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Faculty Research and Development Committee
Minutes

College of Liberal Arts Minutes and Reports

3-3-2023

Minutes, Faculty Research and Development Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 3, 2023

Faculty Research and Development Committee

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Approved Minutes
College of Liberal Arts' Faculty Research & Development Committee Meeting
Friday, March 3, 2023
2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Olin 319

Committee Members

The following colleagues were present:

Mike Gunter (*2023 Committee Chair At-Large Rep*)
Kara Wunderlich (*Social Sciences Applied Division Rep*)
David Caban (*Business Division Rep*)
Pamela Brannock (*Science & Mathematics Division Rep, fill in notetaker*)
Serina Haddad (*At-Large Rep*)
Devon Massot (*Non-Voting Member*)
Janette Smith (*Non-Voting Member*)
Amy Armenia (*Non-Voting Member*)
James Patrone (*SFCS Co-chair, Guest, Non-voting*)
Chris Fuse (*SFCS Co-chair, Guest, Non-voting*)

The following colleagues were not present:

Ashley Kistler (*Non-Voting Member*)
Pavielle Haines (*Social Sciences Division Rep*)
Nancy Chick (*Non-Voting Member*)
Eric Smaw (*Humanities Division Rep*)

CALL TO ORDER

Mike Gunter called the meeting to order at 2:38 PM

OLD BUSINESS

- I. There were only 3 voting members were present at the beginning of the meeting
 - a. we did not have quorum to vote on the minutes from 2/24/23.
 - b. The committee will vote on these during the next meeting on March 24th

- c. A couple minor corrections were asked to be made.
 - i. A new version of the minutes will be circulated later today.

NEW BUSINESS

- I. James Patrone and Chris Fuse came in to discuss FRDC's role in Student-Faculty Collaborative Scholarship (SFCS) proposal review
 - a. Proposals are due today by 5pm
 - b. James and Chris will upload all proposal to Canvas this weekend
 - c. Essentially, they review proposal for completeness
 - d. Previous years the funding rate was 90-95%
 - e. Currently they do not know what the budget is for this year
 - i. They are waiting to hear from Provost Singer within the next week or two
 - ii. Last year they did not fund 2-3 proposal
 - 1. Was not due to money issue
 - 2. Was due to completeness of not containing the required documents
 - f. Mike asked how many proposals are anticipated this year
 - i. Chris and James estimated about 40-45 but could be higher due to the fact we are on the other side of the COVID pandemic
 - g. Pamela asked when Chris and James would like the FRDC's recommendation by
 - i. James and Chris: They will need a recommendation by March 24th end of business day
 - ii. Allows them to inform students (who might need to make arrangements home for the end of the semester, find another position, etc.) as well as Chris and James need to start working with housing etc. to plan for this summer and beyond.
 - h. Chris and James mentioned that since the FRDC is fairly new (this is their 4th year) and due to COVID there has not been any consistency between years of the FRDC's role in providing them recommendations. There has not been the opportunity to discuss what is/is not working
 - i. A reminder of the fact there has been conversations of where is the most appropriate place for SFCS to be house has been discussed. However, for now it still remains under FRDC's charge.
 - j. Pamela brought up the fact that nowhere on the website is there information pertaining to the deadline of the proposals. The current information on the website is outdated (from the last year or two). This causes confusion amongst students and faculty
 - i. Chris and James acknowledged this but indicated that they do not control the website, this is actually under IT and Marketing control. They have requested information to be updated, without it actually being done. They

did state that they did send out in Dec. 2022 the guidelines and policies with the deadline to all faculty and students. They even had an information session in Dec. which hardly anyone attended.

