Faculty Meeting Minutes
October 5, 2011
SEM II D1105, 1:00-3:00pm

Faculty Chair Andrew Reece opened the meeting at 3:17.

Announcements

➢ As follow-up to an e-mail with additional information, Allen Olson announced that 2012 Summer School proposals are due November 1, 2011.

➢ Tom Womeldorff followed up on an e-mail that he sent out this morning regarding nominations currently being accepted from the Academic Deans Search DTF through October 26, 2011.

➢ Sandy Yannone announced that the 6th edition of Inkwell is now available, as well as a one-day writing festival, InkFest: On and Off the Page, which will be held on Saturday, October 15.

➢ Sean Williams announced that she has an alternate persona on Facebook, "Captain Grammar Pants" and invited others, including students, to befriend her to receive her grammar updates.

Andrew provided an overview of the agenda, with particular attention to the last item regarding ongoing civility and free speech issues.

Agenda Committee Member Vote – Leslie Flemmer was nominated and accepted the nomination to fill a vacant Agenda Committee position. She was unanimously confirmed.

Re-Modeling Teaching and Learning at Evergreen Presentation/Discussion – Co-chair Julia Zay provided an overview of this agenda item. She indicated that the DTF has worked from the six prototypes to create three preliminary drafts for discussion today. Next week, there will also be follow-up work sessions for each of the models (a follow-up e-mail providing additional detail will be sent). The RTaLE blog was previewed, including an overview of the FAQ section. The models were then handed out and brief overviews were provided by DTF members.

➢ Model 1 – In-Program – DTF member Sarah Pedersen provided an overview of this model, indicating that it provides both flexibility within programs and an avenue for students who are not currently in programs or in programs without in-depth support for the academic statement and advising to receive support. Additional detail was provided, including the potential for using time currently assigned for governance for this work between faculty and students. An articulation of the different types of support for entry-level students and seniors was provided.

➢ Model 2 – Consistent Mentor Groups – DTF member Kevin Francis began the discussion by providing an overview of the benefits, including building and maintaining a long-term relationship between faculty advisors and students; and that students would receive exposure to other students who are studying in a broad range of disciplines. He described the small cohorts that entering students would be part of, and the periodic meetings that the small groups of students and their consistent faculty member would attend. Additional detail was provided, including the different work that would occur for entering students vs. graduating students and the proposed additional compensation for this work. Kevin indicated that the model provides opportunities for students to switch mentors, particularly as upper division

students who would like to have a mentor with a similar academic focus. Finally, the model provides an opportunity for faculty to bring their mentor groups together at points, with an eye toward increasing the disciplinary breadth of the faculty mentors.

➢ Model 3 – O-Week and Symposium – DTF members Shaw Osha, Nancy Murray and Nancy Koppelman provided an overview of the model, which begins with a required orientation course at the beginning of each student's academic career at Evergreen. Additionally, there is a twice-a-year symposium where events and activities are offered to support student advising and the writing of the academic statements. Courses and workshops would be available to support seniors to finalize their academic statements. The ways in which faculty could come together to do this work were discussed. Benefits include strong attention to first-year and graduating students, without overly burdensome attention to the intermediate years. It was suggested that more focused work needs to be given to the 2-credit course, as well as what would happen in the students' middle years where less support is offered.

The following questions and comments ensued (with responses from DTF members in parentheses):

➢ How will this impact the Academic Advising office? (Sara Martin provided a response to indicate that Academic Advising has been part of this work from the beginning. She indicated that she has written a couple of documents that are on the RTaLE blog to more fully address questions. Briefly, she indicated a belief that any additional attention that faculty pay to advising will likely deepen the work of the Advising office. She also provided an overview of the work that Advising does that is different than the proposed faculty work.)

➢ Where is there documentation about the feedback that was generated during the Academic Retreat and Planning Unit meetings?

➢ How do the models address the Six Expectations? (This will be addressed after the final proposal is passed. Now the discussion is more about structures much more than content.)

➢ What kind of flexibility do we have to combine components of the models? (This is still an option.)

➢ Strong positive feeling about consistent mentor groups being opt-in.

➢ Model 2 – How would it be possible for faculty to have mentor groups of 34-36 students? This may not be tenable.

➢ What is the work that we do now in governance that we will no longer do?

➢ Questions about feasibility were raised, including workload and administrative overload.

➢ Most models talk about enhancements for the first and senior years. Yet the transcript is also an important aspect for students, which does not line up with the first-year and senior emphasis. (one strategy was to start the senior support at 135 credits. The mentor pool could be defined by disciplinary interests by that stage in the process.)

➢ Model 3 – is the summer work after their junior year?

➢ Interested in Model #3, particularly the o-week required course if it would emphasize clarity in written communication.

➢ Model 2 – can imagine cohorts of faculty mentors across disciplines. Increasingly thinking that out-of-program models are the most feasible, particularly if there is built-in attention to balance and compensation.

➢ Seems that there needs to be enough visible change without deluging faculty with extra work. This raises a question of how the model gets conceived. In that light, the first in-program model, which is the most natural, represents the least visible change. This may be a design issue or an intrinsic flaw. If this is work that could have been happening in programs all along, how does this represent a change?

➢ Where is the place in the models to think about the context about why we have a problem, why liberal arts and higher ed is under assault and how we think about this with our students (media saturation, short attention spans, etc).

➢ If all of the EWS students find that none of their faculty are part of this process, what does that communicate to them about their education?
➢ What is the metric? Is it that students leave saying better advised? There are more academic statements? Mentoring is a problem, which is well addressed in model 2 in particular. (The rubric created allows for both "minimally met" by way of satisfying the accreditation process, as well as the higher standard which faculty who have recently read the transcripts find needs to be addressed.)
➢ When students graduating from Evergreen have a sense of having accomplished something coherent in their education, we will be successful. If we do something when they come in to let them know about the six expectations and the support needed to put this together by the time they graduate, we will have succeeded. What is upsetting is when a faculty member has a conversation with a student who has done good academic work in good programs but has not thought about how to put together a cohesive package that they can describe to the outside world.
➢ By talking through the six expectations to new students, they can understand them as an institutional judgment that they can respond to, either affirmatively or not.

Michael expressed that he is impressed by both the cynicism as well as faculty's willingness to engage in puzzling through this work, which will provide students the opportunity to think more intentionally about the kind of person they want to be and the world they want to shape through the intentional pathways they create. Faculty Chair Andrew Reece closed the conversation with a suggestion that more time will be available at the upcoming faculty meetings.

Agenda Committee Response to Ongoing Civility and Free Speech Issues – Agenda Committee member Joe Tougas indicated that the Agenda Committee is not yet clear how to best respond to the Faculty Resolution on Civility and Free Speech as proposed and passed at the June 2, 2010 faculty meeting. He indicated disappointment that the continued work that was promised in the resolution was not taken up by the Agenda Committee last year. Joe described the task of faculty in two parts: 1) the legitimacy of our institutional processes in response to conflict situations; 2) are there things that we can do as a faculty that improve our sense of how these systems work and if our sense is they are not working well, to participate in a collective response to improvement. In addition, faculty need to consider how we interact with each other – what are the standards that we have for each other? The Social Contract is often brought up as it is not enforceable. One could either conclude that it's not important or that it is enforceable in some different way. He asked faculty colleagues to consider what we do to increase the clarity between legitimate civil discussion and argument from actions that are targeting and create harm to some members of the community. Joe invited the faculty to both read the resolution and communicate their ideas to the Agenda Committee.