Provost's Advisory Council
Summary of April 28, 2016 Meeting

Can Erbil (Chair)	Thomas Crea	Katie O'Dair
Marjorie Howes	Mark Brodin	John Rakestraw
Anthony Annunziato	Lillie Albert	David Quigley
William Keane	Laura O'Dwyer	Patricia DeLeeuw
Susan Michalczyk	James Bretzke, S.J.	Akua Sarr
Devin Pendas	Theresa O'Keefe	Thomas Chiles
Samuel Graves	Daniel Chambers	Joseph Carroll
Marie Boltz	Sasha Tomic	Jessica Pesce
William Fehder	Susan Gennaro	
Stephanie Berzin	Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.	

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1. **The summary of the March 31, 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. **Boston College Bookstore and Affordable Course Materials**

   Pat DeLeeuw introduced Director of the Boston College Bookstore Bob Stewart, Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Services Pat Bando, and Course Materials Manager Carol Gertz. Boston College is currently in its 8th year of a 10 year contract with Follett. A percentage of the bookstore's sales are returned to Boston College. Follet also gives $50,000 in scholarships each year to the BC community, $50,000 per year as a donation to various areas on campus, and approximately $25,000 in Superfan t-shirts to freshmen.

   The bookstore has worked to develop methods such as textbook rentals to reduce course materials costs to students. The rental program can save $230 per student, as rentals are typically 50-80% cheaper than buying a new book. After a book has been rented multiple times, it becomes even cheaper. About 37% of the textbooks in the bookstore are rentals. Used books account for 18% of all textbooks, and digital books are only 1% (the rest, or 44%, are new books). Of Follet's 1200 stores nationally, 58% of textbook adoptions are rentable titles; BC is better than average, with 70% rentable titles. The top departments for rentable books are Theater, Philosophy, and the Honors Program.

   Custom versions of textbooks that publishers sell are always new and cost students more. However, if the faculty member can create a custom textbook and commit to using it for 4 terms or more, then it can be turned into a rentable book. If faculty select textbooks with online codes, they can still be rentable, since the bookstore can buy codes separately from books.

   The bookstore is eager to work with faculty to help determine the most affordable way to get materials to students. While Amazon is a tempting alternative, it does not return any percent of sales to BC, as the bookstore does. This semester, the bookstore rolled out a new technique

called Price Match against Amazon (not Marketplace), Barnes & Noble, Chegg, or any local competitors. The policy has already saved BC students $6,000. They expect the program to gain popularity this fall, since it will be discussed with freshmen during orientation.

Another way the bookstore can help faculty is with copyright issues. There are colleges across the country that have been caught infringing upon copyright, which is a serious and costly problem. If anyone has a question on the copyright of any materials for course packs, Canvas, etc., the bookstore has contact information for people who can help. All course packs automatically go through copyright checks.

A Council member asked how book buyback works at the end of the semester. If the textbook has already been adopted for the next semester, then students receive back 50% of the new book price. Then the book can go into the rental library or be sold used. Renting a used book is 35% cheaper than buying a used book. Another Council member asked about adopting textbooks and online codes; if a faculty member requests the bundled format from the publisher, it's more expensive. The bookstore can work with faculty to find a more affordable way, such as used/rentable books plus purchasing the online codes separately. The bookstore will be more diligent about following up with faculty who select bundling options in order to discuss alternative, cheaper methods.

A Council member asked what determines whether a book is rentable. The bookstore says books are not rentable if they aren't durable, if they are loose leaf, if they are custom books, if they are editions at the end of their life, or if they are single use products (like online codes). A Council member mentioned that they would like to be able to tell the bookstore that older editions of textbooks are ok for use in their class. The bookstore says this is a good option that can save students money. Additionally, Follet's 1200 store network should be able to help find older versions of textbooks, including editions that might be out of print.

David Quigley added that the latter point was especially illustrative of the importance in submitting textbook adoptions to the bookstore early. Posting the course syllabus early is federally required now; this helps the bookstore, library, and students find cheaper options for books. Students who need ADA accessible materials also need more time to find them. The bookstore added that earlier adoption also means students are likely to get more money back at buyback time, since the book may have already been adopted for the next semester. What are some ways that the bookstore can reach out to faculty to remind them to send in their adoptions early? Pat DeLeeuw mentioned that the UGBC student committee for students with disabilities has helpful examples of students who need months of lead time in order to secure accessible materials. These groups may be useful to partner with in order to convey BC's values.

