

Provost's Advisory Council
December 3, 2020
8:30-10:00 a.m. - Zoom

In attendance:

Sharon Beckman (Chair)	Angela Harkins	Gilda Morelli
Anthony Annunziato	Dewin Hernandez	Karen Muncaster
Michelle Elias Bloomer	Regine Jean-Charles	David Quigley
Joseph Carroll	Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.	Tracy Regan
Mary Ellen Carter	Adam Krueckeberg	Ronnie Sadka
Thomas Chiles	William Keane	Akua Sarr
Thomas Crea	Thomas Kohler	David Scanlon
Joseph Du Pont	Jonathan Laurence	Billy Soo
Kristin Flower	Karen Lyons	Thomas Stegman, S.J.
Yonder Gillihan	John Mahoney	Sasha Tomic
Stacy Grooters	Allison Marshall	Thomas Wall
Kevorak Atinizian		

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- 1. The summary of the October 8, 2020 meeting was approved.** It will be sent to the President's Office. All summaries are posted on the Provost's Office website; members are encouraged to share them with colleagues.
 - 2. Patrick Kraft, Director of Athletics and Bob Murphy, Chair of the Athletic Advisory Board**

Bob Murphy, Professor of Economics and Chair of the Athletic Advisory Board, introduced Patrick Kraft, the new William V. Campbell Director of Athletics at Boston College. Pat began by explaining his philosophy as Director of Athletics, stressing the importance of transparency, honesty, and building trust within the University community. He talked about his strong belief in academics and obtaining a degree, praising BC for the emphasis placed on academics for student-athletes. He discussed the Jesuit principles and ideals that guide the Athletics Department:

- Cura Personalis and Unity of Mind and Heart: future success is based on developing and caring for the whole person.
- Magis: educating student-athletes to give more of themselves and strive to be better in all facets of their lives.
- Contemplative in Action: allowing actions to speak louder than words and take action to address social injustices.
- Finding God in All Things: creating an environment where there is honesty and support through the good and bad times, having forgiveness and grace, and finding the best in every individual.
- Men & Women for Others

Pat discussed the athletic department's commitment to developing leadership and addressing social justice, the need for continued and sustained discussions on contemporary issues, and the value of self-reflection and assessment.

Student-athletes developed pillars for transformative change, with the goal of developing leaders and embodying Jesuit values, a dedication to education and service, and a commitment to inclusion and engagement.

- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – to ensure equitable and inclusive opportunities
- Personal & Professional Development – to foster self-awareness and personal growth
- Alumni Engagement & Networking – to engage alumni to help prepare student-athletes for life beyond BC
- Leadership Development – to equip student-athletes with the skills to lead on and off the field
- Service, Outreach & Civic Engagement – to be women and men for others

He mentioned Eagles for Equality, a student-athlete led diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative to develop a more inclusive environment and to improve the BC experience for all student-athletes. Its goals are to create a support system, increase awareness and empathy for diversity, and create an inclusive environment that holds student-athletes and staff accountable.

Pat talked about his expectations for the athletics department staff, which focus on creating an optimistic, passionate, and energetic environment. The staff provides leadership to the community and by example, empowers student-athletes to strive for excellence.

He continued, discussing the core fundamentals of the department, focusing on treating everyone with respect and dignity, and the idea that no one individual is more important than the institution. Student-athlete well-being is the department's first, and most important, priority, and mental health is one of the biggest concerns on college campuses. There will be a continued focus on academic achievement, noting that success in the classroom leads to increased confidence in other areas of students' lives. Other fundamentals include a continued impact on the community, healthy debate, and honest communication. The goal is to focus on the students, their welfare and academic success, and to win championships.

Pat concluded by asking faculty to let him know if there are additional ways in which the athletic department can be supportive or contribute to the academic mission.

A council member asked about Pat about his formative influences, mentors, and proactive leadership style.

Pat discussed the extraordinary formative influence of his father and the value of a strong work ethic. He talked about drawing inspiration and learning to lead from colleagues and mentors throughout his career, and learning from their successes as well as failures.

A council member applauded the commitment to social justice and the ongoing discussion on the issues and asked about long-term goals for the initiative.

Pat answered that the goal is to sustain honest conversations, and to promote a culture of ongoing action, not just in response to a specific incident, where everyone feels safe to voice their opinion. Student-athletes who are feeling marginalized or muted should feel comfortable speaking up without fear of losing playing time or being otherwise penalized.

A council member asked what is done to prepare student athletes for challenges they may encounter in less supportive environments when they leave BC.

Pat discussed the importance of providing the tools to prepare student-athletes for whatever path they plan post-BC, noting that few student-athletes actually pursue a professional athletic career. He discussed the relative bubble in which student-athletes exist during their collegiate years and the emphasis on educating and developing core beliefs to guide the decisions and situations they will encounter, empowering them to speak their mind and be who they are, while understanding potential consequences. He stressed the importance of providing ongoing support once they leave BC, noting that he maintains relationships with many past students.

A council member mentioned the success of the football team in staying healthy throughout the fall semester.

