

Faculty Council

4-21-2020

In attendance: Andrea Caloiaro, Stephanie Bogart, Nina Caputo, Christina Davis, Megan Forbes, Alessandro Forte, Aida Hozic, Nancy Hunt, Valeria Kleiman, Ellen Martin, Martin Sorbille, Dave Richardson

Guests: Andrew Wolpert (Quest) and Ronald Anderson (Office of the Ombuds)

Meeting Chaired by Andrea Caloiaro

Called to order at 1:00

1. Approval of Feb. minutes (via zoom poll)-

2. Quest updates

- Quest website has COVID-19 updates page and a new Landing page for new students to guide them through registering for Quest courses.
- Quest 1 started spring 2019 and will be fully implemented Summer B 2020.
- Quest 2 will become a requirement in July 2021. Class of 2025 will not be required to complete Quest 2 until 2nd yr. Implementation has been more challenging since there was no previous required course equivalent the “Good Life.”
- Quest 2 enrollments have been low because it is not yet required; doesn’t fulfill major requirement, and students instead opt for other Gen Ed courses to fill requirements. Fall ’20 enrollments are looking higher than Spring ’20.
- Presented spreadsheet of Quest 1/2 development. Quest 1 scaled up as Good Life scaled down on enrollment caps. Average enrollment is 67 seats, range is 35-132. Larger lecture courses have smaller breakout sessions.
- Quest 2- on track. 50 courses have been approved. Class sizes currently only around 15. Expected to increase once it is required.
- All Quest courses have to be available for UFO. So all will have an online component. A hybrid model is also an option.
- Want online versions to be appropriate to the online learning environment, not just a Zoom version of the classroom course.
- Request from Council for the Quest Experiential Learning Task Force to reach out more. Virtual experiential learning is challenging.
- Request from Council to roll out Quest 2 courses as they are developed and perhaps move up the requirement date if enough course options are available. Response: Can’t make Quest 2 mandatory immediately, but the rollout will be summer 2021. Now is a good time to be flexible and work with the faculty to develop these courses while there isn’t a lot of pressure right now. Approval process has evolved and improved.

- These courses are changing the way the faculty are thinking about teaching. This is having a ripple effect. They are seeing Q1 students excited about taking Q2 courses.
- Students can register for Quest 1 courses during Preview through a survey form that is emailed to them. On the survey, they select six courses of interest. Students will be assigned either summer, fall, or spring to complete Q1. They are given a listing of course options divided in large, medium and small (<35) enrollments. They can pick 3 from large courses, 3 from medium, and 1 from small. Assignments are made based on those selections, and enrollment can be completed before Preview starts.

3. **Office of the Ombuds' services for graduate students, Ronald Anderson**

- Located in Academic Affairs Office - Student Affairs. Responsible for conflict management.
- What is unique about his office is the high level of confidentiality with the exception of incidences that involve harassment or violations of state laws.
- The ombud's role is to be a neutral, independent 3rd party to ensure fair, equitable treatment.
- Requests for services are going up exponentially this semester.
- Tries to work through impasses without involving the General Counsel's Office or courts.
- Works with students, faculty and staff.
- Graduate students are often dealing with advisor/mentor issues. These often come up early, within the student's first 1.5 years. Students looking for advice and confirming whether their experience is beyond normal. Ombud's services can set up a facilitator dialogue or discuss feasibility of switching advisors.
- Coordinates with the disability center. Graduate accommodations can be different from undergraduate accommodations.
- Grievances are mostly about grades and they tend to hear issues that were not resolved at a lower level.
- The office is made up of him and an assistant.
- Common technique is to ask the students what the possible solutions are. Sometimes the talk themselves into a solution. Pointed out that it is easy to sit and agree with people; it is harder to give them the objective information they need to hear.
- Based on numbers he sees (600 cases per year), students seem to be aware of the office. Referrals often come from department chairs. The Colleges are the ultimate arbiters.

4. **Continuing Conversations- Mentoring new faculty- Christina Davis**

- Next "Town Hall" style meetings are April 27 (lab science faculty) and 28 (all others)

- This will be a Town Hall where new faculty can ask questions, especially about the new teaching model.
- Dean Richardson will be there to answer questions.
- New faculty will likely make clear what their concerns are in terms of teaching, mentoring and research. Could lead to topics for discussions at future meetings.
- One topic might be Best practices for teaching online.
- Richardson added there are a lot of questions that cannot be answered now. Decisions about whether fall will be online will be made in early July. Another big question is the state budget - we will be dealing with cuts in the year ahead.
- Repopulating research labs is likely to occur before in person classes resume.
- One topic that has been discussed is whether faculty should be allowed to opt out from using student evaluations for this semester. Alternatives include distinguishing Spring '20 in some way to indicate the unique circumstances of this semester.
- There was a question about whether the Council's input on teaching evaluations had been implemented. Unfortunately, it appears that what went out this semester did not include the recommendations. Perhaps these will be implemented next year? We will all review our GatorEvals when released in early May. If changes are not seen to the survey, Andréa will reach out to Chris Jordi and Chris Haas.

5. **Scheduling last meeting this semester-** will send poll for May 4-15.

Meeting adjourned- 2:30