

**Provost's Advisory Council
Summary of October 1, 2015 Meeting**

Can Erbil (Chair)	Lillie Albert	James Kale
Min Song	Laura O'Dwyer	Hagop Toghramadjian
Anthony Annunziato	James Bretzke, S.J.	Nirav Bhatt
William Keane	Theresa O'Keefe	David Quigley
Judith Clair	Daniel Chambers	Patricia DeLeeuw
Samuel Graves	Sasha Tomic	Joseph Carroll
William Fehder	Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.	Thomas Chiles
Stephanie Berzin	Thomas Wall	Akua Sarr
Thomas Crea	Katherine O'Dair	Jessica Pesce
Judith Tracy	John Rakestraw	

1. The summary of the April 30, 2015 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. Provost's Report

David Quigley began by noting several recent personnel changes in academic administration. Tom McGuinness has moved to the Provost's Office from his former role as Director of Counseling Services. He is working as Associate Vice Provost with the Provost and Vice Provosts on a number of ways to support various communities in academic affairs. Akua Sarr is now the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. She replaces Don Hafner, who retired. Rory Browne is standing in as the Interim Director of Academic Advising while a program review of the Advising Center is conducted this year. Nanci Tessier joined BC on July 1 as the inaugural Vice Provost for Enrollment Management. Nanci will join the Provost's Advisory Council and will report at a subsequent meeting on her vision for enrollment management.

This year, two Deans are stepping down. Maureen Kenny will complete her 6th year as Dean of the Lynch School of Education. Alberto Godenzi will be finishing his 15th year as Dean of the School of Social Work. Two search firms have been engaged to search for their replacements. The Lynch School search is beginning today with open fora for LSOE faculty. The SSW search will be 2-3 weeks behind, with initial meetings starting in October. Ideally, each search would have 8-12 finalists to the Boston area in early 2016 to meet with committees, and the pools would be narrowed to smaller groups of finalists before spring break. If all goes well, new Deans would arrive in summer 2016.

At the beginning of this academic year, total student enrollment was around 14,000. Graduate enrollments have rebounded to some extent this year from last year. Demographic information for undergraduates remained largely the same as last year. Mathematics as a major is growing in popularity. The number of international students has doubled in the last decade. Nanci Tessier will explain more about admissions trends in future PAC meetings.

David Quigley thanked the Council and faculty and staff across the University for making this year's August 31st start date go as smoothly as possible. As many longtime members of the Council know, the earlier start date came about as a result of math/language/science faculty members' concerns about the imbalance of teaching days between spring and fall semesters. We will be revisiting the subject of pre-Labor Day start dates this year to decide what will happen in future years when Labor Day is not as late.

David Quigley asked the group about any issues they heard regarding the earlier start date. Some members of the Council said they heard of students who had to sleep on friends' couches because their leases did not start until September 1. A Council member who is the parent of a junior said that the student's friends stayed at their house because they live nearby; this must have been hard for parents living farther away who may have been concerned about sending their children back to campus without a set place to stay. Student Affairs reported that the majority of the complaints they received were from graduate students; these complaints were mostly about lease start dates. Offices at BC worked with landlords and students to accommodate as best they could for the last week in August, and many landlords let students move in early. David Quigley said this is an area for future research if BC decides to start before September 1 every year.

From a faculty perspective, the early start may have been difficult for people with school-aged children, as camps tend to be closed the last week in August. Some Council members said they saw their colleagues bringing their children to campus at the end of August. Others said that many local school districts start before Labor Day, as well, so it was not a problem.

Core Renewal Update: Julian Bourg is the new Associate Dean for the Core. There has been a great deal of student interest in the pilot program this semester. The deadline for the second pilot program, to be offered next academic year, is coming up shortly. David Quigley urged faculty to reach out to Julian Bourg or Mary Crane with interdisciplinary ideas for courses.

Strategic Planning and Accreditation Processes: BC is approaching the 10-year regional re-accreditation process with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. We will be submitting a self-study in December, 2016, and the visiting committee will be coming in March/April, 2017. Additionally, we will be starting the next decade's strategic plan. The last strategic plan was completed in 2004, and it has driven university investment over the last decade. There will likely be some continuity of themes from the last plan, with the possible addition of core renewal and science planning processes.

