

Minutes of Liberal Arts Council Meeting
Conducted through Zoom
26 January 2022
2:00 p.m.

Presiding: Dean Mary Brennan

Present: Manda Anderson, Natalie Ceballos, Christina Conlee, Susan Day (recording), Ken Grasso, Lucy Harney, Paul Hart, Jeff Helgeson, Yongmei Lu, John Mckiernan-Gonzalez, Gloria Martinez, Vicki Smith, Toni Watt, Craig Hanks, Aimee Roundtree (recording)

Guests: no one

Absent: no one

The minutes of 12 January 2022 were unanimously accepted with no changes on a motion by Dr. Grasso and a second by Dr. Mckiernan-Gonzalez.

Dean Brennan led a discussion of strategic planning *vis a vis* University Mission and Goals. Colleges are asked to comment on the proposed mission and goals, which will be ratified by fall 2022. Dean Brennan asked chairs to encourage their faculties' interest in this process, even though it is not known what the new president's approach will be to the process or the mission and goals.

In answer to the question "What commitments, emphases, directions, or actual statements contained in the *current* mission statement remain critical to our university mission?" Council members agreed that all commitments, emphases, directions, and actual statements were still critical to the university mission.

In answer to the question "What values or concepts are missing in the *current* shared values that should be included?" Council members noted no missing shared values that should be included.

In answer to the question "What sets Texas State apart from other universities, whether it is our students, our programs, our location, or some other aspect of the university?" Council members noted desirable addition of the following: Hispanic serving institution. High proportion of first-generation college students. Applied research strength. High proportions of veteran students. Applied degrees (paralegal). Student centered quality teaching. Beautiful environmentally sustainable and rich campus. Programs connected to the environment.

In answer to the question "What commitments, emphases, directions, or actual statements contained in the *current* shared values are no longer critical to our university mission?" Council members agreed that all are critical and should be retained.

In answer to the question “What values or concepts are missing in the *current* shared values that should be included?” Council members suggested the inclusion of an emphasis on service learning and actively connecting university to international world; encouraging culture of life-long learning; promote the well-being of faculty and staff and our broader community; as well as promoting commitment to democratic processes and the democratic ideal. In addition, a reminder of the importance of the DEIA (diversity, equity, inclusion, and access) goal was mentioned.

In answer to the question, “What commitments, emphases, directions, or actual statements contained in the *current* goals remain critical to our university mission?” Council members suggested adding, “and encourage lifelong learning” to the second goal so that it would read “Offer high quality academic and education programming and encourage lifelong learning.”

In answer to the request for the top 3 priorities, Council members agreed on the following 4 priorities:

1. Provide resources (release time, personnel/staffing, internal funding REP) for successful pursuit of R1 status.
2. Diversification and retention of faculty to more nearly represent state and local community profiles. Compensation for faculty and graduate students
3. Graduate student compensation and tuition and fee waiver
4. Excellence in ug teaching; reduce reliance on contingent teaching

Dean Brennan led a discussion of the CoLA T&P policy which had been reviewed and offered with suggested changes by Drs. Lu and Grasso. Dean Brennan will take Council suggestions under advisement and offer a clean document at the next meeting for a final vote. The suggestions included allowing only a two-page personal statement; allowing a joint effort between candidates and PCs to decide on external reviewers, noting that external reviewers should not only not be biased, but should avoid the appearance of bias. Finally, there was spirited debate over whether reviewers should comment on whether faculty are deserving of tenure or promotion or both. This led to the deletion of “10. Referees are strongly encouraged to speak directly to the qualification of the candidate’s scholarly work for tenure and /or promotion.”

Dr. Harney noted that her proposal to the University Policy Committee PPS Task Force about making important policies readily available will be that each CoLA department will make performance review policies available by linking their policy to the CoLA annual performance and merit policy. Revision dates should be noted on all policies. Access should be available to all faculty and guests nominated by faculty, with policies updated and linked by end of semester

Announcements

Dean Brennan noted that faculty who are pursuing fellowships should notify their chairs and use the planning tool available at the Faculty and Academic Resources site: [Faculty Fellowship Opportunities](#) and moving to [Planning Tool: Faculty Fellowship Opportunities](#) where it is noted that “Each faculty member considering a fellowship is required to utilize this planning tool and discuss the opportunity with the department chair/school director before submitting an application. [AA/PPS 04.01.32](#)

Dean Brennan noted that the DAA will have again have a silent auction. She asked chairs and directors to consider what they could offer the auction and noted the popularity of alcohol and signed books the previous year.

Dean Brennan noted that the Research Expo coming up. Students should be encouraged to consider the submission of papers. Last year, the College gave two \$1,000 scholarships and two \$500 scholarships for outstanding papers and posters.

Dean Brennan announced the Billy Fields Salon on 2/27/22.

Dean Brennan announced that Flowers Hall 230 must be reserved on COLA website. Request will go to Facilities, who will be responsible for setting up the room. CAD will meet in FH 230 in the fall.

Dr. Lu asked whether changes would be allowed to the summer instructional budgets due on Friday. Dean Brennan said changes can be made with good reasons.

Dr. Harney noted that subvention support is now only available from the College or department, not from the Provost's office.

Dr. Helgeson announced that Dr. Caranco indicated that seating charts are not required this spring but would continue to be very helpful for BC tracing if available.

Dr. Roundtree announced that the Swedish Academy had requested Texas State nominees for the Nobel Prize in Literature, and three names and supporting documents were submitted. She also indicated that ORSP and Dr. Breier would like to know more about most the significant Texas State research labs.

The meeting ended at 3:44 p.m.