Pat noted that the team was very committed to staying focused and placing themselves in the best possible position to succeed.

3. Laura Steinberg, Seidner Family Executive Director, Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society

Sharon introduced Laura Steinberg, the inaugural Seidner Family Executive Director of the Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society. Laura comes from Syracuse University where she was most recently the Interim Executive Director of the Center for Excellence for Environmental and Energy Systems and Founding Director of the university's Infrastructure Institute.

Laura began with a discussion of her background and research. She holds a bachelor's degree in civil and urban engineering from the University of Pennsylvania, and a master's degree and Ph.D. in environmental engineering from Duke University. Prior to her time at Syracuse, she taught at Tulane University and Southern Methodist University. In 2006, she was appointed Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science at Syracuse University, a position she held for 6 years before moving to other roles within the University. Her scholarship is ever evolving and includes work on environmental contamination, disaster management, public infrastructure, and diffusion of innovation.

Laura provided some background on the Schiller Institute. The Institute will be forward thinking, creative, collaborative, and cross-disciplinary. The Institute will be housed in the new academic building that is currently under construction, will include administrative, classroom, and lab space, and will provide dedicated space for brainstorming and collaborative thinking.

She continued, discussing the concept for integrated sciences. There was a movement in science education in the 1990s to integrate the various disciplines to reach a more coherent understanding of the natural world and to enable a better way to do research and teach. The idea for the Institute is to integrate beyond the natural sciences, into the social sciences and humanities, education, law, etc., allowing for a deeper exploration of the issues and needs of society and the University's ability to make an impact locally, nationally, and globally.

Laura discussed the Jesuit tradition of promoting dialogue between disciplines in the search for truth. This is a compelling and fundamental tenet for the Institute to build on, taking collaborative, boundary-spanning approaches to complex problems in energy, environment, and health.

She continued, talking about the ideals to consider while designing and managing the Institute, complementing the BC educational model and the Jesuit tradition that underlies it. These ideals include:

- Developing compassionate, reflective, honest, and pro-active students, and to be a model for the same.
- Cultivating integrity, love of learning, and powers of creativity and imagination.
- Recognizing the legitimacy and power of each academic discipline, and each scholar and practitioner.

Laura discussed the current and future ambitions of the Institute.

- The Global Public Health minor will be housed in the Institute, as will other interdisciplinary programs.
- The Institute will collaborate closely with the Shea Center for Entrepreneurship and other BC Centers, providing maker spaces, and strengthening ties with relevant industries.
- The Institute will promote on-the-ground community engagement domestically and globally.
- The Institute will serve as a hub for co-curricular activities, supporting students and faculty in interdisciplinary research and teaching, and serving an organizing function for collaboration and creativity.

She then turned to ongoing strategic planning and discussions with faculty, leadership, staff, and students. Key topics of conversation are how the Institute can best support faculty in pursuit of their research and pedagogical interests, how affiliation with the Institute will be managed, and how space in the new building will be used.

Twenty-one new faculty will be hired, including faculty in the new Human Centered Engineering Department, and cluster hires in the areas of energy, the environment, and health.

Laura continued, discussing student-focused activities, events, and curricular innovations including seed grants, a Global Public Health Major, and a Living Learning Community for Integrated Science.

She concluded by discussing a recent event that addressed environmental racism and the struggle for environmental justice. Hosted by the Institute and the BC Forum on Racial Justice, the program was developed and planned by an ad hoc committee of students, faculty, and staff from around the University. The virtual panel brought together David Pellow, a renowned environmental sociologist, and Rev. Mariama White-Hammond, a local advocate for ecological and social justice, and was viewed by over 500 members of the BC community. Planning for additional, similar events is underway.

A council member asked about the Institute's responsibility to respond to the moment, given the multiple crises facing the country and world.

Laura responded that the Institute will endeavor to be relevant to the current conversations and flexible enough to change focus as needed. The ability to be nimble and creatively think outside of existing structures will be important. She stressed the importance of a broad perspective that encompasses a variety of views.

4. Provost's Report: David Quigley, Provost and Dean of Faculties

Billy Soo provided some updates:

- Sabbatical and Faculty Fellowship decisions were distributed via email this week.
- The Faculty Annual Report and Conflicts Disclosure reporting request will be sent out soon and, as in past years, will be completed through Interfolio. This year, there are two new forms: one for faculty who have sponsored research, and one for faculty with fiscal or administrative responsibilities. These new forms are in response to the Federal Government's increased interest in university and faculty involvement with foreign institutions. Guidance on completing the annual report and conflicts disclosures can be found on the Provost's website.

David announced a faculty forum on December 11, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. that will provide updates on the fall semester and planning for the spring semester.

He continued with an update on undergraduate admissions. There was an increase in Early Decision 1 applications, and those decisions will go out today. Applications for both Early Decision 2 and the regular admission pool have increased as well. This is the first year of BC's partnership with QuestBridge. The applicant pool through the matching program included over 800 applications.

David concluded the meeting by expressing gratitude for the many ways that the community contributed to the success of the fall semester. He thanked the students for going above and beyond, and their commitment to the University.