

**Provost's Advisory Council
September 10, 2020 Meeting
8:30-10:00 a.m. - Zoom**

In attendance:

Sharon Beckman (Chair)	Dewin Hernandez	Gilda Morelli
Anthony Annunziato	Régine Jean-Charles	Karen Muncaster
Michelle Elias Bloomer	Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.	David Quigley
Thomas Chiles	William Keane	Tracy Regan
Thomas Crea	Thomas Kohler	Ronnie Sadka
Joseph Du Pont	Adam Krueckeberg	Akua Sarr
Kristin Flower	Jonathan Laurence	David Scanlon
Yonder Gillihan	Lian Fen Lee	Billy Soo
Stacy Grooters	Karen Lyons	Thomas Stegman, S.J.
Christian Guma	John Mahoney	Thomas Wall

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- 1. The summary of the April 16, 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. Classroom Recording Guidance, Faculty Mid-Semester Feedback and Course Evaluation Results from Spring 2020: Billy Soo, Vice Provost for Faculties**

Billy Soo began by providing an overview of the classroom recording guidance. The recommendation this fall was that faculty should record their classes to allow for the possibility that students may need to miss class due to illness or quarantine. There were a number of requests from faculty for guidance surrounding these recordings. The Provost's Office worked with the Office of the General Counsel to draft a document which provides broad guidelines for issues that faculty should be aware of when recording their classes. Some key highlights of the guidance include:

- Massachusetts has a two-party recording rule, which does not allow for recording a conversation without notifying all parties. As such, faculty should notify students that the class is being recorded through an announcement in class, email, and/or the course syllabus. The default setting for classrooms with lecture capture is to record all classes. These recordings are not automatically viewable by the class, and faculty may choose when and with whom to share the recording(s).
- Faculty should only share recordings with students in the same class as the subject of the recording. If they wish to share a recording with someone outside of the class, they must obtain written consent of any student captured on the recording. Consistent with the University's Intellectual Property policy, faculty must obtain permission from the Provost before making any class recordings available to an outside entity.
- Recordings should be kept until the end of the semester to ensure students have access through completion of the course. At that point, faculty may choose to keep or

delete recordings. If recordings are retained, the reuse policies remain in effect after the end of the semester.

- Administrators will not have access to recordings without the permission of the faculty member unless there is a misconduct investigation that warrants such access. In such situations, the Office of the General Counsel and the Provost's Office would be involved.
- Faculty should remind students that they should not personally record classes without written approval of the faculty member and securing any other required University permissions.

A council member noted the importance of securing consent before the recordings are made, and expressed concern that students may feel compelled to consent to being recorded or not attend the class. Another council member asked if students could be given the option of opting out rather than opting in.

Billy noted that by announcing it in class, students are being asked to opt out, and that students may move to the back of the classroom if they do not want to be captured on the video.

A council member asked if recordings could be used as part of the renewal or promotion and tenure processes. Another council member asked if the faculty member would be notified if permission to view a recording were granted as part of a disciplinary investigation.

Billy responded that recordings will not be available to Deans or Department Chairs as part of contract renewal considerations, the annual merit process, or promotion and tenure processes unless the faculty member chooses to submit them for consideration. He added that there is a specific reference to the University's responsible use of surveillance on campus, which covers situations in which the University may be compelled to provide access to recordings.

A council member asked if the guidance applies to lectures recorded in an empty classroom and provided for students for later viewing. Another council member asked if University permission was required to share videos a faculty member may have of himself or herself giving guest lectures or conference presentations.

Billy responded that the all-party rule would not apply to videos recorded in an empty classroom. Personal recordings, or public videos, would not require the University's permission to share.

A council member noted that students often request that lectures be recorded for studying or disability purposes and asked if the class needs to be notified in these instances.

Billy responded that there is an accommodation request process that students with disabilities should go through. Students with a documented disability may record a class for their own use to meet the classroom experience of others. If the request to record does not fall under an accommodation, the rest of the class should be notified of the recording.

A council member asked if the guidance applies to recording office hours.

Billy answered that if there is consent from the student to record the office hours, there is no issue. If the student does not want to be recorded, there are other options available for engaging including chats and email.

Billy continued, discussing the course evaluation from the spring 2020 semester. There was considerable concern among the faculty about the impact of the move to remote learning on their course evaluations; however, the ratings were higher than in the previous two semesters. The evaluations were prefaced with a paragraph reminding students that the evaluations should reflect their views on the semester as a whole. Results indicated that students were sympathetic to the challenges and appreciated the effort made by the faculty.

The one question for which results were lower was a question about whether the course required more effort than other courses. While lower, the results were similar to previous semesters. There was variability in the results from class to class, but on average across the University, evaluation scores were positive.

Billy then discussed the survey that was sent to all faculty to assess their experience with the switch to remote teaching. The survey received 531 responses, which represents a response rate of about 30%.

Responses indicated that almost 66% of classes were taught with a synchronous component. 77% of faculty had never taught in a remote fashion prior to the spring semester. 60% of respondents taught only undergraduate classes, while 24% taught graduate classes, the majority of which were lecture or seminar classes with fewer than 40 students enrolled.

Faculty indicated that transitioning the laboratory, creative, and technical classes presented the most significant challenges, as did developing or changing final exams. Some of the challenges encountered while adapting to remote learning included: engaging students in classes, transitioning lessons and activities and assessing student learning in a remote environment, knowledge of applications and tools, and finding time and energy to effectively adapt while balancing family and work responsibilities.

Technological issues that were the most challenging included familiarity with the required technologies and applications, adequate digital replacements for face-to-face collaboration tools, and reliable access to the internet.

Faculty concerns with the transition to remote learning included difficulty engaging with students, diminished student learning, academic integrity during online exams, changes to grading structures, and course evaluations.

