

Academic Committee Meeting
January 15, 2021
2:00-3:30pm
ZOOM

Attendees:

Bagchi, Rajesh
Boyle, Kevin
Carlson, Kevin
Ghandforoush, Parviz
Gnyawali, Devi
Hall, Janice Branch
Hartman, Jeff
Hunnings, Kay
Khansa, Lara
Maher, Jack
McGehee, Nancy
Russell, Robin
Singal, Vijay
Sumichrast, Robert
Ward, A.K.

Absent:

Recording Secretary

Brooks, Miranda

Minutes/Action Items/Announcements

Dean Sumichrast welcomed the committee to its first meeting of 2021. He announced academic committee would have had a guest today—Jeff Hartman, Chair of PAC Development Committee. Sumichrast announced that Governor Northam has activated the National Guard. Some students and personnel must report. He asked department heads and other leaders to make accommodations for students or employees, who are affected. (PCLE) was created to help share best practices among advisory boards. Recently it surveyed department heads and other academic board leaders, to understand their priorities. PCLE is forming a subcommittee to look at Pamplin board practices related to fundraising and student engagement. He encouraged board leaders to engage with PCLE at an appropriate level.

Culture of Philanthropy

Jeff Hartman, Chair of the PAC Development Committee said its overarching goal is to change the culture of philanthropy, in Pamplin. Hartman thanked Sumichrast and the committee for their support. Hartman addressed increasing philanthropic efforts and fundraising. Hartman would like to meet the goal of 22% participation by the year 2022. Currently, Pamplin is at 18-19% participation. Hartman would also like to increase advisory participation and has worked closely with Advancement. Last strategic goal is to make sure Pamplin and its Advancement team is considered best in class by assisting with engaging, inspiring and changing culture.

Hartman announced that Giving Day will be held February 24th and 25th. Advisory boards will be able to greatly assist with this event. Hartman requested for this information to be added to the Pulse newsletter to increase awareness. Elizabeth Mitchell added that the approach has been restructured and challenges have been simplified. Mitchell emphasized the question of “why do you give back?” Sumichrast opened the floor to the Academic Committee to ask questions. Hartman addressed the inquiries of the committee.

Pamplin Faculty Input Group

Every college, except Pamplin, has a faculty association or other faculty group to provide faculty input to colleges and universities structures. Pamplin faculty rejected creating a faculty association over 20 years ago. A.K. Ward and others have recommended that Pamplin create a faculty organization, to provide input to the dean and university without the overhead and broad scope associated with some college faculty associations. Ward described a proposal that had been provided to the academic committee in advance. After discussion, the academic committee supported moving forward with the Pamplin Faculty Input Group. As a course of action, Ward suggested to initially have Senators address concerns at each department meeting. Ward will also make a presentation during the upcoming Pamplin faculty and staff meeting and gather comments and concerns at that time. Based on the comments shared, make adjustments and have a formal proposal that goes out for a faculty vote through Qualtrics.

Implementation Plan - Sections 5.4 and 5.5

Sumichrast directed the committee’s attention to the changes made by Dean Carlson to Section 5.4 and Section 5.5. Dean Carlson reviewed the changes to Section 5.4 regarding Research, as provided by UT-Dallas (UTD). Carlson shared that there are two goals, which are categorized by elite level research and doctoral program and effectiveness. Carlson explained the target is to rank 50 or better and how to obtain this ranking. Carlson stated if we can generate approximately 16 UTD articles per year for five years, that would produce a UTD score of 6.6. Carlson explained that based on the faculty allocation model, several approaches were used as to how to count elite level publications. Carlson suggests that these goals were attainable with the amount of tenure-track research faculty we have. Sumichrast highlighted a spreadsheet provided that shows research productivity gains by department, and progress made over recent years.

There was concern regarding the status of the UTD rankings should a faculty member leave Virginia Tech. Carlson assured that if the faculty member listed Virginia Tech as the affiliation on the article, it would remain in our calculations. The committee is in overall agreement of the updates regarding elite level research, with the addressed concerns noted. Carlson reviewed the doctoral program placement goal, which would be 20% of graduates placed in tenure track positions, with 18 total articles (12 adjusted articles) in one of Pamplin's elite journals. There were concerns in meeting that goal for article placement for doctoral students. Carlson clarified that articles by doctoral students would be counted as described in Pamplin's summer research policy—if submitted during the calendar year of graduation., articles will count whenever published. The committee generally agreed with the suggestions regarding research articles and doctoral student submissions.

Carlson progressed to Section 5.5, which addresses faculty engagement and Boundless Impact goals. Regarding faculty engagement, questions will be selected from the COACHE Survey and target levels selected by question. Carlson will facilitate the process of determining the questions, which would address faculty satisfaction with policies, procedures and climate. The committee generally agreed with this approach, with emphasis on adding clarity to the questions to ensure we are getting accurate perceptions of the college. Carlson will provide a list of proposed questions for the next meeting.

Mitchell addressed Boundless Impact goals, highlighting the process of increasing engagement and philanthropic efforts. Mitchell said alumni engagement was defined by the university and included volunteering, participating in VT experiences, attending events, and donations. Mitchell emphasized the importance of growing and building relationships and how to achieve these goals. Mitchell reiterated prioritizing Giving Day and building virtual engagement events. Mitchell addressed the concerns of possibly needing additional staff to assist in these efforts. Mitchell assured the committee that we would utilize current staff in achieving these goals.

Wrap Up

Sumichrast thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.