

Deans' Council Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2019

Attendance: S. Becker, P. Campbell, S. Hangen, A. Lorenz, E. Petkus, C. Romano, E. Saiff, E. Siecke

Absent: C. Naporano

Minutes

Minutes from the May 22 meeting were approved.

Policy 300-P

A recent student inquiry prompted S. Becker to inquire the Council's opinion on the Policy 300-P, Graduation with Distinction. Currently, students must have 64 credits in order to receive Latin Honors. C. Romano shared that the policy was revised in 2011 in order to allow transfer students to be included. At that time, faculty felt 64 Ramapo credits should be maintained in order to recognize half the degree. E. Saiff noted one could compare the challenge of maintaining a high GPA over 128 credits versus fewer than 64 credits. A. Lorenz noted that students with fewer than 64 credits but with an eligible GPA would want it reflected on their transcript and resume. C. Romano noted there may be very rare cases when exceptions to the policy could be made; the Deans agreed. The Council determined the policy would not be revised at this time.

Deans Retreat

S. Becker thanked E. Saiff for the invitation to host the Deans Retreat. The Council determined the best date to be July 25. Some ideas for possible, big-picture discussion topics include the current school structure, budget cooperation, satellite programs, interdisciplinary programs, the types of majors delivered offsite, and the undeclared program. The Council will select two or three big topics to be on the agenda.

Regarding the types of majors delivered offsite, P. Campbell noted the DCP in Professional Communications model that incorporates courses across schools. A. Lorenz added the College could consider offering programs that mirror those offerings at community and county colleges, such as Criminal Justice. E. Saiff inquired if Ramapo could offer a degree in General Studies or the like, similar to the Liberal Arts Associate's degrees. S. Hangen added that the liberal arts equivalent would be the existing Liberal Studies program as a model; there is also opportunity and potential for cross-school tracks that are interdisciplinary. S. Becker suggested that this conversation be continued at a Deans Council in advance of the Retreat.

Regarding the undeclared program, C. Romano noted undeclared students are the highest retention risk, and perhaps a prescribed, interdisciplinary program could help mitigate the risk. E. Petkus asked what would be the difference between that program and the Gen Ed. C. Romano

responded the difference would be the attention given to the majors and other opportunities, and to help give students identity. S. Hangen added it would be helpful for all the schools to promote their minors more. E. Petkus asked if U.Achieve would have predictive capability like the Netflix model: if a student receives good grades in a few similar courses, could U.Achieve suggest possible majors or minors? The response was it could be possible.

There is a difference between those students that have declared a school versus those that have not: the pro to having students declare a school is that they will be paired more quickly with a faculty advisor. The con is it could push students to declare just to declare.

Year of Middle East-North Africa Faculty Travel Grants

In years past, the Year Of travel grants have been paid out of the Provost's budget. However, given the need to address the FY20 budget across the college, the Provost's budget has been reduced. S. Becker shared that he spoke with Ben Levy about having the schools earmark funds to continue this final year of the Year Of grants. E. Petkus noted that it would be important to make clear that funds should be used for research about the Middle East-North Africa region. P. Campbell inquired what the future is of the internationalization strategy. S. Hangen responded she is working with the Roukema Center on reporting and assessment that would inform the future strategy. She suggested the schools inform faculty that when they apply for school travel funds, research and travel to the Middle East and North Africa will be given special consideration. The Deans agreed with this way forward.

Yield Data

C. Romano sent the Deans their yield data and explained the context of the data. The College average yield is 60%; majors that have yielded less than 55% should be looked at, and if any majors had 0% it needs a close examination. He encouraged Deans to think about utilizing faculty to their full potential and to the best event fit, whether that is Open Houses or Admitted Student Days. Admissions staff is also willing to help prepare faculty for these events.

C. Romano shared that the main reasons why students elect not to attend are academic reputation, social reputation, and career preparation and employment. He will share this data once it is compiled, and noted that he is surprised that academic reputation is the key reason: the colleges the students end up attending are not above and beyond Ramapo's rigor. It may be about student perception of rigor. E. Petkus suggested filming short videos of young alums to show at the events and have online; young alums have been great advocates for the College in the past.

Student Assistant Program

E. Saiff, E. Petkus, and E. Siecke expressed concern over the new committee that will evaluate Student Assistant positions. C. Romano noted that Academic Affairs does not have a large portion of the student assistant program budget but it was time to look at the jobs across campus

to ensure the College is funding those that are truly necessary, given the increase to minimum wage. For programs that are revenue-generating or grant-funded, the student assistant positions should be paid from those budgets.

Office Support

S. Becker reminded the Deans that one of the unit secretaries will be retiring this month. He asked for ideas how support can be provided without hiring from the outside.

C. Romano suggested a position could be posted internally, allowing employees an opportunity to advance and fill the need. Two deans suggested they would speak to their unit secretaries about helping to fill in over the summer and splitting their time in the next academic year.

New Business

Printers: C. Romano shared that EMSA eliminated all desktop printers so that each unit has one main printer, unless an employee needed a printer to print confidential materials.