

## **Minutes of Faculty Council Meeting**

February 13, 2024

Zoom- Due to weather condition and closure of campus

The meeting was called to order at 12: 30 pm by the president Dr. James Gallagher.

- 1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA** – the agenda was reviewed and approved with the following action item addition requested by Dr. Donahue

Action Item 3c.

Nomination committee – Presentation of the slate of open committees' positions and proposed procedure for voting.

- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- 12/12/2023 – and 1/30/2024** – Both minutes were approved with one addition to be made to the January 30 minutes where Dr. Sam Williams' name was inadvertently left off the list of council members present for the January meeting.

### **MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Dr. Marilyn Button

Dr. Vilma Davis

Dr. James Gallagher

Dr. Pamela Kennebrew

Professor Christina Kerns

Dr. J.awahar Pathak

Dr Andrey Semichaevsky

Maxine Cook - Faculty Affair

Professor Brandi Berry – Parliamentarian

Dr. Sam Williams

Professor Dafan Zhang Esq.

### **3. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Distance Learning- Distance Education Policy- The distant education policy document was presented to the council for approval. Dr Gluodenis explained what the document entailed and what the difference were between this 2023 document and the original 2016 document. As explained by Dr. Gluodenis, the original 2016 document was established and ratified by the

Board of Trustee (BOT) as a means of ensuring support of distance learning education within the institution as well as support for students learning in remote environments. This document was considered the beginning framework that laid out what the requirements were by the various regulatory bodies with some general documentation of how Lincoln complied. This new draft document listed each of the requirements individual per the Council of Regional Accrediting Commission (CRAC) for distance learning. A link or proof statement is now provided to show how the university met that particular requirement. This measure ensured that if audited it would be easier to show compliance. Per Dr. Gluodenis, on the recommendation of Dr. Joseph, the document does not need to go back to the BOT to be ratified. Instead this should remain a living document to continue building on, not only to show areas of compliance but also areas where there are gaps. It would be easier to reach out to faculty or administration to ensure compliance with the requirements. This document per Dr. Gluodenis is being presented to the faculty council for review and consideration and if comfortable with the document it will be presented to the broader faculty and the BOT as the current policy.

In response to where the document would be housed, it was mentioned that it would be with the distant learning committee, although more work, the number of gaps would be easily identified, what it may take to fill these gaps- and whether this would be taken to faculty council or to administration.

Dr. Joseph wanted to make sure that the document was compliant with the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) another accrediting body which the university is affiliated with. After much discussion Dr Joseph will first review the document and will meet again with the committee. In the meanwhile it was suggested that Dr. Gluodenis could review the standards of NC-Sara specifically related.

Dr. Safford- mentioned that the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) did an extensive review at the last negotiation as related to distant learning and suggested that any extensive changes in faculty document should be discussed with the contract negotiator to make sure that there is no conflict.

Dr. Poe in addition suggested that the person who oversees the negotiations should also review the document to make sure there was no conflict with the current CBA. Dr Poe would also like to review the document and comment as needed.

Considering all the questions a motion was made and seconded to table this document so that it can be reviewed by Dr. Joseph and coordinated with the union.

- b. Education Policies- Engineering Science Revision: The changes made to the proposals previously submitted by Dr. Carla Gallagher on behalf of engineering science committee were presented.

Per Dr. Joseph, the Education Policy committee met and suggested a few changes to the proposals submitted by Dr. Gallagher. With these changes two of the three proposals were approved (revision of the engineering science major and addition of a minor).

Per Dr. Carla Gallagher a minor was requested of engineering sciences from a few different departments where having a minor would make sense for their students. Dr. Carla further explained that Engineering Science is already a major, but there was a need to clean up some of the classes that were listed when the department had different tracks. Some of the courses were never removed although there were no tracks, hence their removal. The intent for the minor were for those students interested in a computer sciences major, but may want to do computer engineering, these students would be able to take this course. It is also envisioned that students who are Biology major and are interested in biomedical engineering would be able to combine the biology major with the engineering science minor. When asked, the revisions that are done does not incorporate the 4 credit model but follows the current course model. The department has, however worked on a 4 credit model in case there is a shift by the university to a four credit model in the fall.

One key question was pertaining to “grandfathering” students when the university changed to a 4-credit model. Per Dr. Carla, it is being considered but no actual plan is in place. New students can easily assimilate to the four credit model. The revision was approved by Faculty council and will be presented at the next faculty meeting

Pertaining to the Minor, there was a concern expressed of making sure that the minor would fit within the scope of the major programs that it was designed to fit in. This will fit as the major is now with 120 credits but not so when we move to a 4-credit model.

There was much discussion concerning ENS 495- Independent study, which was previously taught as a physic course. In essence there were suggestions on changing the course number seeing this course would be researched based guided by a faculty member and not just reviewing an article and writing about it. It was also mentioned that this course was also different from ENG 412- special topics. It was suggested that the registrar need to be made aware of exactly what ENS 495 will be when placed in the catalog for engineering minor. The group was also reminded that faculty cannot be compensated when they guided students with their research.

Another concern expressed was the reality of a student completing all that is required in the minor without them going over the number of credits, considering as well that some students have to repeat courses. From the description of the minor there are 12-14 extra credits that a student would have to take- depending on if students take the BA or BS in engineering degree.

Eventually the minor was also approved by FC and will be presented at the next faculty meeting.

