

CALS ACADEMIC PLANNING COUNCIL - MINUTES

April 2, 2019

1:00pm-2:30pm

2321 DeLuca Biochemical Sciences Meeting

- Attendees:** Jane Collins, Barb Ingham, Chuck Kaspar, Hasan Khatib, Rick Lindroth, Nicole Perna, Doug Soldat, Bill Tracy, Alan Turnquist, Paul Mitchell (arrived at 1:11pm)
- Not present:** Erica Anna, Jeri Barak, Guy Groblewski, Dietram Scheufele
- Ex officio:** Kate Vandenbosch, Dick Straub, Karen Wassarman, Doug Reinemann (departed at 1:35pm), Bill Barker
- Guests:** Brian Yandell (Data Science Institute proposal), Katy Forest (Data Science Institute proposal), Jeff Hardin (Molecular Biology major reopening and name change)
- Minutes taken by:** Megan Ackerman-Yost

Public meeting attendees: None

The meeting was called to order by K. Vandenbosch at approximately 1:00pm.

Review agenda

No changes were made to the agenda.

Review minutes for February 19, 2019

The March 5, 2019 minutes were approved via the consent agenda.

Action and discussion items

1. Extension governance proposal
Doug Reinemann, faculty member and CALS Associate Dean for Extension and Outreach, provided an overview of the proposal for governance of Extension and the faculty currently housed in Extension, received by the CALS APC on April 1, 2019. This proposal was meant to outline the structure for a department to serve as the tenure home for transitioning faculty. He introduced the cover letter, which was included to address some previous objections which had been raised. The cover letter outlined the working group, which included four faculty appointed by the UW-Madison University Committee and four faculty appointed by the Cooperative Extension University Committee. Doug also indicated that feedback already received has raised objections. Among them, one issue was that the existing administrative structure of Extension, called nEXT Gen, was complicated by the proposal and appeared to be overly beaurocratic.

- The current proposal defines joint faculty as “all persons who hold the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor with at least a one-half time appointment in UW-Madison, with a tenure home in a department of another school or college.”
- Tenure-track requirements in Extension are different than requirements for the University. The proposal indicates that the Division of Extension could hire and house new tenure-track faculty, which then creates two separate classes of faculty, as transitional faculty would be tenured under the Department of Extension, but new faculty would need to meet the University requirements.
- There are a lot of benefits that departments get from Extension, in addition to the benefits that extension faculty would get from being in a department. The department and college benefit from having extension faculty integrated within the department, and something great would be lost by the segregated proposal.
 - Many research and scientific questions are developed based on the concerns and needs of practitioners and the implications of new laws and requirements.
 - Integrated extension faculty become part of the UW-Madison identity and the identity of the department.
 - Integrated extension faculty provide support to meet the college and state mission.
- Concern that un-integrated new faculty cannot meet the Divisional tenure requirements and hiring new faculty who were not integrated within a department would not be successful long-term.
- Comment: Working group had a very limited time and resources to come up with proposal, and this is what could be done in the time available.
- Comment: it would be beneficial to have a Division and a Department of Extension to provide a home for the tenured faculty, and then provide a year to hammer out the rest of the details.
- Q: is the new ruminant faculty through extension? A: no, they are a CALS hire who would be partially funded from extension, but not hired through extension.
- Q: Does this mean that there won't be any more tenure-track county faculty? A: That was previously decided upon and isn't part of this proposal.

Kate: major concerns:

- Joint faculty: when faculty are jointly appointed, their salary is split between two entities. If the proposal is requesting joint governance faculty, they should follow FPP. However, it was noted that this might be a misunderstanding of intentions.
 - Suggest clarification of language about what the intention is with regards to “joint faculty”.
- Future hires of tenure-track faculty: concerns about hiring new tenure-track faculty in the Division of Extension for a few reasons:
 - heterogeneous group; faculty transitioning now and new future faculty would have different expectations for tenure
 - concern that new faculty would always be better supported by a department, with access to funding, graduate programs, etc.
- Proposed governance and sections are more than required by nEXT Gen and creates a lot of layers between staff and leaders. For example, the proposal has a steering committee for each section to ensure peer review, each with Vice Chairs to serve under the Department Chair.

- Naming of the educational sections are confusing, as the proposed “UW-Extension Department of Agriculture and Life Sciences” is very similar to CALS. “UW-Extension Department of Environmental Sciences” also is very similar to the Environmental Sciences major.

2. Data Science Institute proposal

Brian Yandell and Katy Forest joined the CALS APC meeting to present the Data Science Institute proposal and answer questions. The Chancellor has charged a number of initiatives relative to Data Science, including this Data Science Institute. Data science is reshaping our world and reshaping academia, and data affects every department and disciplines.

Last year, the Chancellor charged a committee to create a strategic plan for creating the Data Science Institute. The plan was developed in the fall and reviewed and approved by OVCRGE in March, and now it will go to UAPC. The Institute will provide collaborations with faculty and enhance prospects for large-scale funding. It will provide opportunities for collaboration and partnerships, but it will not be where data is housed. There are faculty fellows, faculty affiliates, scientific staff, and administrative staff, as well as an advisory board. Expectation of partnerships with research teams. Katy notes that this institution does not eliminate the need for a data warehouse.

