

**College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC STAFF ISSUES**

February 10, 2016
1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
250 Agricultural Hall

Present: Nicholas Bero, Vince Borleske, Cristiana Carusi, Dustin Eilert, Pat Flannery, Janet Hedtcke, Carol Hillmer, Janet Newlands, Joan Parrish, Mark Seeger, Deb Wendorf Boyke

Absent: Chris Day, Nicole Miller, Robin Mittenthal, Dick Straub

Guests: Sarah Pfatteicher, John Klatt, Laura Ward Good

Minutes: Dawn Wagner

MINUTES

Additions to agenda

- None

Approval of meeting minutes from January 2016

Vince motioned to approve the minutes, Dustin second; all voted in favor of accepting the minutes as written.

Guests Sarah Pfatteicher, John Klatt: CALS Educational Vital Signs

Sarah and John were invited to speak about the CALS Educational Vital Signs initiative. This initiative started around the same time the college was adopting a strategic plan. The CALS Curriculum Committee was charged to “review existing and available data to select a set of measures of education” that captures the educational mission of CALS. The committee developed vital signs that were approved by college governance in March, 2015. Campus is moving towards a new budget model. Some of what now matters is the number of students enrolled in courses and the number of degrees offered. While we agree quantity is important, the issue of quality is also important. While quantity is easier to measure, the vital signs are a way to measure key markers of educational health that reflect elements of a CALS education that we value and aspire to maintain and improve. What is special and unique about CALS is the emphasis on small-group settings, field and group research, low enrollment and therefore at times opposite to the campus push for large numbers. CALS enrollment of undergraduate students recently increased from 2,400 to 3,000 and it continues to rise. This year, we are close to 4,000 undergraduates. This is positive on the budget side but could be problematic on the quality side. There is a question of how many students CALS can accommodate. Similar to a doctor visit -vital signs do not tell everything but they can give a clue that something needs to be looked at more carefully or they may point to something that may be going on underneath the surface. While there is a large amount of educational data available, there are a small number of data points that can point to how healthy CALS is regarding the quality of our educational experience. Nine vital signs have been identified and are organized under three educational values:

- Value 1 – a practical and personalized education
- Value 2 – an expectation of success
- Value 3 – responsible stewardship

Vital signs under Value 1:

- a) student engagement in “Wisconsin Experiences” (quality small-group experiences)
- b) student-advisor interaction (connection with faculty/staff member)
- c) timely declaration of major (if a student delays declaring a major, this can indicate a less personal connection to the major)

Vital signs under Value 2:

- a) attempted to completed credit ratio (or not passing on first try)
- b) probation/drop rates (drop is “expulsion” out of school for academic reasons)
- c) post-graduation plans (work or grad school – even if a student does not have a job upon graduation, there could be outside factors that contribute to the numbers)

Vital signs under Value 3:

- a) exceptions processed per graduate (CALs currently has many by-hand adjustments; looking to reduce these in coming years)
- b) average time to degree (a four-year program equates to 3.75 years due to starting in September and ending in May)
- c) student satisfaction

There is campus support for this approach. Sarah has shared the vital signs initiative with the Provost Office. CALS is the pioneer in this area; it is not being done by other colleges right now. Part of the motivation is the fact that campus is going to ask us to maximize quantity of students. The vital signs initiative is a statement of what we feel is important and is a quantifiable way to send that message to campus. Some individual departments worry that their numbers will not look good under this analysis. For example, a department may not have the capacity to meet one-on-one with large numbers of students. The overall message to the departments is that no one intends to make rash decisions on the budget based on one number. Budget decisions depend on a number of factors. The Curriculum Committee has been in conversations with department chairs, the APC and the reps on the committee should be bringing the communication back to the departments. Ideally, next year all of the FISC courses should be included in enrollment and major declaration data. Graduate students are not included. The nine vital signs may change from year to year depending on a number of factors. The general goal is that the nine vital signs will be chosen based on college priorities. The data is pulled from existing data sources so there is consistency over time. There is an effort to streamline the data so that we are not generating huge reports. In a CALS-campus comparison, CALS is doing fairly well.

Sarah thinks a few of the data points could be improved – how do we get better data?

- 1) Student-advisor interaction – the electronic advising system data is misleading but still the best we have. Not all departments use advisor notes and faculty advisors in smaller departments are less likely to use it.
- 2) Exceptions processed per graduate are a high percentage. It is estimated that every exception costs \$25.00 to process.
- 3) Students transferring to CALS. If more students are coming as transfers than as freshman, how does that impact our overall numbers?

These can spark conversation – why does this number does not look like what it is? Sometimes we discover other problems through this process. More of a starting point than a diagnostic tool.

Accreditation Issues/Minimum Qualifications for Instructors draft policy

The University gets accredited approximately every 10 years. The current new change for 2018-19 is a requirement to keep data on instructors’ qualifications and to have a campus policy on minimum qualifications. We do not yet have a formal campus-wide policy. Historically, we have not kept a record of last degree earned for each instructor. The new recommendation is that instructors have at least one level of degree above their students (or a Ph.D. for doctoral

students). In CALS, all faculty (98-99%) have a Ph.D. or equivalent. CALS HR has started to ask academic staff for CV's and over 90% have been entered into HRS. There are some issues with AS titling. For example, if you are an instructor, you should have a correlated title, so we can check the degree. If you are teaching under a non-instructional title, we don't know to ask for a CV. There will likely be exceptions. Some lecturers who have practiced in the industry for many years and have a mix of undergrad and grad students in their classroom may be allowed to continue as lecturers. Some allowances will need to be made under a future exception process. There have been restrictions on blending teaching and research in AS titles in the past. Not sure if that will continue to be a reality in the future with AS being asked to do more within their roles. ASEC is talking again about the possibility of non-tenure track faculty positions.

Sub-Committee reports

Awards subcommittee: Reminders – CALS AS award nomination forms are due February 12 to Vince. There are 3 awards recognizing contributions to research, service and leadership. ASPD Fall 2016 grants -application deadlines are in March. The Academic Staff chats scheduled for March will cover the mechanics of AS promotion. The AS chat scheduled for April will cover applying for PI status (the one held in January focused more on permanent PI status vs. limited). If you know individuals who would be interested, register through the OHRD website (now called the Office of Talent Management).

Nominations subcommittee: 4 members will be rotating off the committee in May. Nomination forms are used when an election is necessary (when more than one AS member is competing for a ward seat).

APC update: The APC is looking at departmental reviews. They have approved the first FISC certificate course. Five more are under development. There has been a call for faculty proposals. Out of the seventeen have been submitted- four are likely to be approved.

Personnel subcommittee: In the process of reviewing the by-laws and will report at the March meeting. Dick will follow-up to CALS CASI-sponsored coffee.

CALS Updates

There is a broader conversation in CALS administration on the upcoming annual CALS awards ceremony. How can the college make the ceremony more broad and encourage more attendance from the departments beyond those who have an award recipient? The Dean's office would like to create a larger sense of community – there is potential recognition of milestones, retirements, as well as reaching out to new employees. Heidi Zoerb would like to attend an upcoming CASI meeting to brainstorm ideas. Carol will invite Heidi to attend the March meeting.

Adjourned at 2:10

Next meeting: March 9, 2016, 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m., 250 Agricultural Hall