

AFC Meeting of April 27, 2015

Held in room 104 CH

Discussion of Arts Integrated Strategic Academic Plan

PRESENT: K. Bessant; D. Brown; K. DeForest; R. Gasse; S. Grills; S. Gouthro; R. Hinthier; R. Kramer; D. Lakevold; L. MacKay; R. Major; M. Malazdrewicz; C. Mason; S. Medd; J. Naylor; S. Petrella; M. Pollex; D. Ramsey; S. Robinson; M. Serfaty; E. Varley; H. Zhuang; K. Lemky (Geog.); D. Tryphonopoulos (Chair), L. Murray (recorder).

REGRETS: J. Allan; P. Harms; L. Robson; S. Grills (Student Services).

Dr. Tryphonopoulos welcomed Dr. Scott Grills, Chair of the Arts Review and Planning. AR&P believed this document is what they were asked to do though Dr. Tryphonopoulos thought it may be a starting document where a further report would come from and that this could be posted on our website. Prof. Medd suggested that a smaller more accessible document be placed on the web, perhaps only the overview from the committee. Grills noted that the summary does however assume that the executive summary is with the other document.

There was discussion about wordsmithing the document to reflect an emphasis on Graduate Studies as well as noting both global and local issues. Dr. Grills reported that it was striking how many areas spoke of the challenges of first year, but we don't agree on the solution. The Liberal Education requirement is another issue that some dealt with and some didn't as well as learning outcomes, skills development, etc. for our graduates and whether our current Liberal Arts requirements were working.

Dr. Tryphonopoulos noted that the document is a roadmap not prescriptive – a place to start. Dr. Naylor suggested we work on establishing some timelines for first year and Liberal Education requirements. Perhaps also graduate studies. Dr. Tryphonopoulos hopes that each one of us will take up some of these causes. He has, in our budget submission, asked for a position in University Writing as a coordinator and liaison with Student Services, etc. Naylor felt that even such a suggestion is something that should be discussed more largely as part of the plan rather than people pursuing individual goals.

Dr. Robinson suggested the inclusion of environmental issues. Dr. Grills also noted that the group tried not to introduce new ideas and only worked with what was submitted. Arts' connections with the other BAs (Music and Science) were not included. Dr. Tryphonopoulos asked the committee to consider language to address this point.

Dr. MacKay point out there is talk about content but not about alternative delivery methods. Dr. Grills stated there was some content about accessibility for place-bound learners and that a priority for one department is that a degree can be completed through CMB. There was discussion about not knowing what others do. Dr. MacKay pointed out that a colleague was recently surprised to know that Shari Maguire in the Faculty Office has publisher on her computer and can be quite helpful with layout, etc. We don't know what is possible.

Dr. Robinson suggested identifying the highest priorities, if there is consensus, and beginning work soon. We, as a group, need to support each other in these changes and provide a sustained effort. Several members discussed having a faculty retreat in early September.

Dr. Bessant asked what the long term impact of this document is. Dr. Robinson replied that his impression is that it will be totally transformative: in five years, higher number of students, sense of stability in our programs, better distribution of funding, etc. Dr. Tryphonopoulos noted that this will guide the deans in their budget submissions. Dr. Tryphonopoulos noted that his heart sinks when he sees classes with an enrolment of two. When we have many of these in a department and ask for more money, it becomes difficult to defend that type of resource allocation. Dr. Robinson encouraged members to plan this summer with your department and not wait until the retreat. Dr. Serfaty encouraged departments to cooperate a bit more formally and consistently; to not work as silos or individual departments but to think of the Faculty.

Discussion continued about cooperation between departments, how the undergraduate degree is really our bread and butter, how we know our students and can provide options for them. Dr. Brown appreciated the tone of collaboration but felt that thoughts of cuts to low enrolment courses would start a defensive response. Dr. Ramsey expressed concern that we can't even recruit from our own high schools. That BU's media presence is poor. Others noted our areas of strength and felt that the administration needs to market BU to prospective students and the public generally. Frustration was again expressed that our own stories are not getting distributed campus wide nor to the public. Recruitment ideas included: sandwich boards on 18th street; inviting students and parents to BU for mini lectures, offering them free rooms in Residence, doing something with the prime real estate on the corner of 18th and Victoria, complete article that the Brandon Sun could pick up, calling every student who applied to BU but isn't coming as Dr. Grills did years ago. These items need to be discussed at a retreat.

MOTION: (Grills/Naylor): THAT Arts Faculty Council approve the Integrated Strategic Academic Plan Faculty of Arts 2015-2020, with revisions to the introduction and inclusion of environment issues, and THAT the plan be forwarded to Senate for information.

CARRIED.

Thanks were expressed to the members of the Arts Review and Planning Committee. [Applause.]

Meeting adjourned.