- Question: Is this a virtual institute, or is it physical? Response: There is a physical location on Floors 10 and 11 of the McArdle Building
- Question: Would it relocate faculty? Response: No, there would be partial appointments. Grants follow where the work happens, so if the work happens in the department, then the department gets the money, but if the work occurs in the Data Science Institute, then the Data Science Institute gets the money.
 - Comment: It’s very difficult to determine where the work occurs, and this is a huge issue.
 - Response: The portion of the proposal regarding grant administration was written by the OVCRGE.
- Question: What’s the difference between faculty fellows and affiliates? Response: Fellows are involved in the direction of the institute and have a significant amount of research housed in Institute space. They are appointed by the Institute’s leadership in consultation with existing Fellows.
- Comment: Note that the institute will house data scientists. The idea is that this institute would provide the expertise in data science to assist with projects across the university.
 - Comment: Choices would be made about what projects the data scientists would contribute to so that they can build on their experiences and apply that knowledge to the greater University population
- Question: Where does CALS fit in? Response: Think about types of projects that might fit in, not necessarily departments.
- Question: How do you envision how people would receive access to those projects and who would be chosen? Response: The faculty fellows and the leadership team would make those decisions. We would like those people to be chosen based on the needs of the university as a whole so that the data scientists can apply it to a larger picture.
- Question: many new hires have a background in data science – how will these new hires benefit from the institute? Response: The Institute wants to increase visibility of resources that are already available at the university. Additionally, new faculty could possibly become faculty affiliates.

Discussion on what should be included in the support letter from CALS:

- It is important that CALS be involved to further the research of its faculty and departments.
- It would be valuable to have more faculty who specialize in data science.
- It can be difficult to find a way to support data scientists and specialists for each department/group, and this institute would solve that problem by providing external support.
- Strongly supportive of having experts to assist faculty who are working with bigger and bigger datasets and could use expertise in how to best utilize them.
- Some concern about divisiveness, and ensuring that CALS faculty involved in the institute are fully involved in their own department. It would be incumbent on the institute to ensure that there are ways to maintain communication for staff/faculty/students that are housed in two places.
- Some concern about accessibility, given that the choices on who becomes a Fellow and who receives support is all chosen internal to the Institute. Would like to see that choices are fair and equitable across the University.
- Suggestion: The Institute should include a metric for success to measure how well the initial opportunities undertaken by data scientists provide transferrable skills and experiences for other projects. The invited guests indicated that there would be a focus on the transferability of learning opportunities in the starting phase to ensure that the entire university population benefits, and this is an important consideration.

3. Molecular Biology Major -reopening major and name change

Jeff Hardin joined the CALS APC meeting to present background information and answer questions about reopening the Molecular Biology major and renaming it Molecular and Cell Biology. He provided some background on re-opening the major: The Molecular Biology major pre-dates the Biology major. The major had a 10-year review that raised concerns about the governance of the major and the uniqueness of the major in relation to other majors, including Biology, Biochem, and Genetics & Genomics. The concern by the college was that it was not specific and distinct from these other majors. The recommendation from L&S was that the major be closed unless it could resolve issues related to governance structure and distinctiveness of major. This past year, the steering committee of the major revised the governance to address the concerns. Faculty in the major also reviewed the learning goals and course requirements of the majors, and determined that a name change to Molecular and Cell Biology would better capture the intention of the major to capture the molecular function of eukaryotic cells. Jeff indicated that the faculty in the major felt that this focus differentiates it from the other majors, and the requirement for the Cell Biology course makes it unique.

- Question: It looks like one of the recommendations of the L&S review was to have a named option in the Biology major for Molecular Biology. Was this considered? Response: In order to become a named option, they needed a committed group of faculty. The leadership wanted to continue the long history of having a successful major.
- Question: Could a Biology major take all the required classes for the major? Response: Yes, but the purpose of taking the classes is different because the learning outcomes of the program are different.
- Question: what exactly makes this major unique? If I'm looking at the information, it doesn't seem to be unique. Response: The Cell Biology course is required, and there is a focus on quantitative biology.

- Question: You indicate that there is a focus on quantitative biology which makes the major unique, but there's no requirement for quantitative courses. A: That's true. We hope that advisors will guide students, but we are focusing on the required Cell Biology course to distinguish it.

Discussion of the Molecular Biology major and content of a letter from CALS:

- This seems to impact CALS immensely, as it is very similar to other existing majors. It explicitly disallows double-majoring in other biology-type majors and is exclusively in L&S.
- There is no information in the proposal regarding solely eukaryotic cells, which was the way that Jeff indicated the major was different from Microbiology.
 - Even if that were listed, this would cause confusion for students
- Not a benefit for students – splintering of majors with unclear boundaries.
- Concern that if there was not faculty committed to a named option in Biology, how is there enough commitment for a major

Informational Items and Announcements

Faculty Hiring update

- Bacteriology – Assistant Prof in Molecular Biology
- Dairy Science – Asst Prof/Ext Specialist in Ruminant Nutrition
- Entomology – Asst or Assoc Prof in Epidemiology or Disease Ecology
- Genetics - Asst Prof in Plant Genetics (contingent)
- Horticulture – Asst Prof in Plant Resilience
- LSC - Asst Prof in Visualizing Science or Science Communication
- Soil Science – Asst Prof in Soil Microbiology
- Updates forthcoming on spousal and TOPS hires

Search updates

- Finalist for Senior Associate Dean - Dr. Mark Rickenbach, professor and chair, department of forest and wildlife ecology — public presentation on Wednesday, April 24, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Spitze Award update

- At the recommendation of the subcommittee, Timothy Van Deelen (F&WE) was awarded the Robert G. F. and Hazel T. Spitze Land Grant Faculty Award for Excellence

Meeting adjourned 2:30pm.