Observations on areas that proved challenging to students in their transition to remote learning included emotional distress, difficulty with time management and avoiding

distractions once home, lack of access to reliable internet, and lack of a quiet place to study and participate in remote class meetings.

Many of the themes and areas of concern were consistent across questions. Despite these concerns, 67% of faculty indicated that they thought their students had adapted moderately or extremely well to remote learning.

Results also suggested a high level of satisfaction with the support provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) and the Center for Digital Innovation and Learning (CDIL).

Stacy Grooters noted that the primary concern in the spring was ensuring that faculty had the technology they needed to teach remotely. In preparation for the fall semester, there was a higher comfort level with remote learning, and CTE and CDIL were able to support faculty in a more thoughtful course development process and put more emphasis on engagement and learning.

3. Boston College Forum on Racial Justice in America: Dean Vince Rougeau, Director

Sharon introduced Vince Rougeau, Dean of the Law School, and Director of the University's new Forum on Racial Justice in America.

Vince began discussing his vision for the Forum by acknowledging the challenging times the country is experiencing politically, socially, and culturally, all in the midst of a public health crisis. The Forum will provide, in a positive way, an opportunity to engage and build a society that is focused on racial justice. As an institution of higher learning dedicated to educating future leaders and engaging with the community, BC has an obligation to become a leader in a new vision for what society should look like. The goal is to create programming in the various units across the University that addresses these issues, and keeps racism and racial justice at the forefront of the thinking and conversations that are happening. Racism is structural to the society in which we live. A unified effort is required to dismantle the structure, and BC can emerge as a real force for change with that institutional vision.

He continued, talking about the emerging approach for the Forum. There is a steering committee composed of representatives from across the University, which will ultimately include student representatives as well. The committee is planning a launch event(s) during the month of October which will involve a liturgy of lamentation and hope. While there is great pain, there is also hope that the nation can rise above the challenges. It is important, as an institution with a faith-based tradition, that there be spiritual reflection on the process of healing and addressing the sources of the pain.

Academic conversations and panels, pulling together black scholars to respond to the moment from the perspective of their disciplines, will follow the initial launch event. The hope is that the Forum will be a vehicle for large University events focusing on the key issues that are central to the conversations about racial justice. The Forum will also support the work being done at the local levels, help facilitate cross-unit collaborations, and be a beacon for celebrating emerging and powerful ideas.

The goal is to create opportunities for conversations that facilitate healing within the BC community and within the greater Boston community, and ensure that the community is living the values that it wishes to encourage nationally. The Forum will be a catalyst for transformation internal to BC, and in turn BC can be a catalyst for cultural and social transformation across the country.

A council member noted that other schools are taking an approach of fully funded action and suggested such an approach at BC could make the work of the Forum more robust.

Vince responded that funding is critical to creative work. The Board of Trustees and alumni are supportive and interested in the Forum, which may provide some potential funding opportunities.

A council member asked if the Forum will have a virtual presence so community members can get involved.

Vince noted that the website will be launching soon and will be a resource for events, activities, books, media, etc.

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

Billy discussed a mid-semester feedback form that will be available this fall. Use of the feedback form is optional. There will be two standard questions, and faculty will have the option to add three questions which they can create themselves or choose from a question bank. The forms will be launched to students during the first week of October, and results will be available to faculty the following week. The results will be accessible only to the faculty member and responses will be anonymous.

David expressed appreciation for the extraordinary work that has been done across campus over the past six months to prepare for the fall. Approximately 60% of the University's classes are meeting in person in some manner this fall, and the semester is off to a good start. There are ongoing conversations about the emerging plans for the spring semester. The virus will dictate much of how things play out, but the hope is for something resembling the fall semester with some continued expansion to in-person experiences. The spring academic calendar remains unchanged at this point, but some flexibility may be required to ensure the health of the community.

He continued with some updates:

- The Dean of the Connell School of Nursing will be stepping down at the end of the current year and returning to the faculty. There will be a national search for her replacement.
- Additional information and guidance will be available soon regarding faculty contract reviews happening this year.

- The Mass of the Holy Spirit will be held today, September 10, 2020, at 12:00 p.m. The First-Year Convocation with Bruce Springsteen will be held at 7:00 p.m. tonight. Both events will be held virtually.
- The enrollment picture will be clearer once add/drop has concluded, but the admissions team has done a remarkable job of recruiting and retaining students and are now thinking about how to build and recruit the next freshman class without campus tours or visits to campus.

David opened the conversation to the council for questions and comments.

A council member discussed the concerns and anxiety of the junior faculty surrounding their probationary period, and the extraordinary amount of work that they have put in to ensuring an excellent classroom experience for their students. Another council member suggested that a dynamic approach to the standards for tenure would be advantageous to the University and help with retaining committed teachers and scholars.

Another council member suggested that grant-funding cycles can take a long time and asked if there were additional internal grant opportunities available to faculty to assist with restarting research activities.

David responded that conversations are ongoing about how to support junior faculty and ensure effective processes for retention and promotion.

Billy noted that extensions for non-tenure track faculty contracts are being discussed as well.

Tom Chiles added that the Vice Provost for Research Office is exploring mechanisms to support faculty research and hopes to have an update in the next few months.

A council member suggested that the University think collectively about how to address the emotional distress of students and to bring social, emotional learning to the teaching space. Another council member suggested that it would be helpful to gather data from the multiple offices that touch student lives directly to get a better understanding of their experiences and the challenges they are facing.

Stacy Grooters discussed CTE resources and workshops focusing on a human-centered approach to the classroom, the importance of engaging motivation, and embracing social and emotional learning. The center is working on programs for the fall to help faculty with these issues and if there are themes or topics that would be of particular interest, please let her know.