- c. Nomination Committee- per Dr. Donahue the open slots on various committees were reviewed. There are 63 positions needing to be filled. Six of these are current vacancies – and need to be filled immediately. The ballot is prepared and was shared with Faculty affairs and to their knowledge everything appeared fine. The plan, per Dr. Donahue is to send it out to faculty and start accepting nominations. At the next faculty meeting- nomination will be accepted from the floor after which nominations will close. The nominations committee will

carry out the election process, create the qualtrics document and send out to all faculty to vote on. Per Dr. Donahue they are trying to be proactive for a smoother procedure at the faculty meeting. Although people can be encouraged to simply get on committees, due to the fact that in the past, some people would get on committees then get off shortly after because the duties were not clear. A suggestion was made, and agreed to by others that there is a need to create descriptions of committees and their duties, approve and distribute so individuals running for various positions will be aware of their duties.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **Four credit model:** Dr. Jamey Gallagher reported that all the concerns voiced by faculty regarding the proposed 4-credit model were discussed with Dr. Allen. He also assured faculty that the president does not make the ultimate decision but the faculty does regardless of what the president wants. Dr. Gallagher reminded everyone that a template was previously sent out to all departments for them to see what their majors would look like under a 4 credit model. Departments were responsive and he received the completed template back from many.

Per Dr. Gallagher, the president insists on 128 credits as a normal load ( $4 \text{ courses/semester} = 16 \text{ credits} \times 2 \text{ semester} = 32 \text{ credits} \times 4 \text{ years} = 128 \text{ credits}$ ). There will be an extra charge if students exceed the 4 course limit. Paying extra for additional courses per semester is already being done and this is not new.

Dr. Gallagher also discussed his conversation with Dr. Allen concerning FYE and if there will be oversight as putting it with student success has not been overly successful in the past. As mentioned by Dr. Allen, faculty when asked does not want to participate in FYE, and hence should not really be concerned about oversight now. The goal of the president is to absolutely implement the 4-credit model by the fall. It was mentioned that per Dr. Allen, departments can delay getting their courses out to the administration. This should not pose a problem as students can't register if the courses are not posted online. It was also pointed out that most departments have come up with a draft of what their majors would look like which is a positive thing.

There were additional discussions especially on how to get students graduated who are currently in the system with the introduction of a 4-credit model. It was proposed that this would be a huge task for departments with majority of 3 credit courses some of which will not be offered anymore. This is not seen as too big an issue for majors that already had 4 credit courses such as Biology.

Dr. Donahue mentioned that he had a conversation with Mr. Fredrick Roundtree and he was also concerned about accountability with student success taking on FYE. Mr. Roundtree explained that moving forward, the president's plan is to make FYE mandatory. Students will be held to the same criteria as is now used with students' writing portfolio.

Dr. Jamey Gallagher shared a link to Smith College previously shared with him by President Allen so departments could look at their schedule as an example. There was much discussion around the amount of time spent with students in the classroom and how to satisfy the remaining time needed for compliance with meeting the criteria of a 4 credit course. It was pointed out that faculty does not need to be in the classroom for 4 hours but can supplement with case studies, and additional homework. It was pointed out that the school calendar will follow the present module for the 2024 school year. Dr. Gallagher pointed out that Swarthmore, Gettysburg colleges (both have a 4-credit model) when reviewed seem to offer less courses for their majors than what is proposed by the president for Lincoln.

Dr. Haimbodi also mentioned looking at 4 credit models from other institutions- and one issue he recognized was with the majors. There was no way to change some of present 3 credit courses without completely changing the curriculum. This would then require the need to go through Ed policy and curriculum committee which would take some time.

Dr Poe suggested having an ad-hoc committee to answer the many questions that faculty has. Dr. Gallagher explained that the executive committee of the faculty council is that committee as indicated by the president. Dr Poe further mentioned that whenever this is instituted it is not unusual to encounter problems for up to a year.

The question was asked about students input in this proposal of a 4 credit model. It was explained that students can have input from their involvement on various committees as well as on the BOT.

Mr. Roundtree- explained that in thinking of students' accountability and FYE. Student success is getting ready to launch an e-portfolio pathway for 4 years so graduates can present e-portfolio to prospective graduate schools or employers. Although no longer offering FYE 101 – the two semester experience would now be linked with a department such as English 101 where students would be required to be introduced to the e-portfolio. In order to accomplish the task in the e-portfolio- those tasks or initiatives would be assigned to the FYE experiences throughout the week for the 2 semesters and would be recorded in their e-portfolio - thus satisfying the concern of accountability. Participation would be a part of their grade for that class. The department is however open to ideas and suggestions, faculty feedback welcome.

### **Additional questions and concerns identified**

How does rooms get secured for 4 hours?

For the undergraduate campus at SACE that would need to follow the same model as the main campus – how would they grandfather students in who are presently in the program? Would there be FYE in the fall or is not on the agenda?

Looking at Smith's curriculum- do we have to fit into the block schedule?

Running a class at 8am- already have issues with attendance. Specialized classes will not always be able to find a room.

Most other majors require 40 credits- LU requires 60 credits.

Overall concept is less classes- but for some majors this will be difficult

Can students all work in the lab at the same time and how?

Would the syllabi indicate to students 3 hours in classroom and the 4<sup>th</sup> hour will be described by the faculty member? This need to be clear to students about accountability for the 4<sup>th</sup> hour- we will need to hear from the registrar on this matter. Could FYE be divided to obtain greater clarity of purpose? Concept has always been excellent but very badly executed, because of the failure to make this distinction and to emphasize the academic element in it. It is an opportunity to introduce students to an academic discipline.

4 credit course is not a 3 hour course, but it also depends on how faculty want to individually approach it.

Due to time, the remainder of the agenda – (pay for adjuncts and Mandatory Math requirements) will be tabled for today. Considering all the unanswered questions, there is definitely the need for another meeting with the focus being that of the 4 credit model. Dr. Gallagher would discuss with the executive committee of the faculty council and will come up with a day and time for a possible town hall meeting to address these concerns.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:** There was no announcements

**ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting was adjourned at 2:20pm.

Submitted by Vilma Davis