Provost’s Council Minutes
April 22, 2021

In Attendance: N Choudhury, J Connell, S Gaulden, J Gronbeck-Tedesco, S Hangen, L Keller, G Khaneja, T Laprey, A LePore, A Lorenz, P Miyashiro, D Nast, F Papalia, E Petkus, E Rainforth, S Rice, C Romano, E Saiff, N Varma, and A Vasishth

Approval of Minutes:
The minutes from the March 25, 2021 Provost’s Council meeting were approved.

Report from the Provost:
S Gaulden provided an update on enrollment in Fall 2021 courses by delivery mode, which is as follows as of April 19, 2021: 21% in-person course seats; 18% hybrid in-person-synchronous course seats; 9% hybrid in-person-asynchronous course seats; 22% virtual-fully-synchronous course seats; 16% virtual synchronous-asynchronous course seats; and 15% online course seats.

The Provost has answered a number of questions brought forth through the SGA about Fall 2021 course delivery modes and further information was presented at a Student Town Hall held on March 26th. Students were told to monitor their fall course schedules, as some changes to deliver modes may occur over the next few months. The schedule should be as accurate as possible (i.e., incorporate all expected delivery mode changes) no later than July.

The Spring 2022 course schedule will be created by rolling over the Spring 2020 course schedule, and the target is to have 75% to 80% of the courses back on campus. The timeline for the Spring 2022 course schedule build and reveal will be shared but must accommodate the planned October 2021 Advisement Week dates.

The Academic Achievement Ceremony, the Nursing Pinning Ceremony, and the Rites of Passage will be held on May 12th. All are encouraged to attend to support our students.

Policies/Procedures to be Voted On/Approved

Provost’s Council Subgroup: Student Expectations for Virtual Learning

Issue: It would be helpful if the College adopted and promoted written, clear expectations for students who are engaged in virtual learning.
Meeting Notes: The final version of the document titled *Expectations of Students Taking Virtual Courses*, which incorporated all feedback shared at several previous Provost’s Council meetings was approved by vote (1 abstention) after no additional suggestions were provided.

**Policy/Procedure 300-KK Integrity of Degree Programs**

**Issue:** Clarification is needed on the meanings of “concentration” and “track” and more, as well on the maximum number of credits required for a major plus the school core. A draft of a revised Policy/Procedure created by Deans Hangen, Campbell, and Saiff has been shared and reviewed.

**Meeting Notes:** S Gaulden shared a seventh version of the revised Policy/Procedure. A brief discussion reminding all of the meanings of concentration and track ensued. It was pointed out that a concentration must be completed as part of the major, whereas if a student does not complete a track, they will still graduate. In addition, F Papalia clarified that the TE certification options are referred to as concentrations but should be treated as tracks and removed from the students’ transcripts. C Romano suggested that a committee be formed to oversee the operational components. F Papalia had already sent a list of concentrations and tracks to the Deans for review.

The revised version of the Policy/Procedure was brought to vote and unanimously approved.

**Policies/Procedures to be Revised/Clarified**

**Policy/Procedure 300T Online Courses Policy**

**Issue:** Given the pandemic-caused remote delivery of many courses, it is important to review this policy and perhaps expand it to include “virtual courses” and “hyflex courses.” This policy references the Online Course Manual rather than a Procedure, which should be updated as well. Particular attention should be paid to the content in the Manual on recording classes, which has FERPA implications as well.

**Meeting Notes:** S Gaulden shared a version of the revised manual, which included all feedback received to date (i.e., input from ASB and CA). She shared that everyone should be encouraged to provide input, and Provost’s Council representatives should do their best to solicit such from their Unit colleagues. Further discussion occurred, which included the following points:

- A LePore suggested incorporating into the manual links to the *Expectations of Students Taking Virtual Courses* document, the *Intellectual Property MOA*, etc. For the reader’s convenience, a list of all links contained in the manual should be repeated at the front or
end of the manual. She also suggested splitting the manual up into shoulds, haves, and musts.

- N Choudhury asked what this document is trying to do/be. E Saiff responded that this is an operations manual not a policy. J Gronbeck-Tedesco noted that we will have to continually update this document with lessons learned/clarified as we go since virtual learning is very new.

- A LePore asked whether faculty should be required to use Canvas’ gradebook or if publisher’s (or other) gradebooks could be used. N Varma supported allowing faculty to use publishers’ gradebooks.

- S Hangen shared that a separate document that spells out the protocol and requirements of transitioning courses to virtual delivery because of emergencies should exist.

- A LePore suggested italicizing the information related to rotating attendance or reduced classroom occupancy, social distancing requirements, etc. to emphasize this language. She asked for guidance on how rotating in-person attendance will work.

- C Romano suggested organizing this document as a faculty-centric manual with embedded links that provide typical expectations by course delivery mode when there is no existing emergency conditions (e.g., pandemic).

- Consensus suggested there should be some mention of minimum instructional/course content delivery time or, at least, a link to the Credit Hours policy.

It was noted that this document is an operations manual and does not contain policy but rather guidelines for additional course delivery modes. Some suggested keeping the manual as is and not making it more complicated, as it cannot be everything to everyone. More work needs to be done before the revised manual is final. S Gaulden will create a Google document that all members of Provost’s Council can edit or add comments to, and these changes will be shared at the May 2021 Provost’s Council meeting.

**Policy/Procedure 300-R Credit Hours**

**Issue:** There is no policy that contains language which would spell out the exact expectations related to virtual contact time when, for example, the College closes for inclement weather or when faculty schedule virtual meetings with their students in lieu of administering a final exam in week 15 of the semester. There is also a need to define the required amount of asynchronous work that should be assigned in virtual courses that are delivered through a combination of synchronous class meetings and asynchronous learning experiences.

**Meeting Notes:** Tabled.
Policy/Procedure 300-V Certificate Programs

Issue: A request was made at the March 2021 Provost’s Council meeting to revise this policy/procedure, which is in need of updating since it contains outdated language (e.g., CIPL).

Meeting Notes: A general discussion about the schedule of policy/procedure updates occurred. F Papalia and A Lorenz previously agreed to review all Academic Policies and create a spreadsheet indicating when each was last reviewed, which contained outdated language, etc. S Gaulden asked for Council members to be ready to volunteer to help review each policy/procedure from the spreadsheet that needs updating or revisions, which will begin in earnest in academic year 2021-2022. P Miyashiro offered to provide the student perspective, as needed.

T LaPrey volunteered to review the Certificate Programs Policy/Procedure. D Couzens, D Nast, and J Gronbeck-Tedesco volunteered to review the Provost’s Council Bylaws.

New Business /Additional Announcements

Two policies/procedures were suggested to be considered by the Provost’s Council:

1. Professor’s Title Changes – comments: Is this an Academic Policy or an HR Policy? N Choudhury stated that faculty are tenured in a discipline; E Rainforth noted that all faculty are given an official title, program/discipline at Ramapo. S Gaulden clarified that a small number of faculty have requested changes to their titles/programs/disciplines since she began as Interim Provost.

2. Double Master’s Degrees – comments: This issue is being discussed in Graduate Council. The 50% double counting rule seems too generous for a graduate-level program.

C Romano provided an enrollment update. At present, over 12,000 students have registered for Fall 2021 courses. The College is steadily moving toward its first-year cohort goal. About 1,100 students have already committed to living on campus by submitting their $100 deposits, and over 60% of first-year students are stating their interest in living on campus.

S Gaulden showed the Provost’s Council members the new COVID-19 dashboards, which Data Science faculty members D Yuster and O Tweneboah helped the Pandemic Assessment Team create.