

College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Faculty Senate  
March 30, 2016  
Submitted by Bryan McCann

## Tasks

Present: Wilfred Major (president/Interdisciplinary Studies), Bryan McCann (at-large), William Saas (CMST), Dorothy McCaughey (ENGL), Chris Barrett (ENGL), Kodi Roberts (History), Jim Stoner (proxy for Dan Tirone, PoliSci), Carolyn Ware (at-large), Jeffrey Leichman (French Studies), Stacia Haynie (HSS Dean), Michael Barton (SOCL), Belinda Davis (LSU Faculty Senate HSS), Elaina McMurry (COMD), Michael Bibler (at-large)

- I. Introductions
- II. Approval of 24 Feb 2016 minutes
- III. Old business
  - a. Internship policy work in motion
  - b. Still working on senate website
  - c. Willie is working on shoring up membership, unit representation, etc.
  - d. Seeking nominations/selections for HSS Senate, P&T Committee, and Graduate Council
- IV. Comments from Dean Haynie
  - a. Internship policies - College wants to give units as much autonomy as possible
  - b. Budget
    - i. Cut of 1%, approximately \$350 thousand
    - ii. Down from projected 5%
    - iii. Prevents us from, for example, paying to bring in prospective graduate students
    - iv. Very concerned about impact on recruiting
    - v. Having a lot of success in alumni fundraising
  - c. Recruitment
    - i. Kickoff numbers up 76%
    - ii. Dinners with the Dean have also been successful
    - iii. Numbers are better than last year (don't have final numbers yet, but up about 13.5-13.8%)
    - iv. Increased instructor and graduate assistant salaries/stipends
    - v. Committee distributed some instructional fee money based on proposals
  - d. Funding – Centralizing “Strategic Excellence” funds that any faculty can apply for (not limited to instruction)
  - e. Still hiring
  - f. Facility review coming up at the end of April
  - g. Faculty Awards Dinner announcement forthcoming
- V. Discussion with Dean Haynie (questions/comments from senators in **bold**)
  - a. **Any way to ameliorate the \$350 thousand cut?**
    - i. No. Dipping into discretionary resources would be problematic. We state dollars to remain state dollars.

- ii. Goal is to “never return a penny”
- b. Risks of losing faculty?**
  - i. Very real challenge, but the college will put up a fight
  - ii. Consistently advocating for faculty raises with the provost and he has indicated it’s a priority of his. Cautiously optimistic about this.
- c. Student success, DFW rates, etc.
  - i. How do DFWs figure into assessment?**
    1. Mechanism for recruitment and retention
    2. Less variability in students over the years (current average ACT is 25.7)
    3. College asks that faculty tell the college about students who are struggling in class
    4. College is investing in resources to help struggling students
    5. Midterm grades also figure very significantly into tracking students
  - ii. How do DFWs figure into evaluation of faculty?**
    1. Dean receives grade distribution for every section of every class
    2. Gets compared to unit, college, and university trends, as well as prior years for the individual instructor
    3. Average across the university is about 20% (higher for freshmen and sophomores), consistently higher for a faculty member is potentially problematic
    4. Presumption is that the faculty member is grading rigorously. Focus is not on faculty member reducing course difficulty, etc., but trying to draw on other resources to help students.
    - 5. How does this figure into annual reviews if it’s not addressed at a departmental level? In general, how is this communicated to faculty? Will this be evaluated by P&T?**
      - a. College doesn’t do annual reviews for tenured faculty
      - b. Non-tenured faculty reviewed by college during third year review. College approaches this as an opportunity to cover concerns not addressed by unit. This includes DFW rates above appropriate average.
      - c. No present mechanism for college feedback beyond third year review and tenure
    - 6. Isn’t there a risk for corruption/inflation?**
      - a. It’s possible, but wouldn’t a honest/talented professor want to know if they have a high DFW rate?
    7. Academic affairs also track these numbers, so it is in the best interest of the faculty member and college to catch any issues early
    8. Grade distribution is available online
    9. Above 30% gets flagged for third year review feedback, but trends are what generate the most concern
    10. College attempts to account for class size and other variables
    - 11. What about classes that are traditionally “difficult”? Do they need to be more mindful about grading on a bell curve?**
      - a. That is at the instructor’s discretion

- b. From the dean's perspective, concerns emerge when numbers are high relative to multiple sections of the same class

**12. 2009 faculty senate resolution explicitly prohibits penalizing faculty for grade distribution. Could this generate faculty senate pushback?**

- a. Dean welcomes discussion with FS and other groups
- b. Does anyone think we *shouldn't* be concerned about this?

**13. Are there more constructive ways we can approach this since it is a shared concern between faculty and the college? Focus collectively on the basics of student success?**

**14. Why are W's coupled with D's and F's?**

- a. They are different, but high trends are still problematic

**15. Can we be sensitive to timing of a "W"?**

- a. Could be worth discussing with university to implement a more nuanced approach to how W's are recorded against an instructor

**16. What about other instruments for measuring success?**

- a. College would welcome new ones and already uses additional measures (course evaluations, classroom visits, etc.)

**17. Clarity on this issue is especially relevant for NTT faculty**

VI. Adjourn