

10-22-2015

## Consultative minutes 10/22/2015

Consultative Committee

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Minutes of the Consultative Committee

October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

McGinnis Room

4:00PM

Present:

Absent:

Guests:

Discussion of where to go with Discipline Coordinator concerns

The committee discussed what responsibilities are laid on discipline coordinators, and asked what their common role is across disciplines.

The committee asked whether people are taking the discipline coordinator issues seriously. If not, why is this? Does it stem from misunderstanding the discipline coordinator role?

The question of why the music department coordinator is experiencing a heavier workload was asked? The following possible reasons were provided:

- More faculty members, students and events to manage.
- No tenured music faculty

A committee member pointed out that there was a misconception in Campus Assembly that discipline coordinators do not do “administrative work”

Another member mentioned it is difficult to find job description for discipline coordinator position.

-Suggestion: A “how to be a discipline coordinator” manual/pdf, providing explicit tasks coordinators are expected to carry out, so that all discipline coordinators, regardless of their discipline, have a good idea of what they *need* to be doing.

The committee recognized that the stress of the discipline coordinator position can vary by circumstances in the discipline (e.g. personnel issues).

There was an overall concern that the discipline coordinator position is a huge time investment that is not recognized as such.

The committee plans on approaching this issue further. Suggestions for how to do that are listed below:

- Survey coordinators about what tasks they typically perform
- A well-crafted survey that asks about tasks commonly done. Also, survey *past* discipline coordinators as well as current ones.

Goal: Find commonalities among what discipline coordinators do.

The committee asked what could improve this situation:

- Additional staff to assist coordinators?

Doubt about support staff: Can coordinator decisions be made by a staff member? The nature of the decisions (regarding credits, division specifics, etc) may be better reserved for faculty members.

-Discipline coordinators should perhaps be exempt from some governance obligations or receive a form of compensation.

--But this perhaps undermines the democratic vision of communal effort without hierarchy.

//A student representative pointed out that faculty who are overloaded or busy with service and governance are taken away from serving the students.

The committee seemed to recognize in this discussion that the main issue may be the lack of recognition of what discipline coordinators are expected to do.

Consultative committee plans to make a survey that will assess this issue.

-Small, concise, list-like survey.

//Concern: what will divisions be willing to divulge?

-Proposed question: Is the discipline coordinator position an administrative position?

Overall, faculty job description should be improved, because, as mentioned before, service obligations take away from other obligations within their job.

Discussion of possible areas of study for the Higher Learning Commission Quality Initiative (<https://www.hlcommission.org/Pathways/quality-initiative.html>); examples of possible programs include First Year Experience and Writing Across the Curriculum

Bart looking for “initiative ideas,” such as first year programs and improving the first year experience, online learning, etc. He has asked Consultative to discuss possibilities. The committee tried to think of ideas that can be applied to all students that address the institutions present concerns.

Below are the two ideas that consultative focused on:

//Sustainability ---> Programs to increase the community’s knowledge and education of Morris’s green campus efforts.

-Add sustainability class to required curriculum/class. It was discussed whether or not students would be receptive to an addition of a required class.

-Faculty wide effort to implement sustainability concepts into classes across all disciplines.

-There was a general consensus that sustainability is an important concept to Morris campus, and there should be a greater effort to educate the campus population on what sustainability means and how they can be a part of it.

-It was recognized that many people on campus do not realize how broad the term sustainability can be, and how many people are under the impression the term is restricted to *environmental* sustainability.

//First year experience

- >Interweave sustainability concepts into First year experience programs.
- What programs can increase retention of students?

### Discussion of creating an Assistant/Associate Dean position

The committee discussed the pros and cons of creating an assistant dean position. The main points of the discussion are listed below:

- Creating this position could open time for the dean to invest in projects.
- It was brought up that the dean is often booked with meetings and reports. For this reason it would be a good idea to hire an assistant.
- Another committee member made the counterpoint that there are many positions in which people are overworked. So the question is thus: Where do we *not* hire assistants?
- Another counterpoint: Morris has had an assistant dean in the past, and there was a mix of opinions over whether or not it was necessary.
- The committee agreed that if an assistant dean were hired, they should have some level of decision making power so that they can be effective in their position.
- The question of whether or not the assistant dean would have to be a faculty member was asked. A committee member said that as long as the applicant has the appropriate skills set, a P&A should be acceptable. For certain tasks, though, it may make more sense for a faculty member to take the position.

Consultative Committee agreed that in order to come to a solid conclusion on this matter, more time should be invested into discussing it.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elsie Wilson