

Academic Committee Meeting
March 3, 2021
1:00-2:30PM
ZOOM

Attendees:

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

Absent:

Recording Secretary

Ridpath, Kimberly

Minutes/Action Items/Announcements

Dean Sumichrast welcomed the academic committee. He mentioned a new signatory policy requirement that states all faculty and staff must include their phone number and email in their signature block. He thanked department heads and Lara Khansa for encouraging faculty to respect the spirit of spring break. The next spring break is Wednesday, March 17th. Sumichrast thanked the academic committee for participating in the Pamplin Student Town Hall. Jenn Tortora has shared placement results with department heads. Sumichrast said we should be proud of the overall 92% placemat rate and average starting salary of \$60,000. Giving Day was very successful for Pamplin. This year Pamplin beat all colleges and Virginia Tech units in terms of the number of donors and the amount of money donated. Sumichrast congratulated Pamplin's advancement office, departments, and student programs, for their contributions. Kevin Boyle was awarded the Alumni Award for Research Excellence, in the "Social Sciences, Humanities, or Arts" category. The academic committee congratulated him on this honor.

Graduation

Virginia Tech is exploring the options to celebrate the achievements of the May graduating class. When a decision has been made, the details will be announced.

New Faculty and Staff Reception

Pamplin will recognize new faculty and staff on Wednesday, March 10th beginning at 9:00am. Members of the academic committee verified the list of new faculty and staff, to be recognized. Department heads and other unit leaders will have 60 seconds for each introduction. The committee discussed how the reception should be promoted to those being honored and all Pamplin faculty and staff. The use of breakout groups was also discussed. Sumichrast will ask Donna Wortalik to lead the icebreaker session. The second breakout session will be to get input on what Pamplin should begin doing or stop doing.

Tenure Track Hiring

Sumichrast reviewed the principles Pamplin has agreed to, in allocating resources for our faculty, staff, operations, etc. The discussion now focused on decisions about tenure track faculty. The future faculty Diversity Program needs to be better integrated into tenure track hiring. He reviewed a spreadsheet summarizing research and Ph.D. activities, of the departments. Sumichrast responded to questions about the net cost, to hire faculty. The committee discussed aspects of the factors being considered including the current and future role of the executive format of the Ph.D. program and differences in research opportunities/requirements among disciplines. The possibility of comparing departments in Pamplin to like departments at peer schools was considered. There was agreement that judgement was needed beyond the data presented in the table. Sumichrast said a measure of Ph.D. program quality would be added.

Implementation Plan

Kevin Carlson summarized revisions in section 5.4 (research) of the implementation plan. The goals have been simplified and the actions designed to support the goals more clearly. He discussed the Pamplin Elite Journals and summarized the list of contributions, specifically the data. Sumichrast noted we want to be well known as a college, for our research, and have our research be impactful. UT Dallas rankings are important, but they are not the exclusive area to focus on. Sumichrast asked for the committee to look at the target list for graduates of our Ph.D. program and come up with a proposal for the next meeting. After the committee discussed the actions and a few revisions, there was a consensus to move forward with implementation plan section 5.4.

Advancement

Elizabeth Mitchell gave an update on the upcoming GBAC Groundbreaking. This event will take place Friday, March 12th and shared the large amount already registered. They are encouraging as many to attend as possible. She shared that this event is designed to both commemorate this moment and to design fundraising for the 2nd academic building. This will be a great opportunity to draw momentum and to allow everyone to be as involved as possible.

Mitchell thanked everyone for their contributions for PAC nominations. She reminded the committee that the nomination deadline will close on Friday, March 12th so encouraged the committee to still do so, as they see appropriate.