EPCC review and decide on independently?
- We are moving to a new phase where Sarah Thompson has taken on the previous role of Mary Lovit in the EPCC.
- In the past the things the EPCC would bring to this committee were policy changes and new majors.
- New certificates and new minors, new courses and new course additions typically do not come to the Faculty Council for review and approval. The chair of the committee just notifies the department that these items are moving forward.
- The things we think should be sent on to CLAS Faculty Council include:
 - new degrees/programs that need approval at higher levels
 - changes to CLAS graduation requirements
 - big policy changes (i.e. P+ grading)
 - anything controversial which may have broader impacts
- Things that this group would not review would include things like:
 - changes to course descriptions
 - changes inside course tracks
 - curriculum changes
- Florian will draft up a policy document regarding these types of issues to differentiate between what EPCC and CLAS Faculty Council would take action on or not and bring that back to the Council for further review at the next meeting.

Graduation Requirements:

- This document was shared with Council members prior to the meeting.
- There was a committee that was working prior to coated in February 2020 that came up with a final set of recommendations to revise some CLAS graduation requirements.
- But the recommendations were not acted on because of COVID complications affecting the campus.

- Drawing language from the committee document, the committee recommended that students be able to choose from two options
 - a) completing a second major, a minor or a certificate (with restrictions), or
 - b) fulfilling the existing CLAS graduation requirements.

The language the committee proposed is as follows:

To satisfy the CLAS Graduation Requirements students must choose from the following two options:

- 1) Complete a second CLAS major, a CLAS minor or a CLAS undergraduate certificate outside your department (Interdisciplinary minors or certificates: at least half of credits must be from courses outside the student's major department). Minimum 12+ credit hours, no restrictions on number of times a CLAS course can apply to a requirement. Transfer credits cannot apply to certificates unless specially approved by the EPCC. Or,*
- 2) Complete the list of enhanced competencies as outlined in the committee document.*

- The advantage of option one is that it allows for existing majors, minors and certificates to satisfy graduation requirements without requiring extensive revision, as would be the case with a cluster model. The certificate option also allows for the creation of new certificates that could address urgent societal issues. It also encourages innovation and entrepreneurship for departments to create certificates, without requiring new protocols.
- Furthermore, for students in the sciences who pursue a second major, minor or certificate, this would reduce the overall credit hours required to complete the requirements. Some departments, such as English, Modern Languages, and Anthropology may experience some reductions in enrollment. We also understand that this will create more complication for advisors, but we are convinced that it will be easier for students to understand and fulfill their graduation requirements.
- The advantage of option two is that transfer students may find it easier to fulfill those requirements than complete a new major, minor or certificate. ICB will also be able to offer the same courses as they do currently to satisfy CLAS graduation requirements. They may even be encouraged to develop certificates for their campus.
- This change would potentially shift credit hours away from smaller departments.
- It could be helpful to offer this option to allow additional minors and certificates for students to gain more competency and breadth outside of their major.
- This change would get rid of some of the extra CLAS requirements, but not the CLAS core.
- All CU Denver undergraduates still complete a certain number of core requirements.
- We want to create a way for students to start thinking strategically about how they put their coursework and majors together.
- This new option would save students some time. They still need to do 120 credit hours, they still have to do 45 upper division hours, and they still have to do their major.
- This change would make it easier for transfer students to choose an option that best serves them without having to take a lot of additional credit hours. It would take financial hurdles away as students would not have to pay for additional credits they do not otherwise need for graduation.
- A lot of the changes intended to be addressed here are result of complaints from students and the challenges they face in moving towards meeting current graduation requirements.
- This new model will also encourage departments to create new interdisciplinary certificates that students will actually have the opportunity to take.

- We do see this change potentially hurting the Modern Languages department as fewer students may enroll there as they have completed their language requirements in high school before they come to CU Denver.
- When we talk about interdisciplinary cross-college and cross-school degrees, our CLAS Dean has met resistance to that programming because our language and graduation requirements and the additional necessary credit hours makes the degree very difficult to finish. So, this change would allow us to be a little more flexible for our students.
- General feedback was that this was a good proposal in support of making changes for the students to enhance their ability to graduate in a more flexible way.
- Next steps in the process for approval would include bringing this back to the departments for any additional feedback and then taking this to the next Council meeting for a final vote.

