

Provost's Advisory Council
Summary of March 27, 2014 meeting

James Bretzke, S.J., Chair	Don Hafner	Cy Opiel, S.J.
Tony Annunziato	You (Joseph) Jiang, S.J.	Devin Pendas
James Burns, I.V.D.	Maureen Kenny	Joe Quinn
Daniel Chambers	Narintohn Luangrath	Min Song
Pat DeLeeuw	Susan Michalczyk	Anita Tien
Can Erbil	Katie O'Dair	Judith Tracy
Samuel Graves	Laura O'Dwyer	Tom Wall
Kate Gregory	Theresa O'Keefe	Linnie Green Wright

1. The summary for the February 27, 2014 meeting was approved. The summary will be sent to the President's Office. All summaries are posted on the Provost's Office website; members are encouraged to share the summary with colleagues.
2. Provost's Report
 - Joe Quinn reported that the Trustees recently met in Florida for a 2-day retreat (as part of its schedule of quarterly meetings). In anticipation of the next strategic plan, the administration reviewed progress during the current strategic plan - what we accomplished and what remains to be done.
 - Undergraduate applications were down about 5 percent compared to last year, and approximately 20,000 letters offering or declining admission were mailed last Friday. (Early action decisions had been communicated in December.) About 34% of applicants were admitted, according to John Mahoney.
 - Planning for the Center for Teaching Excellence, to be located in O'Neill Library, continues. Pat DeLeeuw shared that construction for the Center will begin in mid-May and is slated to finish by September. A search for an Executive Director is under way.
 - As has been reported in various media outlets, Boston College has reached an understanding with parents of students in the Campus School. Parents will be submitting a strategic plan to address declining enrollments and achieve financial stability, so that the school may continue at its current location. An earlier proposal to affiliate with Kennedy Day School at Franciscan Hospital was not adopted.
3. Susan Michalczyk presented a proposal for a standing faculty committee for the Faculty Handbook, which would report to the Provost and not be a part of the Provost's Advisory Council.
 - Pat DeLeeuw reminded the Council that what is referred to as the Faculty Handbook is actually a webpage on the Provost's Office site, with links to policies and procedures in the University Statutes pertaining to faculty, as well as other policies and procedures established by the Provost's Office.
 - Some have referred to the Faculty Handbook as a "contract." It was clarified that offer letters to faculty include references to the Boston College Employee Handbook, and that faculty contracts refer to the University Statutes. Privileges described in the Faculty

Handbook, such as use of institutional email for retired faculty, are University policies subject to change over time and are not part of faculty contracts.

- A member of the Provost's Advisory Council reported that he had received many messages from colleagues, one of whom had written that a faculty committee would enhance faculty engagement, promote perceptions of fairness, and aid in communication to faculty.
- Another Council member asked about the authority of the proposed committee. It was explained that this committee would provide another avenue for faculty discussions of policy and proposals for changes in policy.
- One member of the Council raised questions about additional administrative structures and whether a standing faculty committee is necessary. It was suggested that a physical handbook (as opposed to one that is web-based) would be helpful.

The discussion will be continued at the next meeting of the Provost's Advisory Council.

4. Paul Chebator, Dean of Students, and Richard DeCapua, Associate Dean of Student Conduct, joined Council to discuss the student conduct system at the University.
 - They noted that infractions of student conduct generally occur on two planes--minor infractions which may recur periodically, and more serious violations (such as sexual violence). It was noted that in cases of the former, there are well-defined processes and policies that appear to function well. Serious violations require significant attention and coordination, and efforts are focused on students who commit such violations.
 - For example, since alcohol consumption and sexual assault are often linked, programs to educate students about the effects of alcohol have been initiated. It was stated that the consumption of alcohol undermines student civility on campus and endangers students.
 - A question was asked about parental involvement, and what the legal limits are for parental involvement. It was observed that parental involvement has shifted generally from supporting University processes, to a tendency to challenge University policies and even invoke litigation.
 - It was noted that the legal age of drinking is 21, and a question was asked about why students engaged in under-age drinking are not consistently confronted on legal grounds. The response was that the University does not ignore the law, but has chosen to approach students less confrontationally and engage them in conversations about their behavior and its implications.
 - It was reported that students are fearful of being brought up for student conduct issues, and so do not want to seek help when they are intoxicated. There is a "help-seeker" policy so that students who approach campus staff for medical assistance when they or their friends are intoxicated will not be penalized; intoxication is treated foremost as a health issue and not a student conduct violation.