

POLS Dept Meeting – October 26, 2018
Minutes

TOTAL PRESENT: 17 faculty, 4 students, 0 others

12:30 Noelani called the meeting to order.

Sharing: Nicole shared her research: Strengthening our community of practice.

ITEMS CARRIED FORWARD

NONE

NEW ITEMS

1. Roadmap for dealing with disruptive students

DISCUSSION:

- There have been a few instances of disruptive students. Would be helpful to have a guide from the department to help guide faculty and grad students on managing these situations. This could be a basic flowchart that outlines what faculty should do when placed in these situations.
- Noelani opens the floor for discussion:
 - What advice has been given?
 - Noelani: Differing advice on prohibiting students from attending class until they have met with the professor. The professor wanted to establish basic classroom expectations. Some said this prohibition until meeting was ok, others said no, in order to protect against lawsuits, faculty should let the student continue to participate in class.
 - Multiple cases have reflected a gender disparity and around conflicting political views.
 - Jon: Thinks that students should be prohibited. Doesn't think this goes against the law.
 - Katharina: Chair appoint someone to sit in on the class and observe.
 - Nevi: Develop a standardized policy that we include in the syllabus so that the students know in advance. Present the syllabus as a contract.
 - Jon: Worries about Nevi's point. People are doing this intentionally. Doesn't want to give students a playbook on what they can and cannot do.
 - Nevi & Katharina: Need to frame it in a general way and let them know what the consequences will be.
 - Heoli: Statement on syllabus on the rights of everyone in the class to learn. When someone infringes on these rights, the consequences will be. This will help the student know in advance.
 - Noelani: Could include title 9 language.

- **TO DO:** Send Noelani language that they would want to include.
- Kathy: should have a standardized statement that should also be included on the website. Worried about being disciplinary from the first day of the class. Wants to combine what has been said with also remembering that we are not the police. We want people to be excited about learning. Want syllabi to be invitations.
- Nevi: Need to use the language of privileges and obligations.
- Jon: Concern that everything becomes juridified. Are we really going to add more legal stuff to the syllabus? Never wants to talk about the syllabus as a contract. Need to express expectations through conversation at the beginning of the class. Doesn't want the class to be a legal space.
- Stephen: All viewpoints are welcome, but we must not attack individuals, use hate speech.
- Heoli: Was told that syllabi as a contract is a way to protect instructors. This might be more useful for graduate students and junior faculty who are less protected.
- Jon: Not a contract because students don't sign it.
- Nicole: Putting certain language in the syllabi has been very helpful. All of this language is already in Nicole's syllabi. Would have been helpful as an untenured faculty to know that she had the support of the department. Perhaps we just need to have this codified internally so that the support for professors is available.
- Nevi: What do we do when this behavior occurs? We need to develop a guide for what steps to take.
- Larry: What did the union say? Let the student back into the class with no conditions for appropriate behavior. Would this not make the professor in violation of title 9? Union said this was the best course of action for protecting the professor's job.
- Jon: the union can make suggestions on resolution, but they don't have jurisdiction over the way we run the classroom.
- Noelani: Would be helpful for the department to outline the steps and say that the instructor has the authority to suggest that the student be taught separately outside the classroom.
- Krishna: Doesn't like the idea of having to have faculty teach disruptive students outside of the classroom.
- Katharina: We might start by defining what we see as a hostile environment, which then protects the students in the classroom,
- Noelani: The problem here is that the student refused to oblige by the rules outlined in the student handbook.
- Jon: Important to recognize that not all faculty have the same protection. One policy may not be appropriate for all instructors. We need a policy that is sensitive to this,
- Nicole: Could put the language that the chair could "recommend" that the student be taught outside the class, then the faculty has the option to say no to this. There also is no agreement on what the definition of

a hostile environment is. The union did not think it was good to kick them out entirely.

