

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well
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Humanities Division

Division Minutes

3-7-2019

Humanities Divison meeting minutes 03/07/2019

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Humanities Division Meeting, Thursday, March 7, 2019, HFA 6

Stacey Aronson called the meeting to order at 11:40 am.

I. Visit from the Chancellor Michelle Behr

The Chancellor made a few opening remarks. She is making the rounds of various units, in order to convey appreciation for the work everyone is doing and to hear what is on your minds and answer any questions.

Jess: Junior faculty may be concerned that we might close, it would be good to hear that we aren't there yet.

Chancellor: Enrollment patterns have been up and down over the past 20 years. Friday she will deliver a five-year plan for enrollment to the Board of Regents. We must be intentional about retention and managing programs. We need to get to a stable, sustainable point. Every year the system helps us fill our budget holes.

Julie: We often hear about retention, and we are doing what we can.

Chancellor: There are currently over 20 different retention initiatives; this is unsustainable, and she is working to rectify that situation and assess which ones should continue and which ones can be eliminated. We need to streamline and be smarter in our approach; this is a community responsibility.

Julie: Can this be said more often?

Chancellor: There are pockets of efforts that may be duplicative. We need to be communicating more effectively with each other.

Siobhan: Is there a number that is too low [for us to remain open]?

Chancellor: The current president says under 1500 is too few. The new president understands the need to optimize system resources and acknowledges the uniqueness of the campuses. Nobody is talking about closing us down, but we have to work toward sustainability.

Mary Elizabeth: HDAC is currently looking at the engagement survey, which states that "information will be used constructively and actions have been taken since the last survey."

What actions have been taken?

Chancellor: Sara Mattson has convened a group of people to look at the engagement survey; I don't know what they have done

M E: Are any of them faculty?

Chancellor: I don't know; Mary Elizabeth was encouraged to be in contact with Sarah Mattson..

Sarah: Heard a rumor that the TC campus was seeking an additional 3,000 students. What 50 students mean to us is not what they mean to the TC campus. How can we get the message across that their recruitment efforts are impacting us?

Chancellor: It's not a rumor. I think there will be no change on this until there is a new regime. The new president understands this; there may not be any change by next fall.

Sarah: There is a conflict of interest when the system president is the TC chancellor.

Chancellor: I don't believe this is going to change; no system is perfect. I am here to spread a message of optimism; I believe there will some shifts with the new president; she understands politically the value of having a system; the new year might be hard again.

Siobhan: What new communication initiatives are being tried for us to be unique as a campus?

Chancellor: We are working on branding, marketing materials, communicating more clearly who we are.

Jess: We should check whether new admissions [was this admissions, or communication?] staff have an understanding of our mission.

Mary Elizabeth: The ACT may be discouraging to students we would like to have at UMM.

Chancellor: Crookston has proposed going "test optional"; there are pluses and minuses; Michael Rodrigues is involved in that conversation. Crookston's proposal will be discussed by Regents on 3/8/19; we'll see what happens there.

Before leaving, the Chancellor invited everyone to come see her in her office hours.

II. Regular course approvals

Engl 1126

Brad: English faculty have had requests about a children's lit class; this aligns well with Victorian lit; works as an introduction to the study of literature.

Mary Elizabeth: I will teach the rhetoric of picture books in the fall.

Sarah: I will be teaching French children's lit in the spring.

Pieranna: Brad should be in touch with Education.

Brad: I have spoken to Michelle Page and Emily Bruce.

No comments offered.

Engl 3063

Julie: This has been provisionally approved; it will become one of Angela's regular course offerings.

Julia: Is there still a maximum of 350 characters for the course description?

Jayne: The new way of inputting allows for more than 350 characters.

Engl 3175

Julie: This is Michael's 3000 level, after there was some confusion about offering it as a 4000.

Brooks: Are the prerequisites based on old course numbers for the surveys?

Julie: These are the new numbers; Angela's course may have the old course numbers {and they will check that}.

Engl 4039

Julie: This is an exciting course on gender.

Julia: How firm are the prereqs?

Julie: They are strict for English majors; if there is room Angela would probably consider allowing non-English majors into the course without these prerequisites.

Th 2112

Siobhan: Both 2112 and 2212 are drama and performance courses; this gives Ed majors the opportunity to take a 2-credit course; it gives the discipline flexibility in offering IC or Honors courses

Th2212

This course was discussed above.

Stacey: Will these two courses be offered sequentially?

Siobhan: They could be.

Mary Elizabeth: Will they be offered in the summer?

Siobhan: No.

Th 3307

Lucas is not here.

Siobhan: This course gives students the opportunity to produce an online portfolio.

Th 3308

This is also Lucas's course

Siobhan: I am not prepared to talk about it.

Jess: This is Lucas's research specialty.

All voted in favor of approving the slate.

III. Discussion of VCAA/Dean search

Stacey: I would like to talk about the process you would like to see

.

Wes: There will be two listening sessions this spring, and other opportunities this spring to gather information.

Stacey: It might be helpful to have the documentation from the last dean's search.

Mary Elizabeth: Do you know when we might start searching?

Wes: No, but everyone is in agreement that sooner is better.

Brad: This shouldn't be seen as the only time to have input; it is too early; there should be more meetings before the job ad is placed in the fall; all search committee members should be present at these meetings.

Stacey: Yes, I completely agree; this is not the only time input will be sought.

Julie: Is the plan still to draft the job description over the summer?

Brad: Yes, but it will only be a draft.

Brook: What about the decision not to hire a consultant?

Brad: I served on the last two searches; the consultant was helpful in encouraging applicants, but we can borrow their formula; hiring a consultant is expensive.

Brad: I spoke with Sarah Mattson about whether the search committee drafts the ad; she said that these are just guidelines.

Mary Elizabeth: Are we thinking that the dean's position is going to be significantly different?

Sarah: I don't think so; we should be careful about how we proceed, be aware of our tone, not be destructive to campus.

Stacey: After seeing the job ad, the division chairs spoke with the Chancellor, who was receptive. The fact that she curtailed the search for this spring due to feedback also demonstrates this.

Julie: The context is that we have lost a space for discussion, which no longer happens at campus assembly; it is frustrating that faculty have less space to have a say.

Mary Elizabeth: I am conducting research on the toxic workplace.

Lisa: On behalf of pre-tenured faculty, they appreciated that the conversation via gmail happened, despite the tone; they might prefer that it not take place on line.

IV. Announcements

Andrew: There is a student art show opening tonight at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:36.
(Minutes submitted by Viktor Berberi, 3/7/2019.)