

Minutes of the meeting of the Arts Faculty Council
Held February 4, 2020 in room 104 CH

PRESENT: S. Asselin; R. Baker; K. Bessant; C. Boult; M. Bower; K. DeForest; R. Dwivedula; R. Elliott; R. Gasse; S. Grills; P. Harms; E. Holland; L. MacKay; M. Malainey; A. McCulloch; J. Naylor; K. Noll; S. Petrella; D. Ramsey; W. Robles; B. Rose; K. Saunders; D. Smid; K. Spice; M. Torabi; D. Wilson; D. Winter; L. Wood; S. Grills (Student Services); L. Robson (Chair); L. Murray (recorder).

REGRETS: J. Allan; J. Dolecki; V. Maud; S. Medd.

ON LEAVE: D. Combet; A. Hanemaayer; R. Hinther; R. Kramer; D. Lakevold; C. Mason; A. Marshall; D. Racine; E. Varley

ABSENT: A. Abdou; B. Ashton; J. Forsythe; H. Gillander; D. Klonowski; R. Kramer; M. Malazdrewicz; A. Marshall; C. Mattes; L. Mayer; K. McKenzie; E. Mihelakis; L. Robson; C. Schneider; B. Strang; D. Taylor; K. Wong; L. Xu; F. Zehtab-Jadid; H. Zhuang.

Dr. Robson called the meeting to order and introduced Mr. Curt Shoultz, Director of the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT). Mr. Shoultz spoke about how the new C.A. states in Article 11.2 that faculties need to work with the CTLC to devise an instrument to solicit student evaluation. He noted that doing these evaluations in class achieves a higher percentage of completions. He reviewed types of assessment, what the literature says works, and how to get useful feedback. He also spoke about modelling feedback in different manners by soliciting feedback throughout the course. Online evaluations also result in quicker feedback and removes the need to have all comments re-typed by support staff. If students don't have their own devices (eg. cell phone, laptop) a device can be handed to them for the exercise. He does not recommend changing the tool itself at the same time as we are moving to online feedback. Students live on-line, the method is time saving, and no difference has been shown in the results. He further suggested evaluations happen at the beginning of class to increase completion rates. All new ERPs that are being considered by the University work with Moodle. Curt will be running an online pilot through Moodle and is asking for a few instructors to volunteer for the project. If interested, please contact him directly.

Mr. Shoultz also discussed the Teaching Quality Framework reference document to support all facets of teaching and learning at BU. The document is being developed to engage and support students, to orient new faculty, to aide in course design and serve as awards criteria among other things. The starting point for this short document is the 9 criteria noted for our Teaching Awards. Mr. Shoultz is asking for instructors who would be willing to review and comment on this document to reach out to him.

Questions arose about the length of time students might have to respond. Mr. Shoultz noted that the pilot project would help define such things.

1.0 Approval of the Agenda

MOTION: (Petrella/Naylor) -- THAT the Agenda be approved with the addition of an item under New Business: 4.2 Motion to support the Department of Classical and Modern Languages.

CARRIED.

2.0 Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: (McCulloch/Gasse) - THAT the Minutes of the AFC meeting held on December 2, 2019, be approved with the corrections noted by Dr. Robles.

CARRIED.

3.0 Chairs Report

The Dean welcomed Dr. Rachel Elliott who has been hired to a 2.5 year term in Philosophy, and Dr. Kevin Spice, hired on a one-year term in Native Studies. She also congratulated Dr. Ravi Dwivedula who has been hired to the Tenure Track position in Human Resources within Business Administration. Arts currently has two active searches in Business Administration, one in Strategic Management and one in Accounting. We are also seeking to fill term positions in English, Political Science and Business Administration (Marketing).

The Dean has asked Department Chairs and Program Coordinators to review their budget and to work towards spending what's remaining by the March 31st year end. She has also reminded Chairs to do teaching evaluations of all sessionals in their area.

Proctoring of Exams – Lisa Murray will no longer be proctoring make up exams. This is BUFA work so please find a colleague or work with us to find a room where students can write unsupervised.

The Strategic Research Plan will be coming to Senate soon.

