**Faculty Council Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 7th, 2021**

**3:30PM to 5:00PM**

**1) Call to Order:** 3:31PM

**2) Approval of agenda**

Amendments to the agenda in New Business:

* 1. Communication Studies RTP Document – refer to Exec Committee via 174-177 lines in the Constitution – Jennifer Asenas, Chair
  2. Proposal to make the Committee for Pedagogy and Inclusive Excellence with language for the constitution

Motion to approve the agenda

Moved by: Anand Commissiong

Second by: Trevor Bell

Vote: 19 in favor out of 25 members in attendance

**3) Approval of Minutes from March 10, 2021**

Motion to approve the minutes from November 18th

Moved by: Anand Commissiong

Seconded by: David Wallace

Vote: 20 in favor out of 25 members in attendance

**4) Reports:**

A. CLA Dean’s Report

*The report was shared with Faculty Council (FC) members prior to the meeting. Additional comments made at the meeting are in italics*.

**Fall Repopulation**

Predicting what will be possible in the Fall term is a bit of a challenge, given, on the one hand, declining infection rates and accelerating vaccination rates and, on the other hand, the dangers of new variants and a potential fourth spike. Because students are registering for courses now, the call was made to stay with the planned schedule which has about 45% of courses with some face-to-face components so that both student and faculty could plan for the Fall term. If LA County has moved out of the final (yellow) tier, it’s possible that more courses might be held face to face, but the logistics for doing so would be challenging; for example, only courses currently scheduled as synchronous could likely be moved to face to face.

**Budget Update**

There is no further update on the budget for next year yet, but this is a case where no news is likely good news. The provost has authorized 13 tenure-track searches for next year in the college (although 4 of those are current searches in Ethnic Studies that he added for this spring). This is fewer than we would normally hope to have, but more than I would have expected given the dismal budget outlook back in September.

**General Education Changes**

As you likely know the Academic Senate has been debating changes to the general education policy mandated by the Chancellor’s Office directive to meet the requirements of AB 1460 by creating a new F category requirement in Ethnic Studies in general education and reducing 3 units from the D (social sciences) category. After receiving input from the CEP Council, the Academic Senate Executive Committee placed three options up for discussion, and two of those have been debated vigorously with senators from CLA arguing for both. I summarize the positions below and provide a brief analysis of the likely effects on CLA.

Option 1: Eliminate D3 (general social science) leaving intact the D1 American History and D2 American/California government required courses that meet the requirements for American Institutions courses in Title V. Arguments for this option are that it meets the spirit of the CO mandate by most cleanly reducing the D category by 3 units, and it takes the required GE cut in the Social Sciences which are, in general, more robust than the Arts and Humanities. Arguments against this position is that it eliminates the general Social Science requirement for students, and that elimination would likely have the effects of students not taking important prerequisite courses and eliminating courses like Intro to Anthropology and Intro to Geography at the community college level, likely meaning that transfer students into such majors would not discover these fields.

Option 2: Move the D1 American History course to the C3 category as other CSUs count such courses as Humanities courses. This option has the least support in the college and probably in the senate because it would limit students in high unit majors to just one Arts (C1) and one Humanities (C2) general education course, and it would likely mean a loss of about 5,000 seats per year in COTA and CLA (about 2/3 in CLA).

Option 3: Co-certify the D1 American History course as a C3 (Humanities) course; again, has been done at other CSUs. Arguments for this option are that it maintains all the categories as options for students, and, at least on the face of it, gives students choice about where to trim a course and spreads the loss of seats across more broadly. Arguments against this option note that students in high-unit majors would have no real choice as most would have to take American History as a C3 to maintain a course in D3 that is needed for their majors, and thus, the loss of seats would fall most heavily on the Arts and Humanities. Also, this option would require the Department of History to create learning outcomes for the two current D1 courses that would meet with Social Science and Humanities learning outcomes, and the department opposes this.

