Department of English Meeting: Friday, December 7, 2018


Meeting began at 1:30 pm in ML 411

I. Announcements

   A. Shelley Rodrigo (standing in for Susan Miller-Cochran and WP): Thanks to everyone who helped with the directed self-placement program. We have over 6,300 students who used this, spanning 347 sections and 182 instructors.

   B. Paul Hurh (DUG): Two of our students won SBS undergraduate awards: Caitlynn (“Cat”) Solewin won the Outstanding Senior Award and Abigail O’Conner won the Student Success Award. Thanks to their nominators: Kate Bernheimer, Marcia Klotz, Manuel Munoz, Ander Monson.

   C. Cristina Ramirez (RCTE): Ann Shivers-McNair won a major grant from the Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication Research, Stephanie Troutman’s book, *Culture, Community, and Educational Success: Reimagining the Invisible Knapsack*, recently came out, Susan Miller-Cochran gave a keynote, and graduate student Lizzy Bentley published a piece.


   E. Ander Monson (CW): MFA student Suyi Davies Okungbowa had a novel picked up, *David Mogo: Godhunter*.

   F. Paul Hurh: UGCC meeting – one of the tasks for next semester will be to add learning outcomes to all of core major classes and all gen ed classes that don’t have learning outcomes attached to them.

II. Update on Hires: 18th Century Literature and Creative Writing – American Indian Studies
A. Hayriye Kayi-Aydar (hiring committee member): we’re narrowing the field for the 18th Century hire and extending invitations for campus interviews after the Skype interviews.

B. Ander Monson: our field is narrowed to 7 candidates for Skype interviews, set for the 1st week of spring semester. Plan is to invite 2-3 finalists to campus.

III. CT Professor Promotion Plan - discussion

A. Alan Kohler and Dev Bose: the most important changes were on pages 6/7 regarding scholarship and creative work. We clarified responsibilities of the CT professors and noted that lecturers are not eligible to serve on the promotion committee per the Provost’s guidelines. We also worked on the criteria to reflect the 4 graduate programs and the Writing Program.

B. Discussion about what programs to include and what specifics are needed for the Writing Program.

C. There was a question about consistency, referring to the bottom of page 3 re: research and service/outreach that inform the candidate’s primary responsibilities are being called “supplementary evidence.” On page 6, scholarly and creative work is divided into “primary evidence” and “supplementary evidence.” Then, on page 7, “primary scholarly evidence” will be counted but “supplementary” won’t. Dev and Alan offered to clarify language.

D. After the new language is inserted, the CT Professor Promotion Plan document will be sent out to the department for a Qualtrics vote.

IV. Annual Performance Review – potential revisions, initial steps and discussion

A. Aurelie noted some current problems with the APR: criteria/process has not been updated since 2007; need to consider how research, teaching, and service are quantified and to ensure visibility of service among all faculty.

B. Susan Briante brought up the focus group’s discussion about publishing the average APR scores from the previous year(s) to get a sense of what individual scores mean in comparison to the rest of the department.

C. Discussion about granular numbers, and how we need to be in compliance. It was noted that we can still use the decimal system but we need to change the bottom scoring threshold for “unsatisfactory.”
D. Discussion about bias in TCEs and how they can undermine a teaching score. This led to another idea from the focus group: self-evaluations can help give the APR committee more information and a sense of what individuals think they deserve – a way to communicate to the committee.

E. Discussion about the CT Lecturers APR guidelines and how their overall process works.

F. Further discussion about the pros and cons of self-evaluations: adding extra work for everyone (individuals and committee) can be tiresome, but it could greatly help the committee with contextualizing and evaluating the faculty member’s annual workload.

V. Academic Program Review report – Shelley Staples / discussion

A. Shelley Staples: External review visitors coming in March 2019. Thank you to the committee.

B. Aurelie solicited feedback on the latest version of the APR. There was discussion about how the latest version addresses central questions re: strategic priorities, advancing research, improving UG curriculum – but potential concerns about the emphasis on culture outweighing the focus on research/creative activity.

C. Discussion about the difficulties in balancing our strengths as a department with concerns about morale, enrollment, climate and other challenges.

D. Discussion about our current context: last year we had the climate survey which identified many needs. We followed through on the suggestion made at the departmental retreat that the APR was a place to make an argument for the priorities outlined in the climate survey, and this is what is being done in the APR.

E. Discussion about the audience of the APR, especially the external reviewers – and also the opportunity for Aurelie to sit down w/ the Provost on all of these concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.