

**Provost’s Advisory Council
Summary of March 31, 2016 Meeting**

Can Erbil (Chair)	Judith Tracy	Katie O’Dair
Paul Lewis	Lillie Albert	Stacy Grooters
William Keane	Laura O’Dwyer	Hagop Toghramadjian
Susan Michalczyk	James Bretzke, S.J.	David Quigley
Devin Pendas	Theresa O’Keefe	Patricia DeLeeuw
Samuel Graves	Daniel Chambers	Akua Sarr
Marie Boltz	Sasha Tomic	Nanci Tessier
William Fehder	Susan Gennaro	Jessica Pesce
Stephanie Berzin	Thomas Wall	

1. **The summary of the February 25, 2016 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. Maternity Policies—Pat DeLeeuw

Pat shared two suggestions that the Council of Deans has proposed for improving the existing faculty maternity leave policy. Currently, the policy for faculty is similar to the employee policy of 8 weeks of paid leave. However, for faculty, this is often the majority of a semester, so we have been giving them a semester off from teaching. This is unfair to the women who give birth in May, since they do not get any teaching time off. To address this inconsistency, Pat suggested we change the policy to grant faculty a semester off from teaching within 12 months of the date they give birth. According to our benchmarking, this is the policy at many other comparable institutions.

The second suggestion was to regularize the extension of the probationary period for tenure-track faculty who give birth. Under the current policy, the faculty member must request a one-year extension. In order to regularize the process and make it more equitable, everyone who gives birth will automatically be granted a one-year extension of the probationary period. Each birth is considered a separate event, meaning two births would equal two years of extension. Deans should still alert the Provost’s Office when faculty members give birth.

We will do more benchmarking of peer institutions in order to try to improve family-friendly policies, as these are some areas that have been brought up by the recent climate survey. A Council member asked that we incorporate caring for elderly parents as part of family friendly policies. These topics may be discussed in next year’s PAC meetings.

3. Conversation about Diversity and Inclusion

David Quigley said he would like our conversation today to focus on areas within Academic Affairs where we might strengthen our commitment to diversity and inclusion at Boston College. We will break into smaller groups to hear about what is going on in different areas across the university, then we will come together to talk about how we can move forward and bring this conversation to the school and departmental level. We should talk about areas

where we have made some progress as well as areas where we should direct our future energies. Across the university, we have been working to be more diverse and inclusive. We expanded the staff climate survey to include faculty this past fall. We have also been discussing methods to enhance diversity in faculty hiring and retention. In our work on the renewal of the core curriculum, we might think about how to build upon the existing cultural diversity requirement. The CTE has hosted programs on topics related to diversity and inclusion in teaching methods, and diversity in the classroom. There is continuing planning for academic programming, symposia, talks, and conferences that will highlight the good work that we're doing on this campus.

We are discussing this topic in the PAC today in part as a response to the national and local conversations about race in the contemporary university. The PAC is a campus-wide elected faculty body which reviews policies. We have asked as well that all constituted faculty bodies, like the UCT, UCIER, UCRC, and all school EPCs include diversity as a topic on their agendas for this spring semester. Requiring this discussion across schools and committees has already helped gather interesting feedback and ideas.

After the breakout sessions, the groups came back together to report on their findings. The first group noted that faculty recruitment and retention must be considered together. We should look at feedback from faculty who leave BC to see what we can do better. We should focus on student recruitment, as well, as there are some programs like Honors and Presidential Scholars that have a lack of diversity. The group asked us to consider how we make progress not just in terms of numbers but also in fostering a welcoming and diverse community at BC.

The second group talked about increasing support for international students and trying to work on the socio-economic diversity of our undergraduates. They noted that there were very few high-level administrators of color at BC. Given our heritage, there is also a dearth of Latino administrators, faculty, and students. The group said that there is a model program in SSW that focuses on students who will work with the Latino community after graduation; the courses are conducted in Spanish, and the program links students with the community. The Monserrat program is also working well, and there is more programming for LGBTQ students than there was previously. We could do better at mentoring for faculty of color, and we could consider creating a set of endowed chairs for faculty of color. The group noted the pipeline problem in terms of faculty diversity and suggested that we should increase diversity in our Ph.D. programs in order to produce more future faculty.

The third group also noted a concern about the lack of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in key leadership positions across the university. Monserrat is a great program, but they would like to see it increased beyond Pell students, since many middle-income students also have financial concerns. In talking about faculty retention, they said they would also be interested in finding out why faculty leave and would like to explore issues related to housing and the larger Boston community. They said that the core renewal is a step in the right direction, but they would like to see the core examined further. They felt that BC could do better about communicating the different types of diversity that already exist on campus.

The fourth group picked up on the idea of looking at the curriculum; they felt that diversity should not be tokenized as a particular requirement, but instead, it should be incorporated into all curricula and syllabi. Faculty should examine who is represented in the authors and voices in their classes. Faculty should also help encourage good students from less represented groups to go to graduate school.

David Quigley said these were useful beginnings of fruitful conversations. We would like everyone to bring these ideas to their departments and schools to engage other faculty in conversation. Some schools/departments have been having these conversations consistently for many years, while some have not. Please connect with your peers to talk about these issues more often.

David Quigley and Can Erbil would also like to hear feedback from the group about whether they found the breakout group structure useful.

4. Provost's Report

David Quigley followed up on the conversation from our last meeting about the academic calendar. Student Services is putting together a draft of academic calendar dates for us to discuss at next month's meeting.

Dean Searches: The STM search is just beginning. There are two finalists each in the LSOE and SSW searches.

The spring Faculty Forum will be in Fulton 511 on Monday, April 25th. We will talk about the results of the fall's climate survey.

There are 53 days left until commencement (May 23). Please encourage your colleagues to attend; this has been an area of great growth in recent years, and it is helpful for the university to have as many faculty as possible attend.

Strategic Planning update: 24 committees are in the process of meeting and developing plans that will be submitted in early May. The reports will be culled by the steering committee in June, and they will determine the directions for future focus over the summer. There will be an update at Convocation in August and town hall meetings in the fall.