January 29th, 2016

Department Meeting

ML 410, 2p.m.

Attendance:


Welcome: Lee welcomed Dean JP Jones and Francisco Pedroza

Reports:

Update on RCM from JP and Francisco; English Faculty Open Discussion

JP: JP stated that department growth is good, the department of English has an advantage with the Writing Program (among others). He said that the University is always focusing on retention at the levels of central administration and student affairs. JP asked what do we have to pay, what resources are available? And he answered that faculty salaries, faculty ERE and temporary teaching budget space is now a cost item to the institution and to the college. He mentioned that we can sum up these numbers and come up with a number for which unit is in the black or in the red. He elaborated that we expect some units to operate in the red, but we are not going under because we have tenure track faculty, as well as units that are in the black: this is a good thing. JP confirmed that the number one generator of surplus in SBS is the School of Government and Public Policy.

JP: JP acknowledged that one thing faculty ask about in RCM discussions is whether everything is driven by RCM since the department will invest/disinvest wholly on the basis of RCM. JP noted that the answer to this is no, because there are lots of things that go into the decision to allocate hires. JP elaborated that one item for this is investing in RCM and that we do this in units where efficiencies are high, and surpluses are high as well. JP notes that we also invest in areas that are in the red but if we invest in a good teacher in this particular unit, the unit has plans for new faculty members to be attracted to students so we can generate new activities.

JP: JP emphasized that hiring plans are based on particular needs within the unit, and sometimes we have to hire outside for new leaders. He mentioned special opportunities like cluster hires or investments that a particular college is making in terms of strategic priorities. He said that a strategic hire in the area of food studies is attractive to students and they will most likely sign up, as an example.

There was discussion about a concerted effort to match a million dollar gift with state funds when we increase professorships and chairs in the college. JP noted that when there is a negative tenure decision on part of the Department or Head, we never want those decisions to
be tainted by considerations about reinvestment. He continued that it is important that those decisions are made completely outside of the question about whether we will reinvest. He emphasized that we will reinvest if you decide as a faculty not to move another person, and brought up Title 6 commitments.

There was a discussion about potential issues: JP asked how do we rebuild a budget that enables us to make better compensation to our faculty. He noted that about every unit in SBS is under the AAU equivalent department for comparable institutions. He said that the percentage runs from the low 80s into the mid-90s for some places when there’s more compensation. JP mentioned that one of the things we do at the College level is we have been investing in equity to try to redress those deviations from the AAU internally to the College. He stated that if a department is in general at the low end of the AAU percentage and another department is higher, we are directing money to the low end. He compared this to Robin Hood at the College level.

There was discussion about JP’s time as department Head: he mentioned raises, and that Heads would get raises that the department would have, then distribute. He emphasized the process for an individual-level analysis for every faculty member in the College. JP noted the control for rank, the discipline average, and the inclusion of variables about gender and ethnicity. He said that the first thing to look for is systematic bias in terms of gender and ethnicity. After this, JP stated that we should find out all the people who are over/under as predicted by the simple regression model. He elaborated that we then add all those people who are underpaid from an inequity standpoint, and take some of that money to distribute, then distribute to the Head of the department with a list of all the people. He noted that at the College level, we set aside money so that the deviations over time are going to be redressed.

JP: He emphasized that we have only one source of money to do this, and it is RCM. He noted that if there was money available for raises, the question is how to distribute it. There has to be money set aside to funnel through RCM and you can do this as a single number to every staff/faculty member, as this redresses inequalities. JP mentioned how he hopes that the University finds a way to do this across the board.

JP noted that SBS is trying to help departments in recruitment and marketing to all majors in the College, trying to lift everyone at the same time. He emphasized that a faculty member should not look at this matrix of numbers and think how can we poach from another department because this is a zero-sum game. JP mentioned that we think about these things with all the Heads and it is not meant to scare faculty, but important for everyone to understand what RCM is about.

There was discussion about whether or not we should produce faculty-specific productivity metrics—the answer from JP is that we don’t collect those at the College level but is something rather for the Department Head.

There was discussion about the relationship between the Department and College and how is this relationship replicated between Colleges and the provost. It was noted that the provost has held back some money for cluster hires and strategic investments. The hope is that there will be
one for English, and that it always comes back to RCM. JP said that central administration cannot increase the budget themselves.

JP stated that SCH follows whoever is paying the instructors. He elaborated that when we teach Gen Eds, the students from other colleges, that money flows to SBS because we are paying the instructors for teaching those classes. JP noted that it would not be ideal if RCM created barriers for students.

JP acknowledged that we are a big College and in any given unit, you can have a diverse array of studies. He noted that from the standpoint of trying to be tactical/strategic, we have a lot of flanks from which people can invent things that in fact should be part of English or, frankly, part of Geography, part of History, etc. He emphasized that there are governance mechanisms in place.

There was discussion about how graduate students fit into this, and JP noted that we have set aside budget money for salary increase to make us more competitive. JP mentioned that we do have ideas on how to come up with money in general but it will involve cooperation with other units.

There was further discussion about how the Writing Program is so well-structured, and additional programs benefit from this.

LM: Lee noted that the impact of RCM works with an effort to try to think collaboratively with other departments. He stated that if there are students that go to a different College, you create a zero-sum game between the Colleges. Lee asked if there was any idea about how to try to mitigate, prevent an environment where we try to eliminate cross-listed courses with one another.

JP answered that we are in the early stages of the implementation of and governance of RCM. He elaborated that by governance, he means what rightly belongs in the English Department. JP noted that he hopes a governance mechanism that is in place will work and that reasonable people will say our future is based on growth of the institution, growth of tuition, etc.

There was discussion about things that can make English more exciting and that is combining Literature courses with the series in professional film studies. The group noted that there is an inter-college struggle going on about who gets to teach film studies and in what way. It was noted that someone needs to figure out a way that’s going to be acceptable to all parties because we have core faculty who can run a film program.

Transitions: Meeting with JP Jones and Francisco Pedroza concluded, full meeting was initiated.

LM: Lee stated that we’ll continue on to the elections for APR and P&T Committees.

There was discussion about folks willing to volunteer for open positions, and it was noted that Lee will appoint 2 additional faculty members to fill in committee gaps.

Larry Evers nominated Susan Miller-Cochran for APR Committee, she declined.

Charles Sherry volunteered himself for APR Committee
There was discussion about the committee leading up to this point in time: Suresh has rotated off and Roger was filling out a one-year term, and Homer was appointed. It was noted that the appointments are only for one year and we elect one full professor now, as Lee wil appoint 2 more again, for diversity across programs. It was mentioned that Roger was finishing Tenney’s term.

Three people nominated are Charles, Larry and Susan White.

A motion passes to change minutes for special occasions with personal information and hiring decisions being left out.

There was discussion about constitution changes (while ballots were passed out) how SBS was changed to COH, and that Lecturers is now a rank we use and honor, and that the poetry center is a part of the Department of English, CESL is part of the Department as well. It was noted that these were circulated last time but we must table the constitution because Jeff made a mistake and did not have the correct version handy.

There was a motion to table the constitution.

APR and P&T Committee results: Larry Evers is the new member elected for APR, Susan Miller-Cochran is the new member elected for P&T.

There was congratulations to new committee members.

The Department Meeting was adjourned.