

Advisory Council Minutes
College of Arts & Letters
Dec 1, 2016

Present:

Chris Long (Dean), Jon Frey (AAHD), Catherine Ryu (L&L), Karen Kangas-Preston (THR), Jon Keune (REL), Julie Lindquist (WRAC), Olivia Gorczyca (undergraduate student), Salah Hassan (ENG), Anna Norris (RCS)

Initial Business

- Frey convened the meeting at 3:19pm
- The agenda was approved unanimously.
- Lindquist moved to approve the October & November minutes. Frey seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Frey announced that the agenda for the fall semester CAL full faculty meeting was approved by CAC members via email.

Dean Long's Remarks

The CAL Fall Planning letter is posted online: <http://www.cal.msu.edu/about/mission-and-vision/2016-planning-letter>. The provost responded to the letter by requesting more data, including time-to-degree and information for Academic Analytics.

The Citizen Scholar program is moving forward. Enrolled students have now had enough experience with it to start giving feedback. Assistant Dean Beth Judge's office is now developing a strategy that is provisionally called the "Excel Network," which combines experiential learning with career development. They are considering how to structurally develop this in CAL.

To prepare for full faculty meeting, CAC members are encouraged to share what is on faculty members' minds, which the Dean could address at the full faculty meeting. Dean Long was considering a way to address the recent presidential election, to help orient CAL faculty to engage with students in productive ways.

Dean Long also proposed the development of a Liberal Arts Extension program, similar to Ag Extension, possibly partnered with the College of Social Science. The aim would be to make CAL and the arts/humanities more present in rural areas, where CAL's focus hasn't recently been. The program would show concern for diversity in a broad sense (class, geography, etc.). The Dean imagines this effort would be more aimed at being open to seeing what's happening in rural areas, rather than a top-down program to deliver content.

Discussion of Dean's Remarks

Regarding the liberal arts extension idea, existing infrastructure in Ag Extension programs (like 4-H) could be used. Ag Extension offices already exist in every county in Michigan, which could become nodes for future programs. Other local spaces where people gather could also be helpful, such as local arts councils and museums or even religious communities like churches. As people working in agriculture look to MSU as offering practical resources and knowledge for their work, perhaps CAL could be a source of humanistic and arts-related knowledge. It may be good to survey people in some areas to see what would be useful and desirable for them.

CAL should also be careful about avoiding language that could alienate or confuse people in rural areas. Top-heavy terms like “public philosophy” or “public humanities” or even “liberal arts” may evoke negative responses. Dean Long suggested the term “arts of liberty” as a possible alternative to explore.

Council Business

The results for the CAL RPT ballot are in. Steven Arch and Teresa Dunn were elected to serve two year positions. But there was a problem with the ballot that went unrecognized until it was too late to change; the ballot was in violation of the bylaws in that three of the four candidates must be at the rank of full professor. Also, the bylaws stipulate that elections should be held in the spring semester for the following year. This ballot procedure apparently fell through the cracks during the transition to a new dean last spring. To be in compliance with the bylaws, CAC will need to hold another RPT election in the spring. The committee discussed possible ways forward and decided to consult with David Prestel before taking further action.

The CAC committee discussed suggestions they might bring to the dean for what to discuss at the full faculty meeting. Ideas included recommending the Dean’s talk be more than information delivery (which could be accomplished via emails, newsletters, etc.), and instead took a stand or stated an opinion about CAL or the humanities in the 21st century, or reflections on what the Dean has learned and experienced in his second year.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jon Keune