The University of Southern Mississippi

The Aquila Digital Community

Council of Chairs   University Committees & Organizations

1-23-2015

January 2015 Minutes

USM Council of Chairs

Follow this and additional works at: https://aquila.usm.edu/council_of_chairs

Recommended Citation

USM Council of Chairs, "January 2015 Minutes" (2015). *Council of Chairs*. 50.
https://aquila.usm.edu/council_of_chairs/50

Council of Chairs
Jan. 23, 2015, noon-2 p.m.
Chain Technology Center, Room 102
Minutes

Attending: Steve Cloud, Stacy Reischman Fletcher, Susan Hart, Liz Haynes, Sabine Heinhorst (proxy for Monty Graham, Bill Smith, and Jeff Wiggins), Wayne Kelly (proxy for Tom O'Brien), Ann Marie Kinnell, Bill Powell, Tim Rehner, Karen Reidenbach, Thelma Roberson, Eric Tribunella, and Tisha Zelner (proxy for Gwen Pate)

1.0   Call to order – Tisha Zelner, chair
        The meeting was called to order.

2.0   Approval of Agenda
        Rehner moved, Kelly seconded. The agenda was approved.

3.0   Guest Speaker: Doug Masterson, chair of Student Success Implementation Team (SSIT)
        -SSIT is proud of its new Student Success website spearheaded by Danielle Sypher-Haley and Amy Miller from the College of Arts and Letters. The search engine is particularly useful. Please ask faculty to share the website in their classrooms. Contact the webmaster if you find an error or omission. The hope is to remove other redundant "student success" pages so that students and parents will go to this page for help.

        -CARES and Early Alert: the two programs are in the process of being merged. If a faculty member submits a case, someone will follow up.

        -What SSIT wants departments to work on without mandating they do so:
                1. Revise semester-by-semester guides for each major that avoid too many historically difficult classes (HDCs) in one semester.
                2. Use GEC coursework to implement cross-curricular engagement activities, such as a common first-year reading.
                3. Consider/implement course redesigns:
                -HDCs could front load instruction.
                -Post syllabi so students could familiarize themselves with the course and course requirements.
                -Open Blackboard shells before the semester.
                4. Participate in faculty development opportunities: Training should be offered to faculty on best practices in teaching and student success.
                5. Advising: we need to address problems with advising. [CoC: students sometimes claim there were advising errors when the paper trail suggests otherwise, so these claims need to be verified.]

        -CoC comments: Thankfully, the tone seems to be shifting away from blaming faculty to recognizing faculty efforts and noting what faculty are doing effectively.

4.0   Approval of Minutes from Dec. 15, 2014 meeting – Eric Tribunella, secretary

Motion to accept with corrections. Kelly moved. Cloud seconded.
The minutes were accepted with corrections.

5.0   Executive Committee Reports
5.1 Academic Leadership Council – report of Jan. 12th meeting – Tisha Zelner
-Deena Crawford, director of Student Counseling Services, spoke about Student
Counseling Services (SCS) and the Campus Action Referral and Evaluation System
(CARES). There is a clear separation between CARES and Student Counseling Center
services and visits. Counseling Center visits cannot be shared with the CARES team.
CARES and Early Alert reporting structure are being consolidated. This should help with
uncertainty about which system is more appropriate: www.usm.edu/cares. This can also
be found on the Student Success website under faculty resources: www.usm.edu/success.
The reporting link is also available through SOAR. Ms. Crawford suggested faculty
consider including a statement about SCS on course syllabi.
-David Sliman provided an update on the Office 365 migration. There have been some
problems with Mac users and shared calendars, but no major problems have been noted.
-Karen Reidenbach noted that training sessions for Office 365 will be available Jan. 29
and Feb. 11.
-The Hearin Foundation offers grants to colleges and universities "to contribute to the
overall economic advantage of the State of Mississippi." The Provost wants to encourage
more proposals from USM, so he is coordinating proposals from academic units. The
deadline for the Provost's office to receive proposals is February 11. The primary focus
of previously funded proposals has been scholarships and salary supplements. The grants
can focus on student success, and the end result should be fostering economic
development in the state.
-The Office of Professional Development and Educational Outreach is being phased out
effective June 30. That office coordinated continuing education (CEU) credits. The
Provost is investigating alternatives for managing CEUs.
-Requests for new or increased course fees are due to the Provost's Office by February 1.
-Bob Press, president of Faculty Senate, suggested that USM investigate the costs
associated with athletics and the value of athletics to the university.
[CoC: it is worth asking about how we can support athletics in a fiscally responsible way
when academic programs are suffering budgets cuts. Athletics are also receiving budget
cuts. We must be transparent about the financial support of athletics and other ancillary
units. How would such a review be undertaken? We need to take care not to harm
enrollment or funding further by alienating alumni or donors with threats to athletics.]
-Bill Powell discussed the SACS-COC review. The certification report is due September
10. The on-site team will be here March 1-3, 2016. Chairs will be receiving information
in the next few days about evaluations of all instructors. GAs have been miscoded for
many years as research assistants when they are instructors of record.
-Provost announcements:
        -the formation of a new academic or research center requires approval of the
        President and IHL.IHL considers requests only twice per year, in February and
        July.
        -Advertising for a new associate provost for academic excellence will start soon.
        [CoC comments: how many new administrative positions have been added in

