

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Faculty Senates
February 27, 2019
Submitted by Hyunju Chung

Present: Alan Baumeister (President/PSYC), Asiya Alam (HIST), Christina Armistead (ENGL), David Chicaine (GEOG+ANTH), Paolo Chirumbolo (Interdisciplinary Studies, proxy for Wilfred Major), Hyunju Chung (COMD), Joe Clare (POLI SCI), Brigitte Delzell (French), Serap Erincin (COMM), Jamie Geer (FLL), Sherri Johnson (HIST), Isiah Lavender III (ENGL), Matt Valasik (SOCL), Clay Weill (ENGL)

1. Introductions

2. Approval of minutes for November 2018

a. Approved

3. Old business

a. College WFD policy:

- Alan talked with Dean Blanchard about the WFD policy on Nov 20, 2018:
 - According to the Dean:
 - There is no language in **new hire** correspondence or contracts going back several years that indicates the desired grade distribution or % of withdrawals for promotion and tenure decision.
 - There is language in **multi-year contracts for instructors** that “overall grade distribution and the percent of students receiving a D, F, or withdrawal compared to university averages” will be a factor in performance evaluation and future eligibility for contracts.
 - For **third review of tenure track** faculty “The grade distribution data for all courses the faculty member taught during the three year review period is included as an attachment to the letter with a link to university data”
- In the ensuing discussion, senators agreed that grade distributions as well as % withdrawals were the prerogative of individual faculty not the College and that such prerogative may attach to the concept of academic freedom.
- The senate ask the Senate President to discuss this further with the Dean and report back at the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

b. Student evaluation of teaching

- The report by the Scholarship and Teaching committee on proposed revisions to student evaluations of teaching was delayed until the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

- Senators did discuss whether student evaluations, no matter how refined, could be valid measures of teaching performance. Concern was expressed that student evaluations measure student variables, such as the influence of grades, how difficult they perceived the class to be, how entertaining the material and the instructor are, and how much they personally liked the instructor. There was consensus among the Senators that evaluation of faculty teaching performance should be based on how much students **learn** not how much students **like** the class. The President suggested using the pre-test/post-test method to measure student learning. The senators expressed interest in adopting this approach for the purpose of evaluating faculty teaching.
- A related issue was whether the current student evaluation of teaching provides representative samples of students. Now, as in the past, students self-select for participation in class evaluations. If students are motivated to participate by some non-random variable, such as whether they are disgruntled, the evaluations will be neither representative nor valid.
- The Senate asked the President to explore these issues further.
- Steven Greening & Mike Barton (Scholarship and Teaching sub-committee) will report on this in the next meeting.

4. Adjourn. **Next Meeting on March 27th**