SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY PRIORITIES
Wednesday, October 23, 2019
2:00 – 4:00 PM
AQ 6106


Regrets: T. Bubela, D. Laitsch, S. O’Neill, M. Roman

Absent: R. Dunsford

1. Approval of the Agenda
   • Approved as submitted.

2. Approval of the Minutes of October 9, 2019
   • Approved as submitted.

3. Business Arising from the Minutes of October 9, 2019
   Items forwarded to Senate (November 4, 2019):
   • Centres and Institutes Renewal Applications 2018/19 (For Information)
   • Centres and Institutes Annual Progress Reports 2018/19 (For Information)

Open Session

4. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: External Review of the Department of English
   Guests: C. Lesjak, J. Pulkingham, and G. Nicholls

   It was noted that the undergraduate enrolments are declining which is a trend in humanities throughout North America. The Department of English is focusing on recruitment and retention. In regards to the Department’s plan to review and revise undergraduate course offerings, a committee member asked if the proposed creation of a cohort-based, lower-division introduction to the field of majors/minors would be the only entry path as it would make it more difficult for students who had not planned on studying English to enter the program. The Department Chair replied that the cohort option is just one possibility they are exploring and have no intention to make it difficult for students to complete a major or minor in English. A committee member asked about the recommendation from the reviewers in regards to partnership/integration with the World Literature Program. The Faculty Dean explained that there was a misunderstanding by the reviewers in regards to the future plans for the World Literature Program. Since the review, the Department of World Languages and Literatures has been established and it is now the home of the World Literature Program. There was discussion about rebranding the Department of English as it would assist with enrolments. A committee member commented that the graduate program within English is strong.

Motion:
“That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the Department of English that resulted from its external review.”

Moved: C. Shaw
Seconded: E. Chenier

The question was called and the motion: Carried

C. Lesjak left the meeting.

5. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: External Review of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology
   Guests: D. Lacombe, J. Pulkingham, and G. Nicholls

A committee member asked why the Department’s action plan included the development of new 400/800 level courses even though this combination was not recommended by the external reviewers. The Department Chair explained that as the Department is growing its MA program and shrinking its PhD program, these course offerings provide more electives for the MA students. The class size will be small with approximately 15-16 students and capped at 30 students. There is a softening of enrolments for Anthropology majors and minors but enrolments remain stable for Sociology majors and minors. It was noted that once the Department has a clear vision of its research needs, the VPR office can provide support to move the Department forward.

Motion:

“That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the Department of Sociology and Anthropology that resulted from its external review.”

Moved: P. Tingling
Seconded: T. Brennand

The question was called and the motion: Carried

D. Lacombe and J. Pulkingham left the meeting.

6. Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology: External Review of the School for the Contemporary Arts
   Guests: A. Eigenfeldt, O. Underhill, and G. Nicholls

A committee member asked how the School proposes to increase its non-operating budget for equipment and infrastructure as indicated in the Action Plan. The School Director commented, although, they may not receive the full funding, SCA will solicit assistance from the offices of the Faculty Dean and VPA. The school is located on a shared building and it was noted by the School Director that although there have been some improvements to security at the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, there are still some concerns that need to be addressed. SCA continues to face challenges with shared space among the Woodward’s Cultural Unit, the Office of Community Engagement and MECS. It was noted that more appropriate metrics on research impact will need to be developed as the standard research metrics do not capture the quality and breadth of research at SCA.

Motion:
“That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the School for the Contemporary Arts that resulted from its external review.”

Moved: C. Shaw
Seconded: J. Derksen

The question was called and the motion: Carried

A. Eigenfeldt left the meeting.

7. Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology: External Review of the School of Communication

Guests: J. Marontate, O. Underhill, and G. Nicholls

In regards to a reference in the report, a committee member asked why a couple of faculty members were not teaching any courses. The CMNS Director explained that one individual is a new faculty member, with a reduced workload assignment for that year, and the other was on sabbatical at the time of the review. A committee member commented that applied learning opportunities are very important to students particularly when seeking employment. It was noted that course accessibility issues and potential bottlenecks are being monitored as they are impacting graduation times. Better advance planning of course offerings will assist with completion times. A committee member commented that space for research collaboration was a good idea. A committee member suggested that the unit look at offering more student workstations with the necessary licensed software to offset the recent lost space. A one-year non-thesis MA is still in the works.

Motion:

“That SCUP approve and recommend to Senate the Action Plan for the School of Communication that resulted from its external review.”

Moved: A. Parmar
Seconded: C. Fowler

The question was called and the motion: Carried

J. Marontate, O. Underhill, and G. Nicholls left the meeting.

Closed Session

Meeting adjourned at 3:18 pm.