

Provost Advisory Council
Summary of February 26, 2009 meeting

Bert Garza	Kay Lemon	Tony Annunziato
Pat Byrne	Ferna Phillips	Angela Amar for
Meghan Cawley	Don Hafner	Rosanna DeMarco
Cole Boskey	Susan Gennaro	Jim Morken (for Paul
Lillie Albert	Paul Lewis	Davidovits)
Prasanan Parthasarathi	John Spinard	Monique Lowd
(for Robin Fleming)	Dick Cobb-Stevens	Callista Roy
David Quigley	Jim Russell	Anita Tien
Hassan Tehranian	Ana Martinez Aleman	Kevin Bedell

1. The summary of the December 4, 2008 meeting was approved and will be forwarded to the President's Office.
2. It was agreed that the PAC will continue to meet at its current time.
3. Groups across the University are discussing ways to increase the academic profile and content at various annual gatherings. Recent changes in Commencement reflect these goals; the University Secretary continues to explore additional possibilities. In addition, the University Teaching Council has been asked for a proposal for the presentation of the teaching awards (e.g., one possibility is at Commencement) and the University Research Council is preparing a proposal for the research awards. This spring it has been proposed that the Faculty Forum will serve as a variant of Faculty Day. The President will attend and speak to the faculty.
 - It was suggested that the most successful faculty event is the fall University Convocation, and that the research award might be presented at that time.
 - Possible topics for the upcoming Faculty Forum include:
 - Course evaluations.
 - Academic freedom and dissenting/minority views. Some expressed interest in reviewing recent conversations about religious iconography at the Forum. Others felt that exploring this might be worthwhile, but not necessarily at the Forum. A suggestion was made that T. Frank Kennedy might speak to the Forum about the background and the work of the Committee on Religious Art. It was also observed that recent conversations on campus about religious iconography in the classrooms would be enhanced by the provision of information about the meaning of the icons. A number of Council members commented that communication between the administration and faculty did not function well in the matter of installing religious art in the classrooms.
 - The University decision-making process: its execution, and perceptions of how it is executed. It was further suggested that a conversation about steps that might be taken to communicate sensitive decisions throughout

- It was agreed that it would be preferable for the Forum to take the form of a mutual dialogue between the administration and the faculty, rather than a series of presentations.
- A suggestion was made that discussion topics be publicized two weeks prior to the Forum.

Next steps:

1. It was agreed that University decision-making and communication will be topics for the upcoming Forum.
 2. It was agreed that discussion topics will be publicized two weeks prior to the Forum.
4. Bert Garza introduced Jennie Purnell, Director of the recently-established Center for Student Formation. He outlined the general structure of the Center: a Director from the ranks of the faculty, with two Associate Directors, one from Student Affairs, and one from University Mission and Ministry. Professor Purnell then outlined the background and goals of the Center.
- The Strategic Plan includes student formation as a critical element; the Center was envisioned as an entity that would span and bring together intellectual, spiritual, and social formation activities at the University.
 - Student formation may be linked to how students learn, intellectually, morally, and spiritually.
 - BC currently provides many well-conceived opportunities for spiritual reflection, such as PULSE, For Boston, international immersion trips, service programs, leadership development programs, etc.
 - It was noted that students do not always get support or direction in how to integrate these experiences, and that undergraduates participate at different rates. Male students do not generally participate as much as female students, and AHANA students do not generally participate to the same degree as non-AHANA students.
 - The Center aims to develop a more intentional, integrated model of student formation by fostering discussion and collaboration between people who work on "student development" (faculty, Mission and Ministry, Student Affairs, and student leaders).
 - Possible initiatives include junior study grants, seminars based on the Intersections model, and one-credit senior seminars. It was noted that the preference is to build on existing successful programs and relationships.
 - Suggestions were made about other potential initiatives of the Center. It was suggested that the Center might take what students have written in the classroom--an academic experience--and extend it into a service program.
5. Bert Garza provided an update about University budget planning. The University remains committed to continued implementation of the Strategic Plan, need-blind admissions and meeting full demonstrated need, and retaining current employees. It

The 2009-10 proposed budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees on March 6. Shortly thereafter, the President will communicate to the University Community about any measures that will be adopted; a letter from the Provost (which will address matters of specific interest to faculty) will follow.

While approved faculty searches will not be withdrawn, the informal or "soft freeze" on non-faculty positions will likely continue (approximately 15% of non-faculty position requests have been approved to date). In addition the current practice of supplemental payments to faculty will be reviewed, and it is likely that there will be a salary freeze for employees earning more than a yet-to-be-determined amount.

It was agreed that at the next Provost Advisory Council meeting, the Bookstore and the impact of the Higher Education Opportunity Act will be discussed.