

Provost Advisory Council
Summary of September 24, 2009 meeting

Bert Garza	Hassan Tehranian	David Quigley
Pat Byrne	Katie O'Dair	Jenny Baglivo
Pat DeLeeuw	Ana Martinez Aleman	Anthony Annunziato
Gilda Morelli	Brian Jacek	Ce Shen
Don Hafner	Anna Rhodes	Callista Roy
Lillie Albert	Susan Gennaro	Colleen Griffith
Francine Cardman	Amy Hutton	Paul Lewis
Rosanna DeMarco	Tom Wall	Elyse Purcell
John Spinard	Dick Clifford	Anita Tien

1. The Council discussed the summary of the meeting of April 30, 2009 as well as the larger issue of whether Council meetings should continue to be documented in summary format, or in the form of minutes attributing discussion points to specific named members of the group.

It was agreed that Council meetings will continue to be documented in summary format, and that members of the Council will be responsible for ensuring that each meeting's summary articulates fully the issues discussed.

It was agreed that the summary of the April meeting would be approved with the following amendments:

#2, after the sentence ending "... student-initiated events was discussed": Insert:

This discussion was occasioned by the cancellation of a speaker event, in which the Provost's Office was not consulted, and the discussion concerned the process by which such things should be done in the future.

#2, prior to the penultimate bullet point beginning "It was suggested that the adoption of any guidelines...": Insert a bullet point reading:

- *Significant concern was raised by some members of Council about free speech and academic freedom at the University, and the public perception of the University.*

2. Faculty members of Council requested that in a future meeting, bookstore practices and management be discussed. Significant concern was expressed from various parts of the University that bookstore practices are affecting the quality of teaching and learning. Rita Owens, Executive Director of Academic Technology, and a representative of the bookstore will be invited to attend.
3. Don Hafner, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, reviewed guidelines for academic continuity (e.g. in the event of widespread influenza). These guidelines were formulated by the Provost's Office with input across the University, including review and feedback from the Deans, the Associate Deans, Student Affairs, and the President, among others. Subsequent to the distribution of the Guidelines, questions had been raised about

- Members of Council raised a question about the recommendation that a fellow student be asked to accompany an ill student to Health Services. It was agreed that students should not be compelled to accompany fellow students who are ill in class. It was further noted that a faculty member may contact Health Services to request assistance in escorting a student from class.
- It was suggested that the guidelines might include more concrete information about faculty expectations for ill students.
- It was reported that not all faculty have been communicating their expectations clearly to students in their classes or course syllabi. Students have been receiving information about procedures and prevention from Health Services, but have not received guidance and/or direction from faculty about keeping up in classes, not being penalized for absence due to illness, procedures for assignments and tests, etc. in the event of illness.
- It was suggested that separate guidelines for students may be helpful, for both undergraduate students and graduate/professional students. In the case of graduate and professional students, communication about their dual responsibilities as students and instructors would be helpful.

Next steps:

1. Gilda Morelli, Vice Provost for Graduate Education, will work with graduate students to develop guidelines and communication for graduate/professional students.
4. Questions and concerns were raised about the interval between freshman students moving into the residence halls and the beginning of classes, and the apparent lack of academic content during that time. It was agreed that this discussion will take place at a future meeting of the Council.
5. Bert Garza reminded members of Council about the upcoming Faculty Forum, on Wednesday, October 28, at 4pm in Fulton 511.

A brief discussion ensued about activities surrounding the freshman book, including its selection, its focus, how it is presented and reviewed during the first week, whether the book's author is invited to campus during Convocation, how the book is employed during the first semester and/or first year, and whether it is discussed in classes.

- Various examples of modified approaches to the selection of the “freshman book” were described briefly. Such approaches might feature the involvement of selected groups (e.g. Presidential Scholars) in developing appropriate and creative programming.
- Other possibilities include the selection of a theme (with several books being presented as options).
- Members of Council stated that it would be desirable to involve faculty in

This discussion will be continued at future meeting of Council. Council members are invited to share ideas with Don Hafner.