

Report to the Faculty
Sara Freeman, Chair of Faculty Senate
October 31, 2018

Dear Colleagues:

Since our last faculty meeting, Faculty Senate has been busy primarily with structuring the process for a revision of the undergraduate curriculum framework in response to the Strategic Plan, *Leadership for a Changing World, 2018-2028*.

I am going to take the bulk of this report to discuss the “how” of curriculum revision as we are shaping it in conversation with the Provost, but first I will update the few other pieces of business.

- Faculty Senate continues to work on revision of the language related to promotion and tenure based on the feedback from the October 3 faculty meeting. We will not have a draft on November 7, but you will be seeing that revision in February and March, next semester.
- Faculty Senate got a first reading of the revised student conduct code, shared with us by our colleagues in Student Affairs who have been working on the revision for the last two years. We asked questions and provided feedback. The revised Student Integrity Code will be shared with the campus at large as it is finalized.
- Faculty Senate collaborated with the President to elect and appoint seven faculty members to the advisory committee to the Provost Search and collaborated with the VP Finance office to have faculty panels to interview the finalists for the new University Counsel position. Voting participation was very high for this election! 187 faculty members voted, which is a 75% response rate.

Curriculum Revision

Since October 3, three key things have happened. First, the Board of Trustees endorsed the strategic plan at its October meeting. Second, the Faculty Senate hosted an informal and very informative conversation with President Crawford at the University Club on October 10. Third, the Provost shared with the faculty a link so we could read the complete strategic plan as presented to the Board of Trustees.

With those events, and the information they have moved into circulation, added to the discussion in the October 3 meeting and the work of the August 23 curriculum workshop for faculty, I am now hearing regular inquiries from faculty about forming a committee and how to do the work. A word on terminology: undergraduate curriculum framework is the name for the thing “author your future” describes; we don’t have to use the title “author your future” for our framework, but the strategic plan profoundly calls us to focus and (re)structure our undergraduate framework for the next phase of our institutional history. I know the faculty understand higher education to be in a changing space in our country at large, and faculty

understand that our university is at a pivotal point in our own right as regards enrollment, student profile, and how we fulfill our mission.

I perceive that there is there is strong interest among the faculty for proposing models for the undergraduate framework. I apprehend that there is also great anxiety as to how we will complete this curricular work and what the available resources will be.

Faculty Senate and the Provost have created a call for nominations for a Curricular Task Force. The call describes everything we've been able to define about the formation of the committee, the committee's charge, the nature of the work. We've defined quite a lot, including a draft charge, a structure and leadership for work, and compensation for those who serve on the CTF. After Faculty Senate's November 5 meeting, that call will go to the full Faculty and we will have a chance to discuss it on November 7. I can highlight three important things the call addresses here, and then I would like to spend the last bit of this report addressing the timeline for work, and why I think it is worth it to move swiftly. I hope you will read the call in full prior to the November 7 meeting.

1. **The call addresses the scope and interconnectedness of the CTF work**, including plans for the task force to interface with later processes related to revising or expanding our graduate programs and plans for librarians to be on the task force. The charge specifies that the task force address workload structures and resources needed to implement a revised undergraduate framework
2. **There are plans to provide either stipends or course releases (in cases where enrollments numbers allow for some shift) for faculty serving on the CTF.**
3. **The spirit of the charge to the task force comes from the strategic plan**, but Senate expects that the task force will exercise discernment and choice as it shapes an undergraduate framework that is fully ours, which may mean continued (re)definition of the terms used in the strategic plan. The call includes plans for an open call for models of undergraduate frameworks from the faculty at large.

The timeline for revision of the undergraduate framework has three main targets: the faculty meeting on May 1, 2019 (yes, we're going to add that meeting to the schedule), the materials used during the 19-20 admissions and recruitment process, and the course schedule for AY 20-21.

I know the timeline strikes many faculty members as very fast. On the one hand, I sympathize with that affective sense. On the other hand, I know that the strategic plan represents three years of work and there is a lot of evidence that we've been talking around the need for serious curriculum alignment or revision for quite a while. The evidence of those conversation is in the work of Curriculum Committee reviewing the core, the work on our educational goals, and the work of the Committee on the Shared Curriculum, experiential learning work groups and Mellon grants, among other processes. I also know two other things: ripeness is everything, and

it helps to have an opening night. We have asked for the opportunity to put students, curriculum, and resources for faculty and staff at the center of the institution's planning processes, and now we are being asked to translate that into action. The ripe moment is here. Having an opening night means you mobilize, for real, and go after what you want as actively as possible.

During interviews for the new University Counsel, I was moved to hear Terry Beck (winner of the President's Teaching Award!) remember that when he joined the faculty, his incoming cohort heard President Pierce say that "this University will live and die by the quality of teaching in our classrooms." That seems to be more true than ever — the stakes are high and our pedagogy makes a difference. I think of the work of a shared curriculum as the great work of a university. So we press on.

Sincerely,

Sara