Dean's Updates: Pam Jansma

Faculty and Staff Forum: Was held on Friday 9/8 both in-person and by Zoom

Budget Impact:

- As of census we were 3.7% down in student headcount. We were projecting to be down only 2.7%, so we were down a little more than anticipated.
- The finance people are going through and looking at the implications of the mix of the students; international versus domestic, in-state versus out-of-state students. We also dropped in the number of transfer students. There will be a big push for recruitment of transfer students and retention of students through the spring semester.
- We still don't know what the budget realignment process will look like going forward. Last year when the budget cuts were first announced it was 3% cuts that had to be implemented by July 1, 2023 for Phase 1. For Phase 2 the projected cuts are 4% for July 1, 2024. A lot of this was accomplished last year through elimination of positions from people who retired or resigned. We will continue to work with shared governance groups, including this one, about what we will do moving forward. We haven't made any decisions because we haven't got all the information yet.

IRC Faculty:

- The amount of promotion bumps within the IRC ranks were made formal in a policy in August and people who were promoted in this last year will see those bumps included in their pay.
- We are working on retroactively giving people those bumps that are equivalent to what the new policy says and we are working with Central to find the money to do that by January 1.
- IRC faculty will still be eligible for merit because this is a separate issue.
- The Regents supposedly have said they are still looking at a 3% merit pool.
- We don't necessarily want to cut more in order to have higher merit.
- The naming of the CTT is changing and going to Teaching Professor. So that means we'll need to change wording in the bylaws.

Enrollment:

- We are down to about 14,000 students on campus, which is lower than it has been in the past. This enrollment decline is a national trend.
- We are still continuing to experience a decrease in CLAS headcount. We are losing majors and new students, but we are not losing our SEH as quickly.

- We are down to about 4400 total students down from 6600 students. Some of that is because we have lost our pre-majors who used to count as CLAS students before they were admitted to their school or college. Students now go directly into their school and college and do not count as a pre-major in CLAS.
- The way the budget model was originally constructed was based on student credit hours. But the way the campus is now talking about the budget model is from the standpoint of student headcount instead. Headcount has implications for majors and budgets more directly.
- CLAS is still producing the revenue. Other schools and colleges have increased their headcount, but those students are taking CLAS core classes.
- There are still enrollment declines that we have to figure out what to do about.
- We also had two years of large graduating classes, which is going to impact declines in current enrollment as more of our students have graduated.

CLAS Marketing Initiatives:

- There was a question about the CLAS marketing initiative and if there is going to be a push to develop more concerted marketing efforts for CLAS.
- Tracy Kohm has moved into the Grants office in CLAS, so her position is currently open.
- There are things happening with University Communications so that the individual schools and colleges are more aligned with Centralized efforts. They are looking at prioritizing those efforts to look at how we strategize marketing. There are a lot of things in flux and we want to see what happens with Central University Communications first before we restructure communications and marketing in CLAS. We will be looking to market our CLAS programs in collaboration with University Communications.
- We are also in the process of redoing all of our CLAS websites. Tim Stalker is working with Rebecca Ward from the Business School to make our sites more student focused. The Psychology website is now live and is already getting a good response.

Student Services Status:

- There was a question about whether we have done any recent student surveys and detecting any obstacles students might be experiencing that could be inhibiting their enrollment.
- We are in pretty good shape in CLAS with our Academic Advising.
- Wait times for Financial Aid and other student services offices have been a challenge and we know this affects students and their stress levels.
- There has been a lot of turnover in some of these offices and they have had difficulty feeling their applicant pools. This seems to be improving now as they work to cross train their staff.
- This is the first year in a while that we will be allowed to propose additional program fees that will help to pay for additional positions in CLAS Academic Advising. As our headcount decreases, we lose the program fees the students pay, so there is less money to support positions.

New Degree Proposals for Next Meeting Review:

- Rich Allen notified the Council that they may see three new degree proposals for review at their next meeting;
 - Interdisciplinary Bachelors Degree in Climate Change
 - Postdoctoral Masters in Clinical Psychopharmacology
 - Masters in International Affairs
- They are also working on a proposed Bachelor of Applied Sciences degree

- The intent is to have all four of these degrees ready for next Fall 2024.
- The first three of these degrees have gone through EPCC and will be reviewed by BPC next week.