

Department Head Committee Meeting
August 18, 2020
3:30PM- 4:30PM
Zoom

Attending:

Bagchi, Rajesh
Carlson, Kevin
Gnyawali, Devi
Maher, John
McGehee, Nancy
Russell, Robin
Singal, Vijay

Recording Secretary:

Ratcliffe, Kelly

Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs, Kevin Carlson welcomed all of the Department Heads and introduced Kelly Ratcliffe as the new Administrative Assistant while Bryanna Meredith is out on maternity leave.

Dean Carlson discussed the Informs items. Carlson appreciated Dr. Vijay Singal's discussion of allocations. On graduate stipends, Carlson asked the department heads if they needed any additional resourced or if anyone has any resources they know they will not be able to use. Dr. Maher suggested that ACIS could use additional tuition waivers. Dr. Singal indicated he may have some tuitions waivers they will not use, as did Dr. Gnyawali, though he will know more in the next week or two depending on demand from faculty. Dr. Bagchi also mentioned that he may be able to provide some as well and would know in the next week or two. Carlson reminded that they needed to discuss whether the tuition waivers would need to be used for one semester or both.

Dean Carlson moved on to discuss department committee assignments and apologized for any inaccurate information that was included due to the current circumstances of having to move things around in the office and shift over to virtual and controlling versions. The department heads provided their corrections. Maher mentioned that there are 5 different ACIS faculty that have been assigned to college committees or University committees that don't show up on the list. Dr. Gnyawali suggested it is good for them to know who their representative is on faculty

senate from the Departments, so that they know who is serving where. Carlson said that faculty senate representation is not something we can control. Dr. Robin Russell mentioned that there are missing advanced VT and inclusive VT reps from the college. Carlson said that he will continue working on those to make sure we get those things corrected.

Dean Carlson reminded everyone of the Diversity and Ethics training for graduate students this coming Friday August 21st at 12:30PM (all online). Ellen Krupar and Janice Branch Hall will be presenting. Following the joint session, there will be a Doctoral Breakout Session and a Master's Breakout Session following the training. He mentioned the Doctoral Breakout Session will be small due to several international students being unable to get to Blacksburg this fall. The joint session will have doctoral students and MACIS students, MSBS/BA students and for the first time, Dr. Khan will be including the MSBA-HTM. All sessions will be recorded. Dr. Chakravarti is doing a parallel program for BXBR students that has already started and Dean Ghandforoush has a separate program for the MIT and MBA students. Both will make use of Friday's recorded trainings. Carlson noted that every graduate student is required to have an ethics and diversity/inclusion training requirement on their plan of study. This training fulfills that requirement. Dr. Bagchi asked if we recommend this training for new incoming faculty. Carlson that Janice Branch Hall is working on that separately and to check with her for faculty training. Dr. Russell mentioned that there may be something included in the orientation for new faculty, but said to check on that.

Dean Carlson noted that draft promotion and tenure and annual review timelines were sent out. In a previous department heads meeting, the sense of the group was to move the meeting to January to take advantage of the revised university schedule that moves the deadline for colleges to submit their materials to the university forward into early March. The draft P&T timeline suggests a first college meeting on the morning of the Thursday, January 14th (the week before classes begin) with the second meeting and votes held on the following Monday, January 18th (which is the MLK holiday) which avoids faculty class conflicts. The department heads agreed that it would be better not to have the meeting on MLK day. Instead, the committee preferred to have the first meeting on Thursday January 14, 2021 before classes begin and follow-up (final) meeting on the Friday, January 22nd. Dr. Russell asked about elections to the college P&T committee. Carlson indicated that half of the departments nominate committee members each year to serve a 2-year term to serve on P&T committee.

Dr. Gnyawali also brought up his concern on the syllabus and the “no-mask” policy (this wasn’t included on the agenda to discuss). He expressed that he is confused on the policies and what has been decided on. Dean Carlson explained that the document that he worked on was basically used as guidance and advice and that most faculty have already built their syllabi. Gnyawali also mentioned that there are concerns of testing and students/faculty testing positive and reporting that to other faculty members and staff to make them aware. Dr. Russell indicated BIT has extra masks that faculty and if faculty teaching in Pamplin wanted to, they could stop by and have extra masks in case students in their class needed one.

Dean Carlson then moved on to the Engage Program and shared the Engage Sponsorship excel spreadsheet document. He said that the Engaged TA’s finished up their training as of 8-18-2020. Dean Carlson stated the challenge now is not receiving enough funding and that they have not received any additional external funding in a week. There is currently about \$71,800.00 that has been given by external funders. The excel spreadsheet takes a look at the funding that has come in, how it’s been allocated, how the UTA’s have been allocated and where they are – according to Michelle Seref’s numbers, the program is still short \$92,200 in funding, that is if, the program plans to fund all 102 ½ UTA’s at 10 hours. a week for 16 weeks. Dean Carlson said that there is still more work to do and they are still funding raising externally, it’s just not clear if more money will be turned loose. Elizabeth Mitchell with the Advancement group will continue to try to fund raise for fall semester UTA’s until the end of the first week of classes. The question now is, how to address what is going on? The college has committed \$32,000.00. That money is available to be allocated. The other alternative is to reduce the hours to reduce the \$92,200.00. Another option: If there is a want for more hours than there is funding- question is, getting other departments to kick in some additional funding to close the gap and cover the hours needed? Dean Carlson opened up for suggestions on how to cover some portion of the balance and close the gap for the \$92,000.00:

- Dr. Russell asked what are the current hours that they can afford across the board? Dean Carlson indicated if they can reduce the number of fully funded hours at 10 hours. down to 6 hours., then he believes there will be enough money to cover everyone at 6hrs across the board. However, for currently unfunded positions, even with the college’s \$32,000 that covers about 4 hours per week.
- Dr. Gnyawali asked if the donors have specifically funded for whatever departments allocations they are for the full TA, don’t we have the obligation to honor that funding?