Impact on the College:

It is important to keep in mind that the college will gain FTES because of the new Ethnic Studies requirement, and all CSULB students will benefit from taking this new requirement. However, that FTES gain will be in the Ethnic Studies departments/program, and there will be loss to CLA under any of the options. The option to eliminate D3 would likely result in the least loss to the college as many high-unit majors in other college rely on D3 courses to meet accreditation requirements (although as noted above, there are other problems with this option). The option to replace C3 (Arts and Humanities) with American History would likely be the most FTES loss for CLA (even though COTA would likely take about 30% of the losses), and those loses would hit in the Humanities that already suffered a loss in the 2012 GE revision. The third option likely would result in only slightly less loss to the Humanities as the second option.

Adjusting to the Change

Clearly none of the options are good for CLA, and both Humanities and Social Science faculty have reason to be concerned. However, the college can make some internal changes to adjust to whatever form the loss takes. None of our majors are high-unit, and we have bout 9000 students in our majors. The Dean’s Office has been modeling the potential losses, and the chairs/directors have started discussion about changes to major requirements that could not only mitigate losses but also help to build a more coherent CLA identity for our students.

*Thanks to all of you for continuing to engage in shared governance efforts and for your continuing to support our students.*

B. Faculty Council Chair’s Report

*Barbara LeMaster* (*BLM*): One of the things that we are trying to institutionalize this year is to have the College to keep updated information about committees’ membership. The College should be able to give us the precise information we need to run elections, including open seats, terms, etc. It sounds simple, but not having this information makes running elections complicated. I met with FC chairs of other colleges and they said that in their case this information is housed in the Dean’s office. I was surprised that the largest College of the university does not do that.

Thanks to Michael Eisenstadt for his hard work on the Elections Committee, a round of applause for him. Running elections is one of the hardest jobs in the College.

Regarding the CLA Strategic Plan: It has become a ground up project. With our Equity Advocates (Sabrina Alimahomed and Rigoberto Rodriguez) we are working on this. Justin Gomer, chair of the Strategic Plan Committee, will give us more information.

C. Standing and Ad-Hoc Committee Reports

1) Educational Policies and Curriculum: *No report*

2) Budget

*Steven Rousso-Schindler* (*SRC*): There is nothing to report this month, we have not met yet.

*BLM*: We circulated the Budget Committee document of CLA Investments suggestions among FC members.

*SRC*: That is a preliminary document, if there is extra money, the College will take that document into account.

3) Graduate Council

*BLM*: Cory Wright will leave that position after Fall and there will be a search to replace him.

4) Committee for Pedagogy and Inclusive Excellence

*Ilan Mitchell-Smith* (*IMS*): We are talking about next steps. We would like to move to becoming a standing committee, but that will come up later in the meeting.

5) Technology Committee

*Rene Treviño* (*RT*): There is nothing to report, but I would like to let everyone know that the terms for this committee are for one academic year. This means that the terms of everyone on the committee now will expire at the end of the Fall semester.

**5) Old Busines**

A. CLA Strategic Plan update from the CLA Strategic Planning Committee Chair, Justin Gomer

*Justin Gomer* (*JG*): As you may remember, earlier in Spring Dean Wallace shared a draft of what he thought would be the Strategic Plan (SP) for the College. He sent an email message and invited faculty to nominate themselves for positions, the CLA Strategic Plan Committee was assembled. CLASP and Faculty Equity Advocates worked together over Spring break and we decided that the SP should not come from the dean, it should come from faculty.

Over Spring break, we synthesized all the information we have we have. We worked on notes from the 2019 Shared Identity Groups and the 2020 General Faculty meetings. We also discussed the infrastructure we have in the College to work on the SP.

We realized the importance of developing a SP that speaks to the interests of faculty and represents the College. What does equity look like in the College? That is what we worked on over Spring break. This means Dean Wallace’s proposals are not in place anymore, but he has been supportive of the change of focus we proposed.

We will need input from a larger group. The remainder of the semester should be spent creating an equitable infrastructure to work on the SP. Participation from other parties will begin in Fall. Since we will start the search for a new dean, we are asking that the SP becomes an essential element in that process.

