**Minutes**

**Liberal Arts Council**

**Via Zoom Meeting**

**15 April 2020 2:00 p.m.**

**Presiding:** Dean Mary Brennan  
**Present:** Council members: Audwin Anderson, Manda Anderson, Susan Day (recording), Beth Erhart, Ken Grasso, Craig Hanks, Lucy Harney, Paul Hart, Bill Kelemen, Yongmei Lu, John Mckiernan-Gonzalez, Angela Murphy, Aimee Roundtree, Vicki Smith, Chad Smith

**Guests:** no one

**Absent:**

The meeting began at 2:00 p.m. and was conducted using ZOOM. All participants were present through their computer screens. The minutes of 3.25.20 minutes were approved without dissension on a motion by Dr. Kelemen and a second by Dr. Grasso.

Because the Provost heard from some departments that summer 2 enrollments are lagging, Dean Brennan asked whether COLA summer classes are lagging. Chairs and directors indicated classes (although some on-line courses are smaller) are full or are filling, for the most part. On-line courses are popular, but face-to-face classes can be larger. Chairs asked to know as soon as possible whether summer II will be on-line. Chairs would prefer a choice for summer II delivery.

Dean Brennan asked for names of graduate students to be nominated to serve in the Graduate House as representatives.

Associate Provost Thorne says ECF requests are budget processes with potentially inaccurate numbers. Chairs are asked to make the best judgments (guesses) for deciding which faculty can be paid out of ECF funds. If errors are made, the Provost’s office will make up the difference, understanding that budgets are potentially inaccurate. Chairs are asked to use up to 80 percent of ECF budget sent to department, leaving 20 percent in reserve. Do not count to be able to carry forward funds. Do not attempt to build up carry a forward reserve.

CAD/COVID Update: For the rest of the semester, departmental phones must be answered by someone who knows the answers to questions. Texas State received $31M from Care Act. Half must be spent on students; how the rest will be spent is unclear. At CAD, Dana Willett demonstrated on-line approach to learning how to teach on-line. Faculty should consider taking the certification now. Names of faculty who need the training before summer should be sent to Office of Distance and Extended Learning.

Departments reported no problems or concerns in the “around-the-screen.”

Dean Brennan discussed EP (emergency pass) grades. She asked what professors are saying about grades. She also suggested faculty members may tell students to discuss with their academic advisors whether to request an EP grade.

Dean Brennan asked whether there are ways to assist professors with large classes in dealing with EP requests. She asked chairs to think about the issue. She asked chairs to encourage professors to be responsive to student emails after grades are submitted. Dr. Kelemen indicated that chairs can initiate EP requests if professors allow it.

The meeting ended at 3:00 p.m.

Draft Minutes—Liberal Arts Council

March 25, 2020—2:00 p.m.

**Presiding:** Dean Mary Brennan  
**Present:** Council members: Audwin Anderson, Manda Anderson, Susan Day (recording), Beth Erhart, Ken Grasso, Craig Hanks, Lucy Harney, Paul Hart, Bill Kelemen, Yongmei Lu, John Mckiernan-Gonzalez, Angela Murphy, Aimee Roundtree, Vicki Smith, Chad Smith

**Guests:** no one

**Absent:**

The meeting began at 2:06 p.m. and was conducted using ZOOM. All participants were present through their computer screens. The minutes of 3.11.20 minutes were approved without dissension on a motion by Dr. Erhart and a second by Dr. Grasso.

The following discussion items reflect the information discussed in the 3.24.20 CAD meeting.

CIP codes for Sociology and Geography were mentioned at CAD. President’s Cabinet is worried about undergraduate enrollment. There are a number of reasons, including the postponement of SAT, ACT, and TOEFFL exams; potential slow transcripts from high schools; a lack of funds by students’ families In addition, research assistants report being uncomfortable about lack of social distancing and their inability to demand it of others. Dr. Roundtree indicated that IRB will require social distancing. Pass/Fail grading ies being discussed in CAD. Potential consequences complicate the situation (deans list, financial aid, GPA). Students may have the right later to request pass/fail grades.

Answers to questions posed by chairs: Putting summer classes on-line will be decided on April 10. Chairs can decide at this point how to list classes now. Faculty should be prepared to be online in summer I. Chairs reported that some faculty members will not teach on line; others prefer it. Mary will ask whether faculty who are “untrained” can teach on line. April 10 seems very late to decide according to chairs. The March 30 registration date seems too early if chairs are to make these decisions.

Dean Brennan will request answers to the following questions:

Can classes be changed at the last minute?

Can faculty who are “untrained” teach on line?

Can the March 30 enrollment date be postponed?

Can we forward staff phone to Google voice?

Beth Wuest is adamant that the current SACSCOC schedule will not change. Emphasis will be on continuous improvement. Chairs are encouraged to directly request answers to their questions by writing to Beth and Lon, copying Susan.

What will happen when all classes and registration go online Monday is unclear.

Final exams should be offered according to schedule if a synchronous exam is given. Faculty can also use exams that are “take-home” due by that day. Mary indicated that the administration indicated a preference for a final project (instead of traditional exams). Proctored exams will be costly and are discouraged. Professors will be contacted about students with disabilities; Mary asked if chairs knew whether their faculty had been contacted by Disability Services. Chairs reported that they had not heard whether their faculty had been contacted by Disability Services.

Health professionals are responsible for contacting individuals exposed to COVID-19; chairs should not violate HIPPA rules in order to contact people whom they believe have been exposed.

Dean Brennan indicated that the University will not close. Much discussion ensued about the problems (e.g., health, morale) resulting from the University being “open.”

Dean Brennan announced that the University is in a hiring freeze. Current negotiations can be continued. Chairs should discuss their open positions with Dean Brennan. Faculty and staff already hired will have their contracts honored.

Dean Brennan announced that fifty percent of Departments’ current M&O accounts will be swept by the administration to pay for COVID-19 expenses incurred by the University. Dean Brennan was asked to ask what the money will be used for. Dr. Kelemen asked whether this sweep applied to M&O lines. Dean Brennan indicated that more budget cuts are likely.

Departments are expected to have at least one person in their open department offices. If occasionally an office has no one to work, we can deal with the issue; the problem would be if an empty office became a chronic event. Chairs expect next week to be a busy with registration beginning.

Dean Brennan asked that creative ways of working from home with staff and student workers be shared with others.

Dean Golato requires GIAs to complete the work-from-home form. A template may be created and shared; Sociology will share their form and Philosophy will share a form for undergraduate student workers.

Desk top computers may not be taken home. Dean Brennan was asked to ask the reason for this policy. Much discussion ensured about the reason for this rule. Chairs should tell Dean Brennan if they know a student who is in “dire” straights and cannot finish their online classes. She encouraged chairs to tell the students to try to check out laptops from the library.

Computer labs may be open, but should be regularly disinfected. Teaching labs are not open. Tutoring should be done remotely. Students cannot be required to tutor in person.

ITAC is replacing Skype with Microsoft Teams.

Mail will not be delivered on campus. Mary will pick up the mail once a week and bring it to campus. Distribution will be completed in some way.

Awards Day will be discussed in the future.

Dean Brennan asked chairs to tell her what they need; she will do what she can to help.

The meeting ended at 3:45 p.m.