Dean Carlson mentioned going back to the donor to ask if we can allocate in other ways. Gnyawali said he thinks it is better to honor that because that way they can speak about that it's a goodwill. The point number one and point number two, if someone really funded for a particular department, he thinks that a good sign and that they should personally thank them and also give the departments what they have or already received through the funding. After that, see how many hours can the budget support and figure out where the shortage is and figure out/explore different ways on how to cover the differential hours. He offered through his department to figure out a way to cover the difference in hours, what college can support v/s what faculty end up using and he will check with his faculty to see how many hours they plan on using.

- Dr. McGehee also said she checked with her faculty and they were fine with cutting back to 5 hours a week. The only concern she has is that if a student needs more hours in terms of helping them along. Dean Carlson said that the original recruiting materials to the students told them that the hours they would be working would be anywhere between 4-10 hours per week.
- Dr. Bagchi said he was in-agreement with what Dr. Gnyawali and said that whatever ACIS has from external funders they should keep to fund students at 10 hours and whatever remains, they can see what they can fund and the departments can take over whatever they need to.
- Dr. Russell indicated that her TA's are used to a 6-hour allocation
- Dr. Singal asked if students happy with fewer than 10 hours? Mentioned that his department tried to do 10 hours for each one.
- Dr. McGehee recommended that she would rather have more faculty with TAs but give each TA fewer hours than having fewer TAs at 10 hours per week.
- Dr. Gnyawali, noted that having that experience, going through the training, work experience, being able to put this experience on their CV and have some kind of pay, including online learning conversation experience are all useful to students. This may be more beneficial to most students and they may be less concerned about the number of hours.

Dean Carlson said that if he goes back through and puts the level at HTM at 5 hours, BIT at 6 for the ones that aren't funded and Finance possibly reducing some hours but defaulting right now at 10hrs. Dean Carlson thinks it will vary around the departments, his sense is knowing what the students can do. Michelle will help monitor the max amount of hours each student can get.

- Dr. Russell wondered whether faculty will be expecting this kind of support in the spring semester?
- Dr. Bagchi thinks that getting more donations from alums, but also feels like this is something that they can highlight to employers and also when students are coming in that this is one way they can learn and this will be appealing to parents. It also is a way to encourage students to do well in class.
- Dr. Singal was concerned that fund raising for Pamplin Engage might cannibalize alumni giving to other college or department fundraising efforts Dean Carlson noted that advancement is hyper-sensitive to those concerns and is working to make sure that doesn't happen.

Dean Carlson reconfirmed hours with the department heads:

BIT-6 hours

HTM- 5 hours

FIN- 10 hours (unless hear differently from Vijay)

MKTG- Rajesh will send specific hours

MGT- 5 ½-10 hours (Devi will send list)

Dean Carlson then moved on to discuss that he and Dean Khansa are trying to figure out a requirement that appears to be emerging at the University around students sign-off on acceptance of risk for experiential activities that involve interaction with people outside of their course or potentially off of the university site. Their concerns as Deans, is having a system in place to approve student participation in these activities in the first place, so if we are going to have our faculty and students engage in these activities, that we have consistent practices to ensure student safety. The college's stance is if an activity, including experiential class or extracurricular activities, can be conducted remotely that is what should be done. If it can't be done remotely, we need to question if it needs to be done at all. If it needs to be done, then we need procedures in place to approve those activities. He encouraged the department heads to pass that message on to their faculty that we shouldn't have our students out exposing themselves face to face for class projects. If interactions are required, please encourage to do so via Zoom. If it is research, it requires IRB approval. The IRB has appropriate review and approval procedures.

Dean Carlson mentioned potential new approval procedures and an expanded scope for Data Transfer agreements. He has concerns about how this might impact sharing of research data in the college. He is getting additional guidance and will report back at the future meeting.

Dean Carlson ended with the discussion of student representation on committees. The Pamplin Community committee (PCC) included procedures to include voting student members who would have overlapping 2-year terms on those committees. Dean Carlson wants this group to explore adopting similar procedures to include students on several college committees. Those discussions would happen this fall, so that any policy changes could be implemented mid-year. The PCC model involves electing student members each spring who would then begin their terms the following fall. This would provide alignment with the strategic plan and draft suggestions in the implementation plan draft to increase the voice of the student.

Action Items:

- Carlson to update and work to finalize UTA funding with the department heads
- Carlson to work to finalize updates on the College Committee List