The next AFC is March 3rd. The package for this meeting will be delayed a day and will go out on the Wednesday rather than Tuesday of that week. At this meeting, the Status of Women Review Committee will present on their recent report.

Enrolment data – overall enrolment is down 1.8% for BU and overall credit hours are down 1.2% from this time last year. Arts is down 1.6% in credit hours from last year. The big difference is that first year students are down 15% in Arts but only 10% campus-wide.

Staffing plan: At the last AFC meeting, members requested rationale for staffing decisions. Dr. Robinson has agreed to provide this but didn't have it for today's meeting. Dr. Robson spoke to the other Deans and the only area that suggested there was some frustration with decisions was Health Studies. They had asked for 8 positions and only received 4. The very rough details are that there are 14 non academic units. Together, they received 13 positions, and 2 ½ term positions. They also had 18 positions denied and 2 sabbatical replacements denied. There are five academic units. Combined, these units received 15 positions, and 8.5 term positions. They were denied 15 positions and 4 sabbatical replacements. In all cases the denied positions were growth/new positions.

At the Chairs meeting on Friday, the Dean asked the Chairs to discuss with their departments the issue of amalgamating or reconfiguring departments. This is a long discussion and we may schedule a Special AFC meeting to discuss this matter.

Dr. Robles asked for the changes in International enrolment. It is up 3.3% overall – mostly music and HS. Grad students are down 17.3% and undergrad up 9.2%. Wilder would like to discuss in future meetings the very high increase in fees for international students. They are certainly affecting Rural Development.

4.1 Course and Calendar Changes

MOTION: (Petrella/Malainey) -- THAT 12:3XX Forensic Anthropology Field School be approved.

Dr. Holland introduced the course and noted that law enforcement and community members are very interested in this type of training. Typos will be corrected.

Dr. Gasse inquired about transportation for this off-campus course. Dr. Holland replied that she is working with the V-P's office regarding this and insurance issues, etc. Dr. Malainey noted that a Bio Safety application will be needed.

CARRIED.

4.2 Motion to Support the Department of Classical and Modern Languages

MOTION: (Ramsey/Winter) – THAT Members of the Faculty of Arts support the Department of Classical and Modern Languages in obtaining the third position left vacant by the resignation of Dr. Claudia Bouliane.

Members discussed how changes in recent years in Languages have negatively affected the Languages program. Discussion included the importance of a strong language program at university. Others were concerned that 3-person departments were being threatened with amalgamation.

Dr. Robson noted that she is not driven by budget decisions in this matter. She's more concerned with addressing the fact that Arts has seven, three-person departments with very low enrolment.

Functionality, pedagogy, and equity are her concerns. Some members in Arts carry 270 students per year, while others have only 35. Chair loads are also quite inequitable. She believes Arts needs to acknowledge this and begin to discuss these types of issues as part of a full discussion about degrees, structure, etc. Some members shared concerns about trusting administration and the tenuous situation this might put three-person departments in. Members also discussed our current 'silo' structure and the challenges small departments face when a member is ill or on leave, and how they have to rely on degree waivers to get their students through their program. Amalgamation is only one possible solution to some very real problems. Dr. Robson mentioned that at the Chairs meeting it was expressed that there is no plan or good reasons to go down this path. She feels Arts should have a plan to function more strongly.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

5.1 Arts Grading Scale

The issue of grading scales was recently brought up at CAP. Should we create a consistent grading scale for the Faculty of Arts? Drs. Smid and Saunders spoke to the importance of such consistency.

MOTION: (Smid/Petrella) – THAT the matter of an Arts grading scale be referred to Arts Review and Planning with a response back to AFC by the next meeting.

CARRIED.

Members were requested to forward their grade scale to Dr. Strang, Chair of Review and Planning.

6.0 Other Business

Dr. Naylor informed members that there will be a senior colloquium this year and that a call for papers will go out at a later date. Please encourage your upper-level students to present their work.

Dr. Winter questioned whether there was an interest in revisiting the slot system? Drs. MacKay and Holland reminded members that Arts did work on this a few years ago. However, the Science Faculty didn't like our proposal so the issue died. Dr. Holland noted that she still has the data and will share it with Arts Review and Planning.

7.0 Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.