Everything we have done until now has been about synthesizing information and picturing an equitable infrastructure. We have not started working on the SP per se.

*BLM*: Could you talk about the new Steering Committee (SC)?

*JG*: One of the things that is informing how we envision the process is expertise around literature on equity processes. We need a SC that is relevant to the scale of people represented. The number of people on the SC will be around 60 people. The crafting of the actual plan will not begin until Fall because we envision several months of planning. Rigo (Rigoberto Rodriguez, CHLS chair) deserves much of the credit for this vision. He has done this kind of work with organizations. There should be people involved in the SP from several different groups. The CLASP group is 6-7 faculty who replied to the Dean’s email and were willing to work over Spring break for a stipend. As the current CLASP team moves onto the next steps, the Faculty Equity Advocates will stay active in the process.

*Maulana Karenga* (*MK*): Thank you for your work on this, I look forward to participating the process.

*JG*: Credit should be given to the entire team; we all did a lot of work over Spring break. I think you all will find useful the report we are producing.

*BLM*: The credit you deserve is your leadership in the process. Thanks to all the members of the committee.

**6) New Business**

A. Communication Studies RTP Document – refer to Exec Committee via 174-177 lines in the Constitution – Jennifer Asenas, Chair

*BLM*: This is our last meeting of the semester, which means there is no time for the FC to discuss this document. The Exec can discuss it at our last meeting of the semester. According to the CLA Constitution, lines 174-177:

“The Executive Committee, in consultation with the Dean and other appropriate officers of the College and University, shall act for the Faculty Council in emergencies and when the Council cannot be brought into session. All such actions are reviewable by the Council as soon as circumstances permit.”

*Kevin Johnson* (*KJ*): I can speak for The Communications Studies RTP document. The changes mostly have to do with the promotion from Associate to Full professor. We clarified standards. The previous document stated that requirements for Associate were the same as those for Full, but they should be greater. We went through the document and revised it, added one more peer reviewed article as a requirement and specified the quality of the article. There is a change to language of what would be considered “excellence” in the area of research when a faculty member is going up for Full professor. Faculty who are currently Associate could go up for full using the new or the old document.

*BLM*: The Exec committee will deal with this document.

*KJ*: At the department level it was passed with a near unanimous vote, all parties that will be affected had a clear voice in the process.

*Eileen Klink* (*EK*): FPPC at the University level is revising the RTP document. Right now, the Academic Senate (AS) is working on this. Before the FC approves the Communication Studies document, you could get feedback about changes to the University-level document.

*KJ*: We prefer to go on with the process and submit the document we have.

*JG*: The AS had a specific conversation on the language to go up for Full. There is the idea that if a second book was markedly better (in terms of content and impact) it could be considered perfectly reasonable for the second rank.

*KJ*: We did not want to box people. The expectations of excellence could be met in a number of different ways.

*BLM*: I appreciate this discussion; we will receive the document and discuss it on the Exec.

*Jeannette Acevedo Rivera* (*JAR*): A common denominator among departments that have submitted their RTP documents for review is the fact that they are in a hurry to get them approved, since they have to then send them to Faculty Affairs. It could take up to two meetings to discuss documents on FC. Something we need to decide is establishing a deadline for the submission of these documents to the FC.

*BLM*: The Exec will work on the Communication Studies document. Thank you all for insights, Justin, Jeannette, and Eileen.

B. Nominations from the floor for Faculty Council Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, First At-Large Member, Second At-Large Member

*BLM*: For the Technology Committee we will have nominations open until April 15th.

Nominations:

*BLM nominated Gwen Shaffer for FC Council Chair*

*Gwen Shaffer* (*GS*): I wrote a statement that BLM will circulate. This is my 10th year as faculty. I have been on EPCC, the Associate Dean search committee, currently on CLASP, I have done university and college service level. This coming year is an exciting year, almost an inflection point in the College with all the changes that will take place. It will be exciting to align our own RTP document in the College with the university one, repopulation, etc. There are many processes, and I would be honored to serve as FC Chair.

