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2020-04-03 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

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Approved Minutes
Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
April 3, 2020
9:00 am – 10:30 am
Zoom meeting

Present: Joanna Abdallah, Paul Benson, Anne Crecelius, Shannon Driskell, Deo Eustace, Mark Jacobs, Denise James, Michael Davies, Leslie Picca, Jason Pierce, Fran Rice, Andrea Seielstad

Guests: Janet Bednarek (Faculty Board representative)
Robert Liang (Chair, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Engineering Mechanics)

Opening

- Opening prayer / meditation – Fran Rice (poem)
- Approval of minutes from 03/27/2020 ECAS meeting -- Minutes approved

Announcements – There were no announcements

New Business

- MS in Construction Engineering & Management – Robert Liang presented a proposal for a new graduate program: Master of Construction Engineering and Management. The proposal was in response to community urging, faculty interest in developing the program, and 1/3 of graduating students go on to construction companies. This would be the 2nd degree for construction engineering in Ohio. Many colleges have programs in civil engineering. The proposed program stresses work experience, similar to the MBA program. Current faculty resources are adequate. The program has received donations, including alumni donations to develop forward looking labs, including a virtual reality theater which will help students have more immersive design projects. The program is projected to be profitable beginning in the first year.

Questions:

- Where are you with the approval process through GLC? Answer: Brad Duncan helped guide us through the paperwork. GLC has looked at it and approved it. Since this proposal impacts one department, the proposal was sent to ECAS for approval. Once approved, it is sent to the Provost, then the BOT, and then Ohio Dept of Education for external approval. All internal processes need to be complete before the May BOT meeting.
- Was there any discussion to include courses on environmental impact or community development? Answer: Yes, we engaged the Sustainability institute. However, we were advised proposals that crossed into other disciplines were difficult to get approved. But once the program is approved, we would be able to broaden the degree to include sustainability and environmental impact courses.
- Is it wise for ECAS to continue to approve graduate program proposals that the GLC has advised to confine the proposal to one department to expedite the process?
- Comment: this proposal is missing consultation. SBA has a management degree that is being packaged as an engineering degree. There has been no consultation to leverage synergy. While I appreciate the ease of approval, there needs to be consultation particularly with SBA. Response:

We were advised to make our proposal clean and self-sustaining because it would involve less review.

- Comment: you can have consultation with others, officers, and include broader letters of support from across the campus. You can consult across campus, and propose a fine narrow program. Response: Brad was guiding us, this is what he recommended. From our point of view, we did perform wide consultation; with consultants, alumni, and faculty, and the community. We followed the instructions provided.
- Comment: will COVID-19 impact this proposal? Answer: it has been looked at carefully, the proposal was submitted before COVID-19, there isn't an additional financial burden. There are no requests for new faculty. We hope to be approved before fall semester begins. The program could attract students unable to get jobs or existing workers would take advantage and go to school because of possible shutdown.
- Comment: I really appreciate consultation, and opportunities for interdisciplinary degrees brought forward. However, you followed the guidelines given to you. This is a masters with no additional resources needed, it is able to go online, the proforma budget is revenue positive in year one. You have thought about these variables and with market demand-both international and domestic.
- Comment: I have no problem with the proposal, just the process that is in place. There should be more robust documentation about the GLC consultation process. This is an opportunity to revise the process and include a letter of approval from the GLC.
- Comment: Extend an invitation to Bran to come with Robert to ECAS
- Comment: Concerned the GLC process encourages programs be developed that are not interdisciplinary. Response: We did reach out to other programs. This program fulfills a unique niche of the needs of community. We want to expand this program to make it more comprehensive, but we may need to do it in stages.

Mark asked Robert to go back and bring back letters of support beyond civil engineering and come back to the next ECAS meeting on April 17.

- Department name change for Geology – Jason Pierce: Rename the Department of Geology to the Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences. Geology has evolved to include research and learning around ground water and energy resources. The curriculum has degrees and courses that reflect a wider scope of attention. Faculty research and experiential learning isn't captured with the current dept name.
 - Question: Was there consultation? Answer: Yes, consultations with Rebecca Potter, courses across the college, and with social sciences. The name change was unanimously approved, and will be forwarded on to Provost council.
- Certificate in Sport Communication – Mark presented the proposal for the certificate. The certificate will benefit students from multiple disciplines, including majors in the Department of Communication, Department of Health and Sport Science, and the School of Business Administration. The interdisciplinary nature of selected courses may also be of interest to students in the Department of Psychology, particularly those interested in pursuing careers in Sport Psychology. The certificate received unanimous approval by ECAS.
- Approval of 4/17 senate meeting agenda – Mark. Agenda was approved

- CAP 5th year review process (tentative) –Leslie provided the update from APC. Because of the current workload situation at this time, APC unanimously agreed to pause the 5-year review for one year possibly two. The group will continue to develop and finalize the proposal, next year’s APC can then use the plan to move forward.
- Open discussion about current status of UD
There are concerns from grad students that their relationship will come to an end shortly and they won’t be able to complete their programs, do we need to communicate with them again that we are committed to their completion? Response: The way units look at this issue is different unit by unit and program by program. Units are working on a communication.

Pre-tenured faculty must decide to suspend the tenure clock by April 15. What happens if someone decides not to suspend the tenure clock but then realizes that the ramifications of COVID-19 has presented more challenges than originally planned for, e.g. journals close down. Response: There would be challenges for those asking for extension, their review dates are included in their contracts which will be distributed and signed by May 15.

Should there be a survey to collect data on what worked best and what didn’t work while transitioning classes to online. Response: The office of student success is working on this as well as eLearning. They are looking at survey designs. They also want to try and gather information on the challenges of studying at home or wherever they are trying to study.

It is very challenging to teach from home. There are lots of issues, especially in households with children. It is very stressful, we can’t keep pressuring ourselves. Also concerns that workdays are becoming 12-14 hr. days, students want more time with faculty.

- Discuss an action plan based on the SAPC report on S.E.T. – Mark will reach out to Sr Laura and Suki.
- Charge to APC to evaluate and revise teaching section of handbook to address all forms – pend

Old Business

- Strategies for stimulating greater faculty participation in shared governance – pend for future meeting
- Senate composition discussion – pend for future meeting
- Mini-course approvals – pend for future meeting

Adjourned: 10:43 am

Respectfully submitted, Fran Rice