

Deans' Council Minutes
Wednesday, November 4, 2020
2:00 pm–4:00 pm
Virtual Meeting Space

Attending: Ravi Krovi, Brad Mortensen, Adrienne Andrews, Eric Amsel, Bruce Bowen, Andrea Easter-Pilcher, Bret Ellis, David Ferro, Kristin Hadley, Timothy Herzog, Wendy Holliday, Brenda Kowalewski, Betsy Mennell, Matthew Mouritsen, Brett Perozzi, Julie Rich, Yas Simonian, Julie Snowball, Amanda Sowerby, Brian Stecklein, James Taylor, Yimin Wang

Guests: Leah Murray

Excused: Ben Ferney, Norm Tarbox

1. Approval of October 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes

- a. The minutes were approved as written.

2. Provost Updates

- a. **General Updates:** Ravi expressed thanks for all involved in this weeks' Faculty Awards and further recognized years of service awardees. Tim suggested that an event celebrating rank & tenure be considered. Ravi also congratulated EAST on the recent ABET visit, discussed the What is an Educated Person Conference, and discussed other recent events and accomplishments. He also discussed the recent VSIP outcomes and reminded Deans' Council of the Diversity Boost program. Adrienne spoke about the current and future status of training opportunities available during the hiring process.
- b. **President's Council Updates:** Ravi spoke about President's Council's discussion about other universities' decisions to pivot to online class delivery after the Thanksgiving holiday. Ravi encouraged deans to offer flexibility to faculty with their course delivery options, and Brad expressed that this decision should not affect staff members as they have been encouraged to work remotely if possible.
- c. **Commencement:** Brad spoke about discussions about how to best handle a fall commencement. Deans' Council expressed support for waiting for a spring event.
- d. **Changes to the CSBS Tenure Guidelines:** Deans' Council discussed pending changes to the CSBS Tenure Guidelines to align them with recently updated autobiographical form. Julie has distributed information to the deans about how to facilitate these changes, as supported by one of APAFT's charges for this academic year.
- e. **Credit/No Credit Policy:** Ravi spoke about a discussion planned for this week's Faculty Senate meeting about sunsetting the Credit/No Credit policy developed in Spring 2020. Deans' Council was supportive of sunsetting the policy.
- f. **Course Delivery Methods:** Ravi suggested that deans continue to encourage faculty needing Canvas support to seek training. Brenda & Brian stated that the trainings developed during Summer 2020 are still available, along with some stipends.

g. Designated Eating Areas: The group discussed the possibility of identifying space in Tracy Hall as an eating area. This would provide a socially distanced place for students to remove their masks while eating.

h. Certification of Compliance Request: Ravi will invite Stephanie Hollist to attend the next WALT meeting to answer questions about this request.

3. Academic Agenda/Policy Discussions

a. Faculty Merit (Leah Murray & Ravi Krovi)

i. Leah spoke about results from faculty surveys addressing merit pay. The survey results express faculty members' desires for a standardized, but decentralized, merit process that includes opportunities for feedback. SBBFP proposes to draft a merit process for Deans' Council review that they hope will be in place for this year's budget planning cycle. The group discussed the effect of support for the process in relation to the amount of merit funding available, and how to ensure that the process will not be disproportionately laborious for faculty or chairs. Deans will share their process and annual report forms with Leah, who will then share them with SBBFP.

b. COVID-19 Considerations for Tenure (Julie Rich & Tim Herzog)

i. Julie spoke about faculty expressing concerns about challenges collecting research data, especially in person, during the COVID-19 pandemic. She described the domino effect this causes for publications and on the rank and tenure process. The group also discussed the exponential effect on female faculty, faculty of color, or with other marginalized identities who are dealing with additional complexities due to COVID and social issues. Adrienne encouraged Deans' Council to clearly articulate and proactively communicate any options that are developed to faculty in a way that reinforces that they are not punitive actions. Deans' Council resolved that extensions should be addressed on a case-by-case basis, that any extension requests may come in a way that empowers faculty, and that delayed compensation should be addressed. Julie will work on an initial draft of a communication, and Ravi will look into delayed compensation options.

4. Academic Support Discussions

a. Value Propositioning (Bruce Bowen)

i. Bruce reminded deans of ongoing efforts to document the value of a WSU education. Enrollment Services has a database of this information that is available for use by marketing directors across campus, in publications, and by recruiters. He asked Deans' Council to add any noteworthy information to the database and will send a sharable link to the submission form with deans. Bruce asked the deans to share the link with their department chairs in hopes of having an initial update completed before the end of the semester.

b. Continuity of Operations Plans (Eric Amsel)

i. Eric spoke about the status of the Continuity of Operations Plans and about the value of the associated conversations. He shared that the documents are ready, but expressed a desire to be sensitive of timing. Eric

asked that the deans notify the Provost's Office when they are ready for the forms and access information to be shared with department chairs.

c. Course Scheduling/Textbook Ordering Deadlines (Brian Stecklein & Bruce Bowen)

- i. Brian explained that the course scheduling deadlines and textbook ordering deadlines are not aligned. He and Bruce, with the support of Deans' Council, will work with the Registrar's Office and with the Bookstore to better correlate these deadlines.

d. Development Office Funding (Betsy Mennell)

- i. Betsy spoke about development office funding structures at WSU and at other institutions. She proposed that the Development Office "tax" the university endowment spending at 5 basis points to support development efforts and staffing. She explained that there are approximately 2 years of endowment disbursements that are not yet spent. Deans' Council requested that an analysis of the current spending be conducted before any decisions are made.

e. Environmental Scan Findings of the Weber State Internationalization Strategic Planning Process (Yimin Wang)

- i. This item was tabled until next meeting.