

Minutes of Faculty Council Meeting

January 30, 2024

Dickey Hall

The meeting was called to order at 12: 37 pm by the president Dr. James Gallagher.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – the agenda was reviewed and approved with an amendment to add as discussion/announcement item the LU Distance education Policy which was received after the agenda was distributed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- 12/12/2023 – Approval of the minutes were deferred due to the late distribution and council members not having a chance to read them. The minutes will be approved at the February Faculty council meeting

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PRESENT:

Dr. Vilma Davis

Dr. James Gallagher

Dr. Pamela Kennebrew- Zoom

Professor Christina Kerns

Dr. J. Pathak

Dr Andrey Semichaevsky - Zoom

Dr. Karen Baskerville Board Representative – Zoom

Maxine Cook - Faculty Affair

Professor Brandi Berry – Parliamentarian

Dafan Zhang Esq.

Action Items

a. Curriculum Committee:

Dr Dameron presented the Engineering Science revised curriculum on behalf of the curriculum committee. There were minor edits per Dr. Dameron that the department was asked to make. The Faculty council was all in agreement to approve this curriculum with the minor edits requested to be made by the curriculum committee.

Also presented was a new Personal Finance Course – FIN 101 to be implemented in fall 2024. This course was identified as necessary for finance literacy which appears to be sorely lacking among students. This course would be a free elective, requiring no pre-requisite and would be open to all students. It would fall under social sciences and would be offered every semester. A healthy discussion ensued about the inception of this course, as most students were not literate on personal finance. There was a question about the possibility of this course being a substitute for Math 106. It was pointed out that this was not considered to be an option especially because Math 106 was a pre-requisite for some majors and this would possible be a deterrent for some students if this is seen as a Math course. The course was approved to move forward by the entire Faculty council.

Discussion Items

- a. **Snow Policy-** It was mentioned by Dr. Gallagher that some faculty expressed their discontent with the last minute change by the university to having classes by Zoom during the last snow storm. The dangers to students, faculty and staff coming into the school was appreciated, but if a policy was in place this would help faculty be better prepared to have classes on zoom. Some faculty had already given work to their students and were not happy being asked to have classes on zoom. It was pointed out that some faculty did not have access to zoom as they did not have a university issued computer with zoom. This left some faculty not being able to literally have classes with their students, and had to find alternative means for connecting with their students. If there was a policy already in place then faculty would be more prepared. Further discussion is needed which should involve the President.

- b. **4 Credit Model** – This again created a healthy discussion as when first introduced. There are still many unanswered questions regarding implementation. Dr. Gallagher mentioned that the president previously made a presentation of the reasons for this change to the Board of Trustee.
The proposed model is for faculty to teach three courses (12) credits one semester and 2 courses (8 credits) the next semester. The faculty teaching load would be decreased from twenty four (24) credits per school year to twenty (20) credits; with the aim of giving faculty time to pursue scholarship and research requirement. Some suggestions were
- to possible consider a block schedule with six credits per block as being done by some universities.
- having 2 credit courses as a filler if additional credits are needed for graduation

- It was unsure what would be the minimum requirement for graduation-124/128 credits
- Another question was asked if a 4 credit class meant 4 hours in the classroom. What about classes with a lab component, is this five credits and would faculty be compensated as such.
- Will students incur an extra charge if more credits are required to graduate, presently students require 120 credits to graduate
- Would the number of credits for each major change.

The consensus was that this new educational model would require an entire system change and would involve the educational policy and curriculum committees.

Dr Gallagher pointed out that these concerns will be discussed at the next executive council meeting with the president February 2. It was noted that Faculty council is charged by the President with helping departments with making these changes as needed. It was also pointed out that a template was already distributed to all department chairs as a guide to see how well their majors would fit in this framework.

Dr. Gallagher pointed out that the Biology department is accustomed to having 4-credit courses and does not find this task difficult. It was mentioned that four hour courses were the norm for Liberal arts colleges. In addition it was suggested that faculty could review other schools who successfully converted their educational model to 4 credit courses for additional examples of what this would look like.

African American Experience – There were concerns about FYE being placed under social sciences. Social Sciences does not seem to be the most appropriate department to house this. This will also be discussed with the president at our up-coming meeting.

- c. **FYE** – Concerns about eliminating FYE was also discussed. Accountability of making sure that parts of the curriculum is incorporated should be the accountability of Student Success.
- d. **Distant Education Policy**- to be discussed at the next meeting in the interest of time.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Dr Baskerville reminded faculty council of the upcoming Board of Trustee meeting at 9am Saturday February 10th. Zoom option available.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm. The next meeting will be back at the scheduled time second Tuesday in February.

Submitted by Vilma Davis