recent years? Administrative bloat is a concern when faculty positions have been cut. Bill Powell: Most "new" positions are really re-titled positions rather than new lines. We are administratively "thinner" than peer institutions.]

5.2 Executive Committee meeting with Provost - report of Jan. 15th meeting
-The Provost also expressed concern with the number of complaints that either go directly to upper administration or that get escalated up when a reasonable decision has already been made. A flow chart is being developed for resolving student issues/complaints. He will send it to CoC for review. [Bill Powell: we do have a formal grievance process that students should use. We are looking into increasing direct lines of communication between staff or between faculty and staff for financial aid or registration issues to minimize traffic through vice presidents.]
-Second measures for teaching evaluations: The Provost reaffirmed that his vision is not a top-down mandate and that departments can develop a second measure that is suited to them. His preference is for a portfolio. The Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching is working on a set of recommendations. [CoC: We prefer a menu of options.]
-Teaching evaluations by students who withdrew from the class: the Provost will look into options about how the system can distinguish between evaluations from students who remain in the course and those who withdraw for whatever reason.
-Mid-term faculty evaluations: The Provost had not heard this proposal recently. [Bill Powell: it was old business for the Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching.]
-Provost: does CoC want a representative on the Student Success Implementation Team. [CoC: Yes. Members should go back to their colleges and find a chair nominee/volunteer by Jan. 28.]

6.0   Committee Reports, internal
        6.1 Chair Development Committee – Wayne Kelly, chair-elect
        -No report. Liz Haynes sent Wayne a list of chair duties based on her experience. Wayne will send out the list with his additions for feedback.

7.0   Committee Reports, external / Liaisons to university committees
        7.1 Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching – Ann Marie Kinnell
        -No report. The committee is not meeting until next week.

        7.2 Faculty Handbook Committee – Tisha Zelner
        -No report. The next meeting is January 30.

        7.3 Strategic Planning Council – Tisha Zelner
        -The committee met this morning. The committee discussed the process that will be used to solicit feedback. The deadline for presentation to the President is February 24, but that deadline might be flexible. The committee wants to recommend that once the strategic plan is approved, a person or body is designated to ensure implementation. [CoC: there needs to be a connection between resource allocation and the strategic plan (unless the plan is a bad one?).]

        7.4 University Assessment Committee – Susan Hart

-The committee meets next Wednesday to finalize reviews and reviews of reviews. The current report in WEAVE remains the 2013-2014 year.

8.0   Old Business
        8.1 Proposed new "teaching faculty" classification: No new information.
        8.2 Faculty evaluations and student success efforts: See above.
        8.3 Budget reductions for fiscal year 2015/16 and ongoing: No new information.

9.0   New Business: None.

10.0   Adjourn
        Roberson moved. Kinnell seconded. The meeting was adjourned.