Faculty Advisory Committee to the President
Meeting minutes, 03/23/22

Committee members present: Suanne Ansari, Dan Greenberg, Patricia Dillon (scribe), Chris Mothorpe, Joseph Weyers, Bob Pitts (via Zoom), Bethany Goodier, Wes Dudgeon, Bob Podolsky (chair), Kathy Béres Rogers (scribe), Vijay Vulva.

Also present: President Andrew Hsu, Provost Suzanne Austin, Paul Patrick, Mark Berry

The meeting began exactly at 3:30 pm over Zoom.
Dr. Hsu had no additional points, so we began with our agenda.

1. Grice Marine Lab Updates
Dr. Hsu said that the College has been trying to get money to update the Grice Marine Lab for many years. There’s a potential to partner with DNR and the State Parks, and there is an interested senator. Dr. Hsu said they told interested parties that we want better facilities but need logistics like water access, etc. Parks and Recreation has hired a consulting firm to look at various facility locations to help develop a master plan. Once we have one, our state legislature can figure out how many resources we need. He also shared that we have two faculty members, Eric McElroy and Jack DiTullio, involved in the master planning process, as is the local architect for the Rita science building.

Bob asked for clarification, and Paul Patrick said the goal is to take all of the different properties (many of which were sold to DNR) and look at everything out there, including May Forest (the former convent). The concern is that increasing public access to the property will compromise the research, teaching, and management functions of the campus. President Hsu has repeatedly said that we want to be a partner in this effort, but we won’t do it to the detriment of our programs.

2. College Reads Program
Dr. Austin began by saying that the program has been running for 20 years, and it’s a good idea to take a step back and figure out what the best way to do it is. About 10% of 4 year institutions in the US are doing this type of program. This is a good time to step back and talk about whether this is the most meaningful shared experience that we could have. There are other ways, she says, to integrate a shared intellectual experience.

The funding is fully there for College Reads, and we are moving forward in bringing in the speaker. The Provost said 50% of the students are choosing to opt in, so that says the other 50% would rather do something else.
Beth Goodier asked why we decided on making it optional before we had that conversation. Austin agreed that the timing of this could have been handled better; she
had no idea how controversial this would be. Lynne Ford told her that it was difficult to get faculty members to do the discussion sections. Bob Podolsky said that it was important to have an intellectual conversation and then potentially tie it into courses. Dr. Austin said it would be great to tie it in, but that we could have a conversation about other ways we might want to do this.

Bob said that faculty are looking for more information about why this was handled the way it was, and about the timing of this decision. He asked whether there was any pressure from the Board of Trustees to do something about this based on the nature of the book? Dr. Hsu answered in the negative. He said that, when the Provost brought this to him, they were discussing the REI requirement. He mentioned having a director in place in January; the suggestion was that we could use the money in the College Reads! Budget. Since then, because REI was delayed, we have identified other funding resources.

3. College Expo
The original message about the Expo was that it was replacing other opportunities. Vijay reported that the graduate school was not communicating with the CofC expo. The students received emails about the expo, that they had to turn in their things one week after spring break. He felt that the graduate school was part of the CofC expo, but that he was surprised about that.
Dr. Austin apologized and said we would be better coordinated next year. No one wants to change poster sessions; she just wants to make the expo a possibility.

Vijay really likes the idea but was curious about the long lead times; were students being reviewed by faculty? Dr. Austin agreed that this should not be a complicated process and will follow up to make it easier for people the next time around.

4. Dean of Education School
Dr. Hsu said that it’s no longer appropriate for us to accept the donation for the School of Education, and that they need to stand with the faculty and returned the donor’s money.
Bob asked about the next step, and Dr. Hsu answered that we will continue with the separation of the two schools. Health does have a great future, and we want to continue developing a full-fledged School of Health Sciences. In terms of deanship, Dr. Welch has agreed to serve for one more year and help shepherd the separation of the two schools.
Provost Austin said the search for the dean of the School of Health Sciences is going on right now. That person will be working closely with Fran Welch on budget items that will remain joint and on items that will be separated.

5. Cost of Living
We returned to discussing the cost-of-living vs. merit increases. Wes began by saying that, for associate professors doing their job well—but who don’t go up for full—there is very little structure for pay bumps, which leads to compression.
Dr. Austin said that she always wants to see what people at various ranks are making—she brought up the example of retention and wants to make sure we aren’t throwing money at people to retain them. It needs to be fair, but we need the money to address issues of compression. At this point, the idea is to go ahead and get people raises, and then, when we’re in a better place, we can begin to discuss these things.

6. **Statement of Support for the Ukraine**
   Dr. Hsu said he has already made one.

7. **New registrar**
   starts June 1, from West Virginia.

The meeting adjourned around 5pm.