3. Faculty & Staff Experience Survey Results Highlights

David Quigley reminded everyone of the survey that was sent to all employees last October. He presented the preliminary findings at the Faculty Forum this past week and is looking for feedback to guide the next steps.

Jess Greene from Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment introduced the survey, saying that there was a 51% response rate overall. A previous survey was sent out in 2006 to staff only; this year was the first time there was ever a full-time faculty and staff survey. There is a plan to administer such a survey every 3 years. A working group was formed that looked at other institutional surveys, including Harvard's faculty survey.

David Quigley said the findings of this study will help inform policy over the next few years. Of all full-time employees, about 90% agreed that they feel like valued members of the BC community. This is a high number compared to other institutions. The level of satisfaction with opportunities for promotion was higher for faculty than for staff, likely because there is a clearer path to promotion in faculty positions. Respondents said they had high levels of trust with colleagues, they were satisfied with access to training and professional development, and they felt there was a great feeling of community on campus.

While the responses on the closed-ended questions showed that people felt there were not enough diversity programs on campus and that we should continue to make diversity a priority, there was still some inconsistency in the qualitative responses. Some comments stated there is too much diversity discussion on campus, while others noted there was not enough. Both faculty and staff agree that BC has a welcoming atmosphere, though staff agree more strongly (85% versus 76%). Staff also feel that the sense of community is stronger than faculty do (81% versus 65%), which is not surprising considering the individual nature of faculty work.

Overall, 78% of faculty respondents said they were satisfied/very satisfied as a faculty member at BC, and 74% of faculty said they would encourage a colleague to accept a position at BC. Faculty also reported that the formal mentoring they receive is adequate or more than adequate (66%), while 86% said that informal mentoring is adequate or more than adequate. Of the faculty respondents, 78% were satisfied with resources for teaching, and 65% said they were satisfied with the support they receive for research. Regarding departments (or schools, for those that have no departments), 69% of faculty agreed that they have a voice in decision making. Regarding faculty diversity, 59% of faculty agreed that their school/department makes a genuine effort to recruit and retain faculty of color, while 73% agreed that their school/department makes a genuine effort to recruit and retain female faculty. In terms of classroom climate, fewer than half of the faculty respondents felt that the classroom climate is at least as good for female faculty as it is for male faculty. Only one-third of faculty agree that the classroom climate is at least as good for AHANA faculty as it is for white faculty.

Overall, full-time employees were satisfied with benefits, training, BC's caring and authentic community, and support for faculty. Areas that could use improvement are parking, professional development, work/life balance, and acceptance/understanding of differences.

There was a question about the classroom climate results. IR reported that the survey questions for faculty were taken from other faculty surveys, such as Harvard and Notre Dame. Women and faculty of color reported that the classroom environment, which can include interactions with students, is less good for them. As the Council began to discuss this, many faculty noted that women and faculty of color are often questioned/challenged by students,

students can be more hostile toward them, and that they are often on the receiving end of discriminatory attitudes from students. Other Council members noted that we need to talk to students about how to be respectful in the classroom; perhaps this is an area where Academic Affairs can partner with Student Affairs.

One Council member requested whether we could have access to the qualitative data, as the ability to see (especially negative) comments can be helpful. IR agreed that we need to look at these comments. Another Council member asked if it is possible to link the data from the faculty survey to any student survey data to see links; Jess Greene said IRPA will investigate the possibility, especially to look for relationships at the school level. Another Council member asked about whether we can break the data down by age to see if classroom climate is worse for early career faculty; Jess Greene said they have seen that work/life balance issues are more prevalent for mid-career faculty as opposed to younger and older faculty. IRPA will look at this request further.

4. Provost's Report

David Quigley said that there will be town hall meetings for the strategic planning initiative in the fall. He also presented the final academic calendars for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, which reflect the change suggested by the PAC that a Monday class schedule run on a Wednesday in the spring semester. The calendar also shows a new fall break starting in Fall 2018 with Monday and Tuesday off over Columbus Day weekend.

Pat DeLeeuw said she will be sending emails to the Council in the next week to ask for nominations for a faculty chair for next year's Provost's Advisory Council. She asked that we acknowledge and thank those people whose terms are ending this year: Devin Pendas, Susan Michalczyk, Min Song/Marjorie Howes, Lillie Albert, Mark Brodin, and Sam Graves. People whose terms are ending but who have agreed to serve again beginning next year are: Can Erbil, Judy Tracy, and Laura O'Dwyer.

The Council also thanked Pat DeLeeuw for her service. She will be retiring on May 31, 2016.