

College of Arts & Sciences Opening Meeting Minutes

August 17, 2011

Natural Sciences Auditorium

- **Interim Dean Gibbs Knotts called the well-attended meeting to order at 1:02 PM**, and made some opening remarks.
 - Please vote for faculty nominees for the Strategic Planning and Provost Search Committees during the meeting. Ballots with ten names for each committee are distributed.
 - Changes in leadership are recognized:
 - Jane Eastman thanked for her service as Department Head of Anthropology and Sociology; Ted Coyle welcomed as the new Department Head and congratulated for surviving an attack by a shark (or dolphin, perhaps) while swimming the length of the Golden Gate Bridge.
 - Mark Lord thanked for serving as the Interim Associate Provost; Pete Bates will be the Interim Department Head of Geosciences and Natural Resources, while Lord is so occupied.
 - Tammy Thomson is welcomed as the new Administrative Support Associate to the Chemistry and Physics Department

- Introduction of New Faculty
 - Jessica Moore, Associate Professor in Biology
 - Andy Gambill, alumni, Lecturer in Communication
 - Jen Harris, alumni, Lecturer in English
 - Rain Newcomb, Lecturer in English
 - Eleanor Petrone, Assistant Professor in English
 - Diane Styers, Assistant Professor in Geosciences and Natural Resources
 - Heidi Anderson, Assistant Professor in Geosciences and Natural Resources
 - Nathan Borchelt, Assistant Professor in Math and Computer Sciences

- Regis Gilman presented on behalf of Educational Outreach:
 - Introduced the Division of Educational Outreach, reviewing its mission and departments, highlighting the distance learning programs
 - Educational Outreach pays for the [online tutoring service SmarThinking.com](#) to be available to students for free. It also has resources available for faculty. Passwords are available from Gilman. It is designed primarily for off-campus and distance students, but not restricted to them.
 - State authorization and licensing issues. Legal regulations regarding online and distance courses are in a state of change and development. This includes internships and similar courses where the student has a physical address in another state. Western must be licensed or exempted for each such class. Lists of states were provided indicating where Western is approved for online and physical instructional presence, and where it is not. There will be a new registrar website to help with this.
 - UNC proctoring services ([services.northcarolina.edu](#)). Distance students or Western faculty can find local proctors using the resources offered. Proctoring services will become available around midterms.
 - Gilman then pelted the faculty with stress balls, and Knotts joined her in this.

- Leah Hampton presented on behalf of Undergraduate Studies, emphasizing changes made over the summer:
 - QEP: Undergraduate Studies understands the QEP and is available for help or counsel regarding it.
 - Brief discussion of Liberal Studies, the e-Briefcase, the Advising Center, Career Services, the Center for Service Learning and First Year Experience (FYE).
 - The Advising Center has moved to Undergraduate Studies, including the early alert program.

- The Academic Success Program (ASP) is now under First Year Experience.
- The Math Tutoring Center has hours for drop-ins and can make class presentations.
- Writing and Learning Commons
 - Combined from former Writing Center and CAT Center.
 - Bigger, better, faster, stronger.
 - Website still under construction, feedback welcome.
 - No change in tutoring services or TutorTrac.
 - Academic skills consultants available for student appointments.
 - Working hard to not let their position losses negatively impact the services offered.
- WCU Poverty Project introduced by John Whitmire
 - Using poverty issues as a framework for thinking together about a real problem.
 - Invitation to take up discipline specific and appropriate questions regarding poverty in research and teaching.
 - “a year's worth of engaged teaching, learning, service, and creative and scholarly opportunities centered on poverty, both in local communities and global society” ([Mission](#))
 - Making resources available; see the website for these (<http://www.wcu.edu/29252.asp>).
 - Grassroots-like organization of the project rather than top-down mandate. The steering committee is diverse and broadly representative.
 - The kickoff will be on September 7th at 7:00 pm in the Bardo Arts Center. The CEO of the Global Poverty Project will give an address.
 - Data was presented on poverty in North Carolina.
- Knotts presented an update on his leadership philosophy as Interim Dean and on the budget.
 - Leadership philosophy: Knotts firmly committed himself to collaborative decision making, to being open and available to the faculty and to support staff.
 - Budget:
 - The College made a 10% cut this year (\$1.2 mil), and lost a lot of instructional capacity.
 - We were given back \$500,000 in local tuition money, resulting in a relative cut of 6%.
 - Good news: the Provost agreed to make 10% into 8.5% cut.
 - Bad news: we have to move from a 6% relative cut to 8.5%, about \$300,000. The Provost wants some money now, so we have difficult decisions for the short run.
 - But all is not doom and gloom. We have several reasons for hope, including a dynamic new Chancellor, great work being done in the college (e.g., 4 books out in English this summer; GNR got a \$200,000 NSF grant) and many outstanding students.
 - “If we continue to foster an environment where faculty can create and disseminate knowledge, where we value the contributions from staff and where we focus on student success as our highest priority, I am confident we will weather this latest storm.”
- Floor opened for questions from the faculty.
 - Is there any further information on service contracts in the College of Arts & Sciences?
 - The Provost's Office has covered these in the past but is now limited in ability to pay for service contracts. They have allocated \$200,000 for service contracts across university, but there are \$350,000 of contracts in Arts & Science. The Provost's Office is asking for a prioritized listing, and they will get back to us on what they will and won't cover. We don't have up to date information on how the costs will be shared. It doesn't look good right now, but there are other possible sources funds.
 - Any hint for Dean's search this year?

- There are several interim deans right now. I've not heard about any dean searches. Restructuring Task Force plans may play into how they want to handle the dean situation. I don't know. My contract said a year or until they find someone.
 - Several of us getting more spread out in our teaching. What do I do if I'm in another building and the door is locked?
 - Answers and comments from faculty members:
 - Depends on building and college.
 - Convenience of faculty not taken enough into consideration in scheduling.
 - Suggestion that we pressure other deans to make keys available on sign out.
 - Will we be getting rid of R25? It's been a disaster.
 - We could put that at the top of the budget saving proposal (in irony)
 - Faculty member: Upgrade for R25 was lost to budget cuts, but there has been no talk of eliminating it.
 - Give ballots to Carrie
- Meeting adjourned by Interim Dean Knotts at 1:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David G. Henderson
Faculty Secretary to
the College of Arts & Sciences