*IMS nominated Justin Gomer for Vice-chair*

*JG*: I would be honored. My biggest plan is that there is continuity for the SP. The Exec would be involved in the next Dean’s search.

*BLM*: Are there other nominations? Secretary is a very important job. Anybody willing to take that on?

*EK nominated Rene Treviño as Member-at-large, he politely* *declined*.

*BLM asked Rigoberto Rodriguez if he would be interested, he politely* *declined.*

*Caitlin Fouratt* (*CT*): I am not sure if I will be here next year, I am filling in for someone else. If I am, I can self- nominate for the FC Exec.

*Jessica Brooks* [in chat]: Are the At-Large positions open to lecturers? I will self-nominate.

*Note about voting process, from the agenda: Voting will occur online. Further nominations will be received via email to the elections committee chair, Michael Eisenstadt, until April 15th by 5:00 p.m. Nominees must be or will be Faculty Council members for the 2021-2022 academic year.*

C. Rene Treviño, CLA CEPT Representative – Plus/Minus grading policy

*RT*: CEPC is currently in the process of revising the Policy on Final Course Grades, Grading Procedures, and Final Assessments. Under consideration is a proposal to implement, starting fall 2025, a plus/minus grading system. Faculty received the survey by email. Participation ends this Friday at 5PM. Thus far, 91 people have responded: 48 approve, 32 disapprove, 11 are neutral. Of those, 50 have written comments. Numerically more people voted to approve this change, but many comments are against. Once we are done reviewing policy, we will take a vote and make a recommendation.

Arguments in favor: this will reflect the nuances of students’ achievements in courses, distinguishes/differentiates students, people argue that there is a gap in achievement, it brings us in line with other CSUs (we are one of 2 CSUs that does not have a +/- system), it used to be like this 10 years ago

Arguments against: it is extra work for faculty, grade appeal concerns, arbitrary distinctions (what is the difference between 95 and 98?), students are opposed, equity issues

Equity is brought up by those in favor and those against. Students already in the margin may be affected (first generation, transfer students).

*KJ* [*in chat*]: Grade appeals is huge. Most faculty I know who work with this system have way more grade appeals than we have. We have them here, but I’d expect that to dramatically increase here with the +/- system. Increase work for all for not much of a significant advantage.

*RT*: We meet next Wednesday at 2PM, so if you have any additional comments or feedback just reach out.

*Araceli Gonzalez* [*in chat*]: Is the survey anonymous?

*RT*: The survey is completely anonymous. We could not even trace IP addresses.

D. Changes in language to the CLA Constitution

*BLM*: One of the changes that we will include among the duties of the FC Chair is that they should attend CLA Chairs’ meetings.

*BLM showed changes to the Constitution. The document was shared with members prior to the meeting.*

*BLM:* Who should appear as presiding office over these meetings and Exec meetings, the FC Chair or the Dean?

*RT*: It is confusing to think about the meetings we host vs. the meetings presided by the Dean. There needs to be clarity around that.

Lines 77-78 of the Constitution: “The Council's Chair shall serve as presiding officer at all-College meetings in the absence of the Dean.”

*RT*: It would be good to leave the responsibility for Dean in all-faculty meetings. That would be my recommendation. It should say that the FC chair “may” plan all-faculty meetings, it should not be “shall.”

*BLM read and explained changes pertaining to each position on the FC Exec Committee.*

*JAR*: Regarding the submission of documents for discussion, the deadline should be at least the Friday before the FC meeting. The expectation is that FC members come ready to discuss these documents, but we are sending them late, which means we are unable to have in-depth discussions.

*BLM*: Please send us your comments about these changes to the Constitution before the Exec meeting in two weeks.

**Meeting adjourned: 5:00PM**

**Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by**

***Jeannette Acevedo Rivera*, Faculty Council secretary.**

**These minutes are not official until approved.**