

Academic Committee Meeting
June 16, 2021
3:00-4:30 p.m.
ZOOM

Attendees:

Bagchi, Rajesh
Boyle, Kevin
Carlson, Kevin
Ghandforoush, Parviz
Gnyawali, Devi
Hall, Janice Branch
Hunnings, Kay
Khansa, Lara
Maher, Jack
McGehee, Nancy
Mitchell, Elizabeth
Russell, Robin
Singal, Vijay
Sumichrast, Robert
Xiang, Phil

Absent:

Recording Secretary

Ridpath, Kimberly

Minutes/Action Items/Announcements

Dean Sumichrast welcomed the committee. He shared some changes to the academic committee. Phil Xiang will continue as representative for Howard Feiertag Hospitality & Tourism Management Department and today will be Nancy McGehee's last meeting with the Academic Committee. Janice Branch Hall has been participating in the academic committee for a while, but this will be the first time participating as Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. Tom Tillar is retiring at the end of the month. Sumichrast congratulated everyone on their stage changes.

Sumichrast shared we will be having a new faculty and staff reception on August 26th from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the Pamplin atrium. Unit leaders will share a brief introduction of their new hires.

There was an announcement that non-tenure track faculty are eligible for emeritus status after retirement.

The university has not yet provided a budget for next year. Sumichrast shared that allocations to departments for staff and operations will be updated with new data for enrollment, etc. using the model developed last year. Additional money will be given because of merit increases. Kay Hunnings is hoping the budget will be provided by the end of August.

Sumichrast updated the committee on some changes for Advancement Pamplin Communications. Sookhan Ho retired on July 1st. Jeremy Norman has been Interim Associate Director of Communications and will now be our Associate Director of Communications. Pamplin Advancement will complete another very strong year in fund raising. Elizabeth Mitchell provided an update on replacement hires: Kellie Grove joined us as Director of Major Gifts and Lauren Gallops Castro as Assistant Director of Leadership Gifts. Tommy Amal took a promotion and opportunity in February so has left Pamplin.

Sumichrast has asked the committee to encourage their faculty and staff to respond to the email from Human Resources, which includes a link to document vaccination status. All university employees are required to provide this information.

Returning to classroom and office

Returning to the classroom in the fall semester will be a relatively straightforward transition—teaching will be in person with few expectations. The environment will be much like pre-covid where no masks will be required, and classrooms can be used at 100% capacity. We are anticipating that nearly everyone will be vaccinated by fall. Faculty should always work to accommodate students who are ill and are not required to accommodate students who may be uncomfortable attending in person classes. Lara Khansa confirmed that there will be a process for ill students to contact the dean of students who will provide information to our undergraduate office.

Hunnings said that Pamplin is participating in a Pilot Program that Virginia Tech HR has started, to prepare the university for the “future of work” where more remote work options will be available. There are six different units that are participating in this pilot including an academic department and the MBA program in Northern Virginia. Pamplin’s Undergraduate Programs Office has developed an extensive plan including a hybrid model/hoteling method for academic advising. A side benefit is that this will free up offices which can create space for additional faculty. The university is also working on specific areas, such as wellness, benefits, payroll tax, policy and compliance, technology and infrastructure, employee engagement, and change management.

The plans returning to the office this fall will be developed for each unit and re-evaluated at regular intervals. Hunnings provided the committee with proposed “guiding principles” for developing reopening plans. After discussion, there was broad support for these principles. Hunnings encouraged unit leaders to develop plans assuring that faculty and staff have an opportunity for input. Sumichrast requested these plans be submitted to the dean’s office by July 7th.

DEIB reorganization

Sumichrast invited Janice Branch Hall to provide an update on the reorganizing of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB). Hall provided some supported documents—Pamplin DEIB Philosophy, Definitions, and Principles for Strategic Direction. There are two existing positions that Hall is rethinking on how they can be used most effectively, and she shared these job descriptions. Hall shared a presentation of her thoughts on how we can reimagine DEIB as a

college, moving forward. Similar to our philosophy, she wanted to create principles for our strategic direction and reminded the committee that the center of everything in this area is around our strategic and implementation plans for strategic priority 5.6. She hopes everyone will play a role and be critical partners in how we move forward as a college. Hall plans to share this document, with the Pamplin Community Committee, for feedback.

Hall shared her plans on how her unit will be structured and how that undergraduate student DEIB roles relate to the lifecycle of a Pamplin student. Some of the core components will be recruitment, admissions and enrollment, and student success. Emily McCorkle will now be focused solely on student success efforts Hall encouraged the committee to review the documents and reach out for feedback.

In discussion, Hall clarified that she would continue to support faculty recruitment, retention, and success efforts. Pamplin has made considerable progress in developing a more diverse faculty in recent years.

Implementation Plan

Carlson shared a document with all sections of the Implementation Plan that has been previously discussed and with the committee. Sections 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 are well established but will review when the other sections are finalized. Carlson recently met with the department heads and discussed sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 and the plan is to possibly hold workshops to discuss more in depth. The department heads will continue to meet on a regular basis, to discuss these sections. Section 5.7 focuses on goals related to the Pamplin Pillars and will be finalized last. Section 5.8 discusses the colleges strategy for growing education and growing programs in Northern Virginia. Section 5.9 is about making sure we are properly supported and funded for the size of our program.

Each of the strategic priorities in the Implementation Plan has metrics and planned achievement levels. Carlson acknowledged that data for some new metrics have not been collected in the past and so planned achievement levels may not be set until later. Carlson shared a report on enrollment and graduation. This report shows enrollments and graduation by options, but it does not provide credit hours by option. He is working to get the University Data Commons (UDC) to provide more of necessary data.

Pamplin Faculty Association

Sumichrast provided an update on the Pamplin Faculty Association that will start this fall semester after faculty voted in favor. The Pamplin Faculty Association Constitution and Bylaws were shared and discussed. Sumichrast pointed out that it is open for all full-time teaching and research faculty, not just tenure track faculty.

DRAFT Research Success and PIBB

Sumichrast shared information that was pulled from a recent Academic Affairs Council meeting. The information shared ways of measuring faculty success and showed some comparisons of Virginia faculty success vs other land grant universities.

New Action Items

1. Unit leaders must submit plans for returning to the office by July 7th.