Minutes of the May 29, 2019 faculty meeting

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. in Harris 107 by Dean Adrian Randolph.

I. The minutes of the Faculty Meeting of March 12, 2019 were approved with a correction to the speaker in point III, amending to Associate Professor Beth Tipton.

II. Dean Adrian Randolph read the recommendation that degrees be conferred to students who have successfully completed their degree requirements during the 2019 academic year. A total of 769 students enrolled in WCAS will be awarded the BA degree in June 2019, along with seven Bachelor of Philosophy degrees, 16 Bachelor of Science in General Studies degrees from Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences for those 14 students enrolled in the School of Professional Studies.

Dean Randolph moved for a vote and majority approved.

III. Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Assessment Laura Panko gave the second reading of the Proposal for a Data Science Minor in the Department of Statistics. This is a proposal for a six-course Minor in Data Science, offered by the Department of Statistics. The Minor would be available to statistics majors and minors, as well as to all Northwestern undergraduates.

The faculty unanimously approved the motion.

IV. Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Assessment Laura Panko gave the first reading of the Proposal for a Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS) Minor. This is a proposal for a six-course minor that aligns with the proposed Weinberg learning strategies (observe, critique, reflect, and express) and incorporate CNAIR’s mission: To advance scholarship, teaching, learning, and artistic or cultural practices related to Native American and Indigenous communities, priorities, histories, and life ways.

Associate Professor Robert Linrothe noted that he was in favor; however he raised concern about the management of new courses related to the minor. Patty Loew Professor in the Medill School of Journalism and Director of the Center for Native American and Indigenous Research at Northwestern University responded that at this point they would not be proposing new courses related to the minor, rather they would be identifying existing courses that related to the focus, with the chance to expand curriculum in the future.

The dean noted that a webform would be created to collate comments after the first reading.

V. Associate Dean for Academic Initiatives Ann Bradlow gave the second reading of the Proposal for modifications to the Weinberg College degree requirements. She outlined the modifications as follows: the creation and introduction of the college-wide learning goals (Observe, Critique, Reflect, Express). Second, the introduction of two overlay requirements called When-Cultures-
Meet learning goals — one that focuses on cultural interactions in the USA, and another with a global orientation. The third modification was a restructured writing requirement: one First-Year Writing Seminar and one course in Year Two or later in Advanced Expression. The fourth modified goals for the Fall Quarter First-Year Seminar. With the change to the writing requirement the fall quarter seminar will now focus more on transitioning and supporting students during their first quarter. The fifth and final modification was a change from Distribution requirements to Foundational Disciplines, with new learning goals developed for each of the six disciplines. Dean Bradlow shared that the webform for comments was open, and encouraged faculty to share their thoughts there.

Several faculty shared concern about the removal of the term ‘AP scores’ as evidence of proficiency in a language in the new degree requirement description, and discussed altering the phrase to “You must demonstrate (through department approved criteria, testing or Northwestern coursework) proficiency up to the level equivalent to 6 quarters of college-level language study in a language other than English.” Dean Randolph noted that it was a ‘living document’ and encouraged faculty to submit ideas or edits.

Liz Trubey, Assistant Dean for Academic Advising remarked that she would like to hear from the committee on why they did not support lowering the number of courses required for graduation from 45 to 42. Associate Dean Ann Bradlow replied that the committee did discuss this option, but felt it was a separate discussion, and that the new degree requirements were structured in ways to accommodate a reduction in the number of courses required overall in the event that change from 45 to a lower number were to happen.

Associate Professor Ji-Yeon Yuh voiced concern that she believed the College was out of sync with its peers on the number of courses per quarter and noted that a reduction in courses per quarter might encourage students to double major.

Associate Professor Elizabeth Tipton brought up faculty concerns over the title of the overlay for “where cultures meet.” Dean Randolph requested that voting faculty present at the meeting weigh in with their comments.

Assistant Professor of Instruction Michael Maltenfort requested that the document be reviewed again in five years. Dean Randolph agreed that the dean’s office would do a reappraisal of the items including the overlays in five years. Associate Dean Ann Bradlow encouraged faculty to continue to submit comments to the website.

Professor Catherine Woolley requested an outline of the process; Dean Randolph noted that the faculty would vote on modifications during that meeting, then they would begin planning and implementation of these modifications, which would be expected to go into effect no sooner than fall 2020.

Associate Dean Mary Finn reiterated the necessity of a check-in on the modifications at the five year mark.

VI. Dean Randolph thanked retiring faculty: Christine Bell - Administration/ Art History, Ronald Braeutigam - Administration / Economics, Alice Eagly – Psychology, John Franks – Mathematics, Donna Jurdy - Earth and Planetary Sciences, Mary Kinzie – English, Robert Linsenmeier – Neurobiology, Jeff Rice - Administration / Political Science
VII. The Dean thanked the faculty in attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Courtney Essenpreis, assistant to the dean.