3. Student Resilience—Tom McGuinness, Associate Vice Provost

Tom McGuinness, formerly the director of University Counseling Services has worked with faculty over the past year on the issue of student resilience. Some students have a great ability to bounce back from challenges, while others have more difficulty. We need to determine how BC can best support the latter students. There is an ongoing faculty conversation about this topic, and Tom would like the PAC to contribute its ideas.

Tom said there is an overall trend of diminished resilience amongst college students. After 40 years of working in university mental health, he sees significant change since the 1970s. More

students are coming in with emergencies because they are unable to wait for the first available appointment. While there are still serious emergencies, the number of students with subclinical problems has increased. In earlier decades, these students were not bringing these problems to psychologists, but would seek help from family and/or friends. Now many students want help from trained professionals immediately. This puts a burden on University Counseling Services, and it is not feasible to add more and more counselors to the staff.

Tom has conducted focus groups with faculty and administrators about trends they have seen on campus, such as the over-involvement of parents, grade inflation, incomplete grades, and course withdrawals. Faculty are concerned that if they don't yield to student pressure, they will receive poor course evaluations. They also feel that there is limited support from the administration and that students are rejecting their authority. Students, on the other hand, feel that they do not have enough quality relationships with faculty on campus.

From the focus groups, Tom has heard that students are afraid to take risks. They often ask to redo papers, they want rubrics for every assignment, and they seem to care more about the grade than the learning process. Faculty are conflicted about how much guidance they should be providing. Many raise the issue of what to do if a student doesn't show up for class; there is confusion about how much responsibility faculty should take for their students. Tom feels this is an issue we need to work on as a university. We should try to reset the balance between challenge and support for students in order to hold true to our mission of student formation. We have to articulate the importance of growing resilience and autonomy in our students.

A Council member pointed out that much of what Tom described is a nationwide problem. Tom agreed that there is a great deal of literature in this area at present. Research shows that students are more depressed and more anxious and stressed than ever before. Students are also less empathic than before. Another Council member said that BC could do more targeted outreach to parents, since students often contact parents first for help.

A Council member said it is important to engage students in these conversations. Another Council member said that students' and parents' anxiety about jobs and the economy is reasonable. He feels that there are deeper structural issues at work in these students' lives that we can't fix. Mental health is now a major focus for UGBC. UGBC members would like the University to expand its services. However, UGBC should hear the perspective that students can be more empathetic, can take more responsibility, and be part of the solution. UGBC would like to invite Tom McGuinness to speak to the whole group about his findings.

Another member was struck by Tom's comment that lower resilience tended to be seen in more affluent students. Perhaps their anxiety is a result of an expectation that they will achieve a certain lifestyle upon graduation. Less privileged students have experienced more adversity and can rebound better, but that doesn't necessarily mean they thrive. We have to figure out when to challenge and when to support. Perhaps the schools could focus on expectation management in order to help reduce anxiety in students. Since college students now are different than they were ten years ago, we need to meet them where they are and not overwhelm them.

4. Open Conversation about Ideas/Topics for the PAC this Year

Tom Wall, University Librarian, would like to discuss a policy for open access, specifically for faculty publications. This could be tied to the open textbook initiative. The AAUP and Association of Research Libraries both have statements on this. It is now a practice within many universities.

A Council member would like to talk about parking issues. Many colleagues have mentioned having trouble finding parking if they come to campus later in the day. David Quigley said he would like to hear specific complaints, and he will work to bring the new head of Parking in to talk to the PAC.

Pat DeLeeuw said it might be helpful for the PAC to review deadlines for posting syllabi. Often the April deadline for posting the fall semester's syllabi is ignored. How can we urge people to comply? This is an important issue for students who need accessible materials.

Another Council member said many faculty are concerned about breaches of academic integrity. He would like to address this topic.

Another Council member asked about "of the practice faculty," who are full-time but non-tenure track. They are heavily relied upon in certain courses, and the Council member would like to explore how different units support such colleagues.

The UGBC says students would like to diversify what classes count as core requirements. David Quigley said it would be useful for UGBC to consult the new Associate Dean for the Core, Julian Bourg, and the UCRC on this topic.