

EPAG minutes - April 9, 2020

Meeting by Zoom, 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Present: Louisa Bradtmiller, Eric Carter (Chair), Terri Fishel, Arjun Guneratne, James Heyman, Joanna Inglot, Mark Mazullo, Ann Minnick, Ernesto Ortiz-Diaz, Paul Overvoorde, Timothy Trafficie.

1. Approved Minutes of April 2, 2020.
2. Report from FAC. Most topics on our agenda.
3. New Business/Covid-19 response
 - a. Concern about students being assigned extra work under remote learning format. Discussion about teaching in online environment and some discrepancies regarding added work, impact on students and their stress level about extra work. In addition, complaints have been made by students and parents about classes not being held by faculty who have just added reading and have a paper requirement. Recommendation was a memo from the Provost to include guidelines: about need to stay in touch with students, mindful of workload, possible suggestions for group work. Students were feeling ignored and cast adrift. Suggestion that department chairs check in with their faculty and targeted outreach - a friendly outreach. Ask individual faculty to summarize how things are going. Academic freedom and autonomy in the classroom.
 - b. Discuss changes to College calendar: [contingency plan for late Fall 2020 start or remote learning in Fall 2020](#). (Karine/Timothy) Reviewed spreadsheet created by Timothy. Starting two weeks late, starting with an October 1 date, and start on November 1 and impacts on spring. Starting two weeks late could keep the spring schedule. Tradeoffs on start date. Scheduling finals around holidays. Late start means reconfiguring entire calendar for the year. Maybe start in mid-August, and that a resurgence of virus in November/December. Different scenarios according to start date. EPAG members should look at different options. Late spring start might buy time to get vaccine. Concern about students not able to do research over the summer - this summer a disaster, if next year is also, will mean a cohort that didn't have any summer research time. Suggestions including using remote - hard to welcome new students with remote instead of in person. Retention could be a problem. Unknowns are such that we can only make contingency plans based on possibilities. Fall exams the week before spring semester starts? Trimesters suggested? 2 credit version from October to December. Then a 2 credit version after December. Credit hours need to be 42, accreditors wanted 45, so we can't go lower. 7 week half semester, smaller period of disruption if we have to go to online teaching. Smaller chunks of teaching time, teach 2 credit courses. If teaching remotely, reduction in tuition, reduction in budget, is the worse case scenario. It got too depressing to consider considering the calendar.
 - c. Proposal for one-time extension to the final grading deadline for this year: from May 14 to May 21. (Timothy) Remote commencement is scheduled for same time May 16th - generally takes Registrar a week to do processing for diplomas. There will still be students who would go through commencement, but need to come back. We

missed a week of class with the extra week of spring break. Assignments due last day of finals. Honors projects deadline to defense is tied to printing commencement program. Two boxes - box 1 - Mortar board and ?. Box 2 - honor cords, program, and diploma.

- d. Discuss a one-time exception to the limit on incoming transfer credit for first-year students. (Paul/Timothy) Approved.
 - Currently that limit is set to change to 20-credits as of Fall 2020. The suggestion is to allow for up to 32-credits for first-year students should they take additional courses before matriculation at Macalester. Question about impact on foreign languages.
 - Second conversation about first year course - would we be willing to offer in both semesters next - students who want to defer starting in spring. Agreed it would be a good things. Check with faculty who would be willing to do it.
 - Eric will write a memo about curricular changes to faculty.

Adjourned 4:33

Submitted by Terri Fishel, Library Director