

CAC meeting October 4, 2018

321 Linton Hall, 3:15-5pm

Present: Danielle DeVoss (WRAC); Suzanne Wagner (L&L); Susan Bandes (AAHD), Kyle Whyte (PHL), Kirk Kidwell (IAH), Jeff Wray (ENG/Film), Jared Talley (PHL GRAD), Alia Jones (HUM pre Law UGrad), Sarah Panuska (ENG Grad), Jon Keune (REL), John Rouk (RSC)

For CAL: Dean Christopher Long, Sonja Fritzsche

For African American & African Studies (AAAS): Glenn Chambers (HST, Director of AAAS), Kristie Dotson (PHL), Yomaira Figueroa (ENG)

1. **Call to order:** Danielle DeVoss, 3:17pm. Welcome and introductions.
2. **Agenda:** D. DeVoss requested that agenda item 4 (Dean's Remarks) be moved down to accommodate visitors from AAAS. Motion S. Bandes, second J. Keune. The request to approve the revised agenda was approved.
3. **Minutes:** Motion S. Bandes, second J. Wray to approve the minutes as presented.
4. **AAAS proposal:** G. Chambers summarized the history of the proposal to change AAAS from a program to a department. The program is composed of volunteer faculty with appointments in a wide variety of departments. The structure is somewhat ad hoc. Students have difficulty securing committees, finding mentoring. The program director has relatively little control. To address these issues, AAAS has been reflecting and restructuring for the last 4 years. The graduate program has been in moratorium for that time (3 years imposed by the University; 4th year by AAAS faculty decision). AAAS brought in external senior scholars as consultants, who suggested strategies for moving forward. There was a formal external review of the program. The faculty held retreats. K. Dotson has been leading the restructuring and re-visioning process.

AAAS provided a document to CAC ahead of its meeting, providing detailed rationales for the creation of a AAAS department, and outlining steps to be taken in the future with respect to hiring faculty and re-opening the graduate program. A plan to create a new major will be discussed once new faculty are on board.

G. Chambers (director, AAAS), K. Dotson and Y. Figueroa requested that the CAC provide feedback on the proposal. CAC questions were answered by the AAAS representatives, Dean Long, and Associate Dean Fritzsche.

Q: What is the CAC's usual role in a process like this?

A: The CAC must be consulted, before the Dean formally approves the proposal. The proposal then goes to the Provost's Office, to relevant University Committees, the Curriculum President, and the Board of Trustees. AAAS is aiming for the Steering Committee meeting in November (first Tuesday in November). It was agreed that CAC will write a memo to AAAS providing supportive feedback, and approving the proposal. D. DeVoss will draft immediately and circulate to CAC members for edits. Aim for Friday October 12th to get the final version to AAAS.

Q: What other feedback is AAAS getting on its proposal?

A: Besides the external consultants and CAC, AAAS holds a “talkback” series where students can talk about experience of being black on campus. It also provides an important sense of community for students in this otherwise quite scattered program. G. Chambers will attend October 24 to propose the idea in detail to the undergraduates. (He originally shared the news in April, after the March 2018 approval by the Provost to move ahead with a proposal).

Q: ‘Diaspora’ seems to be a proposed focus on of the department in some parts of the proposal, but not in others. Why?

A: Legacy from earlier version of the proposal; will be updated. Research on diaspora will not be a specific focus but will cross-cut all the main foci. Thanks for requesting clarification.

Q: Are there any issues with hiring faculty from within MSU before the department bylaws are created?

A: No. Appointments will start at the point when the department is established. There will then be time for the bylaws to be written before the hiring of MSU-external faculty begins.

There was praise for the proposal document, and for the hard work that AAAS faculty had clearly put into this long and complicated process. Dean Long thanked the contributing faculty for their energy, patience, faith and thoughtfulness.

5. Dean’s remarks:

AAAS is a signature priority for CAL. Thanks to CAC for the feedback and the forthcoming memo.

Core values. The environment on campus is still hard. We need to continue to nurture new ways of behaving, being collegial and supportive. Some units are modeling this admirably, as we just saw from AAAS. How else is this playing out?

At the CAL deans retreat, participants articulated what they saw as the Colleges’ core values, and considered how we are putting them into practice. Do our main initiatives embody those values? Are we *doing* what we’re *saying*? The same activity was conducted at the recent CAL chairs’ retreat. Among other things, it was useful to have the chairs talk to one another in new ways. An upcoming change: Chairs will be asked to do an exercise with their department colleagues before the fall planning letter, to determine the values they care most deeply about. Chairs will then explain how those values inform the fall planning process. An example activity: What are this unit’s top 3 values and how are they put into practice in your relationships with one another, your policies, and how are they further developed or embodied via initiatives (e.g. hiring, curriculum etc.). The College will take those ideas and use them to inform its letter to the Provost. The letters will also inform the “spring ask” letters. The College will also serve as a hub for identifying matching core values across the units, and connecting like-minded units.

