

College of Arts and Sciences
Faculty Council Meeting
Friday February 23, 2024
2:00 – 4:00pm, Microsoft Teams

Present: Allison Cleveland-Roberts; Jennifer Collins; Maria Corton; Jennifer Friedman; Colin Heydt; Jennifer Johnson; Meredith Johnson; Paul Kirchman; Edward Kissi; Randy Larsen; Ryan McCleary; Adriana Novoa; Mahuya Pal; Thomas Pluckhahn; Robert Potter; Tangela Serls; Toru Shimizu; Stephen Song; Erin Sutliff; and Sameer Varma

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of 1/26/2024 Meeting Minutes. Moved to approve (Corton); Seconded (Novoa)

III. Committee Liaisons Updates

- a) Library Committee (Kissi): The liaison reported sending an email to the committee chair but has received no response.
- b) Diversity Committee (Novoa): Novoa related committee discussions with USF General Counsel regarding SB266, describing the conversation as helpful; the committee intends to have follow-up discussions with General Counsel at their next meeting. Serls reported that the committee also discussed the success of “I Belong” Week.
- c) Faculty Development Committee (Friedman): The liaison reported that the committee was fixing issues related to the CAS Spring Travel Award and was preparing a call for the Teaching Award.
- d) Technology Committee (Corton): The liaison summarized discussions on the impacts of artificial intelligence (AI) that took place at the committee’s meeting in early February and described how the committee decided to form task groups to consider the impacts of AI on administration, research, and teaching; the committee plans to present summaries to the Spring faculty assembly.
- e) Grievance (Cleveland-Roberts): Cleveland-Roberts was unable to attend the FC meeting on 2/23 as she was representing the CAS at the Foundation Board of Directors meeting with their Development team.
- f) Lack of activity from some committees (Thomas Pluckhahn): Pluckhahn related the motivation for including this as an agenda item; his previous experience suggested that the CAS Core facilities had not been active for several years and that the same seems true of several other committees with which the Council liaises. Collins related that the council began having liaisons to the committees approximately two years ago to minimize inconvenience to the committee chairs.

Kissi reiterated the lack of activity by Library Committee despite the recent high-profile acquisition of the papers of Elie Wiesel. Collins will reach out to committee chairs to emphasize the importance of communication with the Council. Larson reported that the Core Facilities Committee had met early in the year but there had been no follow up and indicated his intention to reach out to the chair, given impending opportunities for investment in core facilities.

- IV. Spring Assembly/Social (Collins): CAS has decided to have a social to celebrate Bob Potter and Daniel Kanouff on April 12 at 4 pm. Collins proposed continuing with the online format for Spring assembly on a different date and there were no objections. Collins will connect with CAS Events on proposed dates.
- V. Online Classes (Friedman): Friedman discussed concerns among colleagues in Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences about intellectual property as well as some of the numerous issues associated with faculty and graduate students who teach online courses that they did not develop. Among other issues she raised: the ability of instructors (including faculty and graduate students) to demonstrate their intellectual contributions to a course in their annual evaluations when there is minimal flexibility to change the course; and, the manner in which departments will interpret course evaluations when a faculty member or graduate student has taught an online course designed by another instructor (who gave up their intellectual property to design the course Novoa described some of these as grievable issues under the collective bargaining agreement, especially as related to priority for summer teaching. Pluckhahn voiced questions regarding changes to online courses relative to their continuance to meet state and USF standards. Corton described larger concerns regarding how USF wishes to position itself with regard to online teaching and learning. Novoa expressed concerns regarding quality control. Kissi raised concerns about course evaluations, especially from students who had not attended class regularly or had dropped the course in the middle of the semester because of poor performance on course work. Sutliff provided lengthy responses: noting that faculty and department chairs have been encouraged to discuss online course development; expressing the opinion that the issue should not be addressed in terms of online vs. other teaching modalities, but in terms of overall quality; expressing concerns regarding summer courses, especially the need to maintain consistency in rigor and learning outcomes; relating the decision to defer larger discussions about online teaching at USF for directives from new leadership; reporting that CAS budget does not support development of individual online sections for each instructor and that course flexibility should vary by course depending on the service load provided; relating that USF considers online courses developed in-load to be co-owned by the lead faculty person and the department; noting that USF considers it the chair's responsibility to make sure the certified courses are being used over other versions of the same course. Potter also responded: noting that quality control needed to be addressed at the department level, and that outcomes and assessments need to be appropriate and consistent; encouraging departments to take a more active role in the evaluation of teaching through measures like peer evaluation; and noting that the Faculty Senate is currently considering the matter of course evaluations but cautioning the need to maintain anonymity.

VI. Associate Dean Toru Shimizu

- Status of the Post-Tenure Promotion Process: Shimizu reported that all 78 PTR cases had progressed to the next level (the Provost) and described the process of review at CAS: the committee (Shimizu, Potter, Larsen, and Thomas Smith) split into two-person teams and divided the cases, all four then met together to discuss them, and after reaching consensus, they all met together with Dean Michael who provided her input. At the Provost's suggestion, cases rated "2" received a template statement and no further discussion. Discussion centered on why cases rated "1" or "3" belonged in each category (there were no cases rated "4"). They used the self-reports, the CVs, the chair evaluations, and the annual evaluations for the last five years in comparison with the department and state criteria. Novoa, noting respect for all involved, expressed the opinion that the review was mishandled given pressures on faculty from the state over the last few years and the blow to morale to have department reviews overturned. Kissi expressed concerns over how the pandemic featured into considerations and a desire to see a breakdown of ratings by school. Pal noted the lack of discipline-specific knowledge at the level of CAS review. Johnson noted that the CAS review committee did not have sufficient academic diversity. Collins reiterated some points made and added a request to see the breakdown of those who met 1's, similar to the table provided on the CAS website for those who made Tenure and Promotion. Shimizu responded: that the concern was with ensuring fairness in rating across departments; that it would be difficult to provide meaningful summaries of ratings because of variations in assignments and because the small size of the sample could compromise confidentiality; and reiterating that the CAS committee used the same department criteria employed by the chairs (although he also referring to different interpretations). Shimizu confirmed that he met with Steve Tauber from the Provost's Office, prior to the faculty began completing their narrative, and together then considered and approved the department criteria. He offered to look further to see what information could be provided. Potter added that while there was room for quibbling about where individual cases belonged with respect to ratings, the committee was able to reach consensus and are satisfied with the final result. Varma and Collins thanked Shimizu and Potter for clarification and listening to the Council's concerns.

VIII. Dean's Remarks (Toru Shimizu in Dean's absence): This agenda item was tabled given the extent of Shimizu's comments on the previous agenda item and Michael's expected return at the next Council meeting.

IX. Faculty Concerns

- Council Member Questions: Collins asked the Council for clarification regarding the draft letter many expressed they wanted sent to the Provost outlining concerns over PTR. Varma suggested incorporating discussion from this meeting into the letter. Collins responded with opinion that if a letter is to be sent, it needed to be

sent soon (early the next week) to reach the Provost as soon as possible in order to make greatest immediate impact.

X. Adjourn