- k. Mike did ask where the budget comes from?
 - i. Chris and James indicated that this is rather complicated and the money comes from a number (more than 15) different sources that range from gifts to the college, to endowments, to money coming from the Provost Office, etc.
- l. The question of what that money goes towards was also asked.
 - i. Chris and James replied that a large chunk goes towards travel for conferences and meetings. About half of the money also goes toward paying the faculty and student stipends. They increased the funds provided for the scholarship activity from \$500 to \$750 per student. The SFCS also pays for on-campus housing (at a greatly reduced rate) for all students who require it in this program.
- m. Who gets these grants?
 - i. It is not just for the sciences, even if that is the perception. Since Chris as been chair of this program (started in 2011) it has been about 50% science and 50% other disciplines. Chris did note that faculty early on in their career (pre-tenure) seem to apply more than faculty post tenure.
- n. Kara inquired about whether breakdown information of who submits the proposal by division is available or easily obtained. Might help FRDC members to report back to their division on divisional application and receiving rates (since funding rate is so high, maybe rep can go back and encourage more divisional applications.
 - i. Chris stated that he has this information. Just would want to know from the FRDC how far back they would want and how they would like the information broken down (by division, department, etc.)
- o. Mike wanted to provide some feedback. He said that he has heard of some faculty doing an independent study during the spring semester so that students can prepare their material. He also mentioned that juniors might be more prepared at writing these proposals than younger students. However, this also might interfere with students who are on/going on study abroad programs. He also stated that 8-10 weeks might not be enough time for the collaboration to produce an artifact (article, book, etc.) as requested by the program. Might take 2 years to get something.
 - i. James acknowledged this and stated that the project does not need to be completed just within the summer. Students can continue their projects after the summer. James gave examples of the sciences having students continue with research through independent studies or senior thesis

projects. Some faculty come back several year later and state here the peer-reviewed article from the SFCS project student X and I worked on 2 years ago. They are realistic and realize that most disciplines cannot achieve enough scholarship within the 8-10 week timeline.

- p. Pamela brought up the concern for another committee member that maybe the guidelines might be more transparent or lay out what is actually expected of the student and faculty member. An example was given that a student just came this week to a professor with a proposal asking to research and wanting them sign the collaboration form. This faculty member did not believe the student understood the difference between this collaborative program and an independent study.
 - i. Pamela suggested that maybe an Instagram story could be made and posted from a student who has gone through the process explaining what the student should do during this process. Or maybe a video on the website (again the fact that the website is not controlled by FRDC)
 - ii. Amy suggested if there could be something very quick and minor due in December (kind of like an intent to apply) that the student must submit before they leave for break forcing them to make a connect with a faculty member early on and start thinking about a project prior to mid-February. This would also approach the subject of doing an independent study for the spring term.
 - 1. Chris and James were receptive to this idea, but did not want to put the requirement that they had to do it to allow for some flexibility.
- q. Mike inquired whether students can obtain credit for the independent study
 - i. James stated that is up to the faculty, but yes. Pamela shared that she has done this in the past for her student applying for the SFCS. She meets with students once a week for the beginning of the semester. The first week is agreeing on a timeline of when parts of the proposal are due to the faculty and when the faculty will return with comments. Sometimes it is meeting to work on a requirement together (maybe budget). Pamela shared she has done this for 2 credit hour course for the student, and the grade depended on meeting deadlines and the quality of the draft (in terms of completeness and effort) that were turned in.
- r. A committee member asked what is the goal of the SFCS?
 - i. James reiterated that essentially it is to fund as many as possible. In the history of this program no one had to be turned away, only denied because missing requirements (and that is low). James stated that it is really the thought of the scholarly activity and the experience for the student. As long as the student has demonstrated that they know what is going on, have timeline, have background, have methods, clear budget, etc. the goal

is to fund. They do not see this year being different. Maybe in future years this might be different, but for now this is the goal.

