

Academic Committee Meeting
April 3, 2020
1:00-2:00 PM
ZOOM

Attendees:

Bagchi, Rajesh
Boyle, Kevin
Carlson, Kevin
Dickhans, Jim
Ghandforoush, Parviz
Gnyawali, Devi
Hunnings, Kay
Khansa, Lara
Maher, Jack
McGehee, Nancy
Mitchell, Elizabeth
Russell, Robin
Singal, Vijay
Sumichrast, Robert

Absent:

Recording Secretary:

Ridpath, Kimberly

Minutes/Action Items/Announcements

Dean Sumichrast thanked committee members for participating via zoom. He acknowledged the extraordinary circumstances which everyone is working. Sumichrast said the university would accept disruption caused from COVID-19 as a reason for extending tenure clocks. Normally, the timing of 2nd and 4th year reviews will not change. The BOV cancelled its scheduled March meeting. It plans to meet in April, when it will consider honorifics appointments.

Essential Operations Status (Stay at home order)

Sumichrast referred to the governor's stay at home order and the university's "essential operations" status. He said everyone who can work from home, should work from home. Faculty and staff should not work from the office for convenience. After discussion, Sumichrast clarified that it was not prohibited to come on campus—for example, to pick up documents but this should be avoided.

Kay Hunnings explained a system for signing documents electronically.

Course Issues

The conversion to online courses has gone very well, in almost all instances. Sumichrast thanked departments, faculty, staff and students for their flexibility and hard work, to make this change. He said Pamplin has received some reports about students with infected relatives and other circumstances that make completing courses more challenging. Lara Khansa described grading options available for undergraduate students and their appropriate use. Parviz Ghandforoush explained similar options for master's students. There was an open discussion that followed.

Staff

Pamplin and the entire university is committed to current employees. As during the great recession of 2007 and 2008, we will limit expenses in an effort to retain current employees. Kay Hunnings led a discussion about how staff can remain functional without daily in-person contact. The committee discussed various operational procedures and the value of assigning projects and training to their staff.

Events

Elizabeth Mitchell and Lara Khansa described plans for two major student events, this spring. Students of Distinction and Pamplin's graduation activities. The committee reviewed the plans and made suggestions for improvement. There was general support for the outline of these events. Department heads would like to have contact information for students who have been recognized so that they can add their own recognition.

Summer courses

Khansa explained changes the university has made in the summer term, beginning this year. Formally, there is a single term but in practice, courses may be offered during the first half, second half or a shorter period of the summer. Concern about not allowing grades to be posted until after the full summer session was raised—Khansa will contact the registrar about this concern. Hunnings reviewed the summer funding model in Pamplin. Departments operate summer courses and are provided with \$125 per student credit hour. This change made several years ago, has encouraged larger classes and controlled faculty cost. Sumichrast asked departments to consider their planned summer offerings in light of the uncertainty of the budget and options for the fall semester. Khansa explained how students can benefit from additional course availability. The committee discussed ways in increasing summer enrollment including academic advising and through the departments, faculty and staff.

Action Items:

1. Invite Scott Midkiff and/or TLOS team to a future meeting, to discuss courses, specifically “cheating”?

Old Action Items from March 26, 2020:

1. Mitchell will send department heads names and contact information for students recognized in the Students of Distinction.
2. Khansa will discuss the timing of summer grading with the registrar.
3. The committee will send additional thoughts regarding spring graduation.
4. The committee will send thoughts on the spring 2020 faculty and staff meeting.
5. Kim Ridpath will schedule an additional meeting for next week.