- Kathy: Likes the idea of combining a clear message of a process of steps and a range of possibilities that is tailored to protect the differently positioned faculty and graduate students.
- Boyd: As an incident occurs, have documentation and a threshold, then organize a meeting with the professor and other tenured professors to provide advice.
- Jon: Legal language is not going to help us if there is no backing from the university. We should have assigned faculty for graduate students to go to sit in on the class if they are having issues.
- Manfred: What are other departments doing?
- Noelani: This was not discussed at the chair council.
- Nicole: Campus climate: supportive of inviting them back and having the TA sit near the student and record the lecture. Also supportive of outside the classroom teaching. Union: Really trying to protect the instructor, felt that inviting the student back and managing the class was the best way to show that rights were not being denied and encouraged Nicole to take classes on how to deal with disruptive students.
- Krishna: The benefit of having something on the syllabus is that as soon as the first instance occurs, the syllabus can be used as a reminder. This should include articulating an environment where there are privileges and rights. Even if not legal, this can be helpful for curbing behavior.
- Dick: Do we have the right to unregister a student? Has done this before. Noe: No. Should check with the Chair to see if this is possible.
- Discussion will continue. Noelani will pull something together in writing.

2. Graduate teaching workload

DISCUSSION:

- Noelani: Department has tried to offer 10 graduate courses per semester. This has not been the case, there have been more. Do we want to stick to offering 10 except in exceptional cases? And the other question is around the 2:1 breakdown for teaching. We have not been adhering to this. How do we address the graduate teaching workload for faculty?
 - Noelani: One suggestion is a requirement to have a syllabus.
 - Nevi: Enforce one grad course every three semesters.
 - Krishna: If we cap the number at 10, we should see if 2 undergrad one semester, and 1 graduate and one undergrad the next. Should have more opportunity for junior faculty to teach graduate courses.
 - Nevi: Grad students should have the first pick to teach grad courses.
 - Stephen: Have we ever thought about asking students in a survey to ask what topics they would like.

- Jairus: Used to have a google doc for this, low turn-out for student contributions.
- Ehito: What classes always need to be offered and in which semester?
- Dick: Need to think about which classes should be offered in the same semesters. Why do we have research methods courses offered when students don't take them (speaking of 601 and 602, 701 and 702 courses).
- Noelani: Need to consider the role of methods classes in the department. We have to decide this in coming meetings.
- Jairus: 187 open undergraduate seats this semester, having more undergrad courses is not a solution. Not sure what is being gained by more classes per semester. Need to think about what we are trying to accomplish when we are thinking about changing this formula.
- Krishna: We throw teaching assistants into the classroom too early. If we had the TAs assisting faculty in their first two years we could have more faculty teaching and help TAs be more prepared.
- Nevi: the problem is simply that too many grad courses are being offered.
- Myungji: Curriculum structure problem. No required classes means that students just take a few classes and then a number of 699s. We need to think about how to structure the graduate curriculum requirements.
- Larry: Should the 699 be unlimited?

3. Statement supporting transfolk (Kathy)

- Kathy read a letter crafted by her and Noelani that is a response about the trump administration's decision to define gender biologically. Looking for signatures and hope to send it to other departments.
- Ari: Happy to bring this to the attention of the GSO.
- The letter will be in the office or people can contact Kathy to have it signed.

4. Reorg

- Doesn't directly impact our college but will impact SPAS and some of the centres within SPAS. There is hope for this to take effect by Fall 2019.
- Carolyn: Two reorgs happening at one time, alongside the reorg of the entire campus.
- **TO DO:** People are welcome to send any comments or concerns to Noelani.

5. Professor of the week

- Athletic department wants to feature outstanding professors to be featured during sports games. Would require a short bio, a headshot, some in action photos. 30 second feature of the professor's work at a game.
- **TO DO:** If anyone is interested, they can contact Noe for more information.

Announcements:

- Colloquium at 2:30pm: Sarah Wiebe (read paper beforehand)
- *Responding to peer revisions*, Nov 7, 12 – 1pm in the Moon Room

Adjourn at 1:55 PM.