The general idea is that CAL’s values should emerge from the bottom up, not from the top down. At the end of the day, the process is the product. The conversations we have along the way are worth it in themselves, regardless of the outcomes: cf. the conversations that took place during

the School of Languages exploration. K. Whyte shared ahead of the meeting, via e-mail, a summary of how PHL has been actively reflecting on its core values.

Q: Is there a role for CAC in the fall and spring planning, and the writing of the CAL letter?

Dean Long: Not historically, but I would love to see CAC more involved. We seem to be heading toward CAC being a truly advisory body. The College is also moving into a more transparent mode. Chairs are sharing their fall and spring letters with one another for the first time. Among other things it helped shape chairs' awareness of the Provost's role in approving projects.

There was some discussion about the ethics of what could and couldn't be shared with CAC. The conclusion was that the College will share information about the core values articulated by units, and the emerging connections between units.

Integrating programs with departments. Can programs housed within the College be integrated better with departments in ways that are supportive and sustainable? Currently departments take over a lot of the administrative side, but programs gain legitimacy from the College. They are also vulnerable to changes of dean etc. How can we weave programs better into the fabric of the university and its intellectual life?

Q: Would it help to raise the profile of programs, e.g. have the program directors give lightning talks at the next CAL faculty meeting? Could help programs find more departmental connections.

A: Yes, worth considering.

Q: Why do we have stand-alone programs?

A: They can be interdisciplinary and agile. Can allow things to flourish that can't flourish well in departments.

Q: If programs are founded to be interdisciplinary, why not a Memorandum of Understanding for programs, as we do for individual faculty? Could require every new program to have at least two departmental sponsors.

A: That involves change of policy. The emphasis for now is on how we can help programs to be their intellectual best.

D. DeVoss, Dean Long and Associate Dean Fritzsche described the current arrangement for the Experience Architecture program, which could serve as a model. There is a three-year MOU in place. Art, Art History and Design (AADH) and Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures (WRAC) have created a committee structure, with faculty from both departments. Someone in WRAC is appointed to do administrative work for the program, and that person is reviewed by the committee. Benefits: College is not as directly involved in life the Exp. Architecture program administratively, and WRAC is also not the sole "owner" of the program. Initial conversations with the Film Studies program are taking a similar form. However, we don't yet have a shared language for this kind of process and structure. E.g. for Film Studies, would English be the "sponsor", whereby the review of the program director comes from English but the budget comes from the College?

6. Discussion/Action items:

- **CAL fall faculty meeting.** The Dean's office is considering a change in day/time for the currently scheduled CAL faculty meeting (Friday, November 16 from 8:30-10:30am).
- **RVSM task force.** D. DeVoss and K. Kangas-Preston propose that CAC appoints a task force. Given the complicated nature of the discussion at the CAC September meeting, the task force's first charge will be to determine the scope of its activities. It was agreed that a 5 to 6 member group was optimal. A CAC member should either serve on the task force or closely liaise with it. D. DeVoss and K. Kangas-Preston will talk to Deanna Thomas in the Dean's Office about sending out a recruitment e-mail.
- **Hiring faculty with tenure.** Questions from L&L: What are the policies and procedures for hiring faculty with tenure? Is it appropriate to make hiring recommendation letters serve double duty as RPT letters, especially when the position is administrative? Especially in cases where individuals are hired for administrative positions, if their research area substantially overlaps with areas represented in the tenure home unit, can the individual have a tenure home in the College rather than the department?
 - S. Fritzsche: The hiring handbook has been updated. For hires with tenure, 4 letters must be requested, not 3, to put us in line with Academic HR policy. If the letters are for an administrative position, the search committee must advise the candidate that prospective letter writers must not be exclusively those who can comment on leadership qualities or must not write exclusively in their letter about those qualities. Additionally, letter writers must be of the same rank or higher as the candidate. Generally speaking we don't want the RPT part of the process to be arduous. MSU AHR respects the values of colleagues at other institutions; their research dossiers might not always be MSU level but we must respect the fact that an intellectual effort has been made. The next handbook update will be next summer, so we can have an ongoing conversation about further updates. About tenure home: Technically all MSU faculty are tenured in the University, not a specific department, so there is actually some room for flexibility here.
- **Digital Humanities bylaws.** There was no further feedback on the DH draft bylaws, reviewed at the CAC September meeting.
- **Staff representative on CAC.** There are three nominees. S. Fritzsche advised [via e-mail after the meeting, October 6] that the staff select the representative themselves from the nominees. She will check with Deb Mansel (CAL HR and Facilities Director) and send feedback to CAC.
 - Motion S. Bades, second K. Whyte to move further discussion to CAC group on Teams.
- **CCC representative.** Motion S. Wagner, second J. Keune to table this item until the CAC November meeting.
- **CAL Senate representatives letter.** There was general agreement that the CAL reps are doing an amazing job. CAC members are asked to encourage their units to attend listening sessions, be involved in the presidential search process.

Adjourned: 5:02pm, motion J. Keune, second D. DeVoss.

Minutes submitted by S. Wagner, secretary *pro tem*.