- s. Mike asked about the length of the proposal. How many individuals reach 12 pages, how many are around 2 pages?
 - i. James indicated that this is something that him and Chris are currently discussing and potentially revisiting. However, the game plan was to bring these changes to Provost Singer to discuss this summer, but she is leaving and we do not know who the new Provost will be. So currently this might be on hold.
 - ii. Pamela stated that her proposals often reach 12 double spaced pages. Especially with figures and tables in there.
- t. Mike also brought up that fact there might be some disciplinary difference in reference to the number of students that one faculty member might be able to take. He mentioned that the sciences might be able to have students work on different aspects of a project but he often has students come with drastically different projects that it just is not feasible.
 - i. James stated that the projects do not need to be the same for multiple students and leaves that flexibility up to the faculty member and what they know they can accomplish.
- u. Serina asked about the FRDC members needing to review all the proposals (reviewing 40+ proposals in 2 weeks is not feasible or sustainable). Can assign everyone a subset of proposals?
 - i. Chris and James deferred to us as a committee. They look for completeness, but whatever the FRDC wants to do to give their recommendation is up to the committee members. There is no defined way of how the recommendation comes about.
- v. David stated this seems to be a duplication of work. Why is this?
 - i. Chris explained that an ad hoc committee used to be formed by the Provost and Dean to review these. There was not any transparency of how the committee was made and faculty felt as though there was not divisional representation. Therefore, when the FRDC was made, it was put under the charge of that committee. The SFCS director (or co-directors) review all proposals and the FRDC can do whatever they want in order to provide their recommendation
 - ii. Chris and James do recognize that there is a perception that the sciences control this program. This is not the case. Yes, several science faculty have been the directors and now both co-directors are within the science divisions. However, in full disclosure, a call did go out when they moved to a co-director model for individuals to serve on this role. Chris had ever intention to roll off (in previous years as well) but only James replied to

- call. Previous non-science faculty have been/we going to be in the director position and something came up or they left the college. The program has
- w. Discuss of the rubric made by the initial FRDC committee was brought up. The committee discussed and felt as though if the idea and the expectation was to fund all proposals that met the application guidelines, then that rubric is too detailed for these purposes. The reasoning was this rubric was not binary and had multipliers that were most likely not needed at this current stage if the idea is to fund all. The committee did discuss if there are any proposals that fall into the grey area or at a point in time funding all proposals is not possible, this already developed rubric will be more beneficial.
 - x. How do Chris and James evaluate the proposals?
 - i. Essentially, just goes down the application guideline list with a binary yes and no. In addition, they make sure the student knows what is going on and has an idea of the commitment (do they have a timeline and is the timeline reasonable). These are student written proposals. They are not going to be to the quality of faculty proposals.
 - ii. Chris and James offered to give us their ranking (fund, questionable, do not fund-missing requirement) or let the FRDC do it on their own. Each of them do this independent of each other and then compile
 - 1. The committee thought it would be good to go through these without their influence.
 - y. FRDC's game plan decision
 - i. 3 voting FRDC members will review each of the proposals.
 - ii. Pamela offered to randomly assign proposal equally (as possible) to the seven voting members. She will provide assignments to the committee by Monday, March 6th at 5pm. She will also number the proposals so that it is easy to tell which is what.
 - iii. Serina will make a Qualtrics survey of the six guidelines listed in the SFCS 2023 Application review criteria evaluation. These six will be a binary choice of yes or no. At the end of the survey will include a free response box where reviewee can articulate any "no's" they gave. Serina will have this completed by Tuesday, March 7th at 5pm.
 - iv. The committee agreed to have all reviews completed and entered into Qualtrics by 5pm on Tuesday, March 21st.
 - v. Serina will provide the compiled data to the committee by 5pm on Wednesday, March 22nd.
 - vi. Anything that seems to have discrepancies or are in the grey area, individual committee members can choose to review those prior to the meeting on Friday, March 24th.

- vii. On Friday, March 24th the committee will discuss those proposals that the 3 reviewers did not agree on.
 - z. Chris and James offered to come to the meeting if it would be helpful. Mike stated once we get a feeling on the Wednesday before we would let them know.
- II. Devon did mention that Nancy is looking for feedback on the template FRDC agenda
 - a. Pamela and Kara stated that they will look over this over the weekend and provide Nancy comments by Monday.
 - b. Mike state maybe in a future meeting we could discuss this.

ADJOURNMENT

Mike Gunter adjourned the meeting at 3:45 PM.