

College of Arts and Sciences
Chairs Meeting
November 6, 2003

Attendees: Diane Sorace, Kathleen Siren, Lisa Schoenbrodt, David Powers, Jenny Lowry, Bill Heiser, Jai Ryu, Robbie Sabin, Drew Schoeffield, Rob Pond, Mary Lowe, Tim McNeese, Tim Stapleton, Jack Breihan, Paul Lukacs, Martha Taylor, Janet Headley, Steve Fowl, Diana Schaub, Chris Morrell

The meeting began at 12:20 p.m. by Dr. James Buckley. Dr. Buckley made the announcement that Bill Heiser is leaving Loyola College. The college will be hosting a farewell for Bill on Friday, November 7, 2003 and everyone is invited to attend.

FACULTY SURVEY (FSSE)

Dr. Buckley passed out a copy of a "Pilot Test of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement" (FSSE) program to survey faculty on issues similar to those on which students have been surveyed in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Faculty will be able to complete the survey, if they choose. Their individual responses will be confidential, although there will be some clustering of responses (e.g., reports on what natural science faculty think about a particular question). Some Chairs had suggestions for other questions to include. Dr. Buckley said that this was only a Pilot version, that we could not change questions (which parallel NSSE) now, that we could do so in the future. He asked Chairs to alert their faculty to the survey, which will be taken in the Spring.

ADVISING SURVEYS AND GUIDELINES

Iona McGuinness passed out the results of a Core Advising Survey and a Major Advising Survey for 2003. She said that the results were quite positive. The main faculty challenges in Core Advising were lack of knowledge of the curriculum in general, the majors in particular, and periodic inability to help students on their degree audits. The main challenges students reported on the major Advising Survey were that students report that faculty do not always know them as persons or offer good advice on double majors, minors, or degree audits. She asked Chairs to take the results of the survey back to their departments. Some Chairs suggested that the surveys include not only questions related to faculty performance but also questions about student performance in advising, perhaps in tandem with each other (e.g., asking both how often students arranged to meet faculty and faculty arranged to meet with students). Iona said that her office would be very open to Chair suggestions about revising the survey. Iona also brought along a final draft of the document on mutual faculty-students expectations for advising, entitled "Guidelines for Academic Advising at Loyola College". The document began in a meeting of Chairs last year and was revised by students and administrators before reaching its current form. At least one Chair worried that some of the expectations for faculty advising (e.g., "document each advising conversation") might cause fewer faculty

to advise. Jim suggested that Chairs let him know any major objections to publishing the Guidelines. One Chair suggested that the questions on Advising Surveys of students parallel the reflections in the Guidelines.

STUDENT STUDY HOURS

Jim handed out a “Student Study Hours” packet that included a copies of the “Academic Excellence” context of the “25 study hours” strategy in the Strategic Plan [one piece of Strategic Plan binder from last Spring]; the CSS student questionnaires in which students self-report on their study hours; survey questions and sometimes results from 8 departments or programs asking about student study hours in at least some department courses; and a set of possible ways of carrying out the “25 study hours” strategy, from The Big Issue (How can faculty work together to achieve this goal?) to some possible steps:

- i. Individual departments putting a similar question on the Loyola Student Evaluation form?
- ii. CAS Chairs recommending that the Faculty Evaluation Committee develop a common question for the Loyola Student Evaluation form?
- iii. Have as many departments as possible commit themselves to students’ studying at least 5 hours for each course (5 x 5 = 25 hours)?
- iv. Deans monitor amount of time individual departments challenge students to study, and Chairs/departments monitor the amount of time individual faculty challenge students to study?
- v. Faculty discussions of what are the best sorts of study assignments/exams to increase study time?
- vi. Faculty discussions with students about the challenges to accomplishing this strategy?
- vii. Other

Jim asked Chairs to take this material to their departments for discussion and report results to him by 28 February 2004.

The twenty minute discussion was wide-ranging. One Chair asked whether there existed comparable data at benchmark schools. Jim said he would find out. Thinking of the massive change in Loyola culture that would have to happen to carry out this strategy, it was also pointed out that the strategy has no time-line, leaving it up to faculty/students to determine how long it might take to accomplish this strategy. There was some interest in the possibility of constructing a common question for student evaluations, and Jim proposed that as many departments as possible used a revised version of the question asked by Physics. Other Chairs were skeptical that anything could be done about study hours without attending to student satisfaction with high grades and low study hours. Still other Chairs were sympathetic to the idea that the entire strategy was a mistaken expenditure of energy, confusing the non-quantifiable love of learning that drives serious students and the conception of studying as a chore that drives most students; other Chairs

seemed to think that quantitatively increasing study time in at least some courses could contribute to a culture of love of learning.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.