

Approved 8-11-21

Liberal Arts Liberal Arts Council

2:00 p.m. in Flowers 230

14 July 2021

Presiding: Dean Mary Brennan

Present: Manda Anderson, Beth Erhart, Craig Hanks, Lucy Harney, Paul Hart, Bill Kelemen, Yongmei Lu, Gloria Martinez, John Mckiernan-Gonzalez, Aimee Roundtree (recording), Chad Smith, Vicki Smith

Guests: Natalie Ceballos, Toni Watt, Sheri Mora, Chris Conlee

Absent: Ken Grasso, Jeff Helgeson, Susan Day

The minutes of 6.16.21 were approved, on a motion by Dr. Kelemen and a second by Dr. Grasso

CAD Information

Captioning: Rev did not apply to Texas State University captioning RFPs. Another company--3 Play Media--is a frontrunning contender of four other applicants. It offers two services—human services with 99% accuracy at \$1.65/minute and automatic services with 85% accuracy at 15 cents/minute (to be corrected by student workers). Microsoft has a tool (Microsoft Stream) with 95% accuracy. Evan Pickerell also has resources on his website. Dr. Hanks recommended investigating individual contracts with Rev that won't exceed their \$50K cap *sans* contract. Zoom offers captioning as well. *The Dean will ask about a timeline for the university contract and a list of available resources.*

COVID 19 and Fall: They will reconvene the health and safety task force. They suspect that breakthrough cases will emerge. Texas State policies take CDC guidelines in mind, but also have additional guidelines. If exposed, vaccinated, and not experiencing symptoms, you don't have to quarantine. If exposed and not vaccinated, quarantine is required. If experiencing symptoms or test positive, vaccinated or not, see a doctor and quarantine. Providing Zoom alternatives in face-to-face courses should be discouraged. Syllabi should state that, short of medical directives, course conduct will return to pre-pandemic standards. Policies on missing class due to illness. Empty classrooms and Zooming for convenience's sake are to be discouraged. The group discussed different scenarios that might complicate the guidance and overcoming the tendency during the pandemic to provide accommodations. Contact tracing will remain the same. Instructors should keep accurate attendance and use seating charts. The question emerged about university and THECB policies on what percentages of contact qualify as face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses. The Dean stressed transparency and communication with student, as well as designing courses with student expectations of face-to-face courses in mind. *The Dean will ask for standard syllabi language regarding attendance and COVID.*

Lessons Learned from the Past Year: Later, LAC should reflect on lessons learned from the pandemic.

Miscellaneous

Change of grades: Dr. Day will reject change of grades without good explanation. However, if chairs and directors reject instructor's justifications, students receive a copy of the instructor's justification to read (from the Registrar). When Dr. Day rejects the petition, the students do not receive a copy of the instructor's justification to read. If chairs/directors read problematic justifications from instructors, then ask instructors to change the language or approve it for Dr. Day to reject.

Cooperation between Academic and Student Affairs: To facilitate more collaboration, the new VP of Student Affairs is assembling a Faculty Advisory Council for Student Affairs. We need to send up one faculty representative (two-year terms, three meetings a semester). *We want to send nominees on August 2. Please send names by the first week in August.*

Representative to General Education Committee: We need strong liberal arts representation on the committee. *Please send names for faculty representatives with general education and curriculum experience.*

Endowments and Budgets: Departments with outstanding endowment balances should spend them down. JCK has begun the decentralization model and has begun sending back requests for funds for faculty relocation to the department for coverage. We are still awaiting the list delineating centralized from decentralized expenses going forward. The college budget can only afford to cover \$5000 in graduate travel. The Dean asked for input about how to dispense these funds. Some chairs mentioned that they've already encumbered funding for student travel. Others mentioned ways to divide the funding evenly—send the \$5K to the departments and let them disperse it or divide it into spreadsheets and develop a formula for funding (factoring in prior support, etc.). *Please provide suggestions to the Dean. Dispersal to the departments might be in order. The Dean will ask Dr. Golato for input.*

Fall Registration: We still have 2K freshman who have not registered. Some have gone through new student orientation without signing up for advising. Others have failed to attend their advising appointments. Still others have not attended new student orientation. Manda shared that these issues also persist with transfer students. Class availability and ability to accommodate students last minute vary department by department. Only 35% of new doctoral students and about 40% of new master's students are registered. *Please ask program directors to send registration reminders to new students. Please be sure to keep course waitlists.*

Around the Table

Dr. Roundtree reminded departments to expect college-level social media guidance and meetings in August.

Dr. Kelemen asked whether departments can request more GIAs. The Dean said yes with justification.

The Dean said that the next LAC meeting will take place on August 5. The Dean will also work on a resource book for new chairs. Dr. Day and Dr. Roundtree will help when the Dean is away on break.