

Minutes | CHSS Faculty Assembly Meeting

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 | 3:00-4:15pm

- **Call to Order**
 - CHSS Faculty Assembly Chair Esperanza Román-Mendoza called the meeting to order at 3:01pm. Approximately 36 faculty and staff members were in attendance on Zoom.
- **Approval of Minutes of February 16, 2022**
 - Esperanza moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and gave a reminder that they were sent with the meeting agenda and are available online. The minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections.
 - Esperanza made a motion to approve the agenda. There was no discussion or requested changes. The agenda was also unanimously approved.
- **Announcements from the Dean**
 - Dean Ardis thanked Esperanza for her leadership and hard work as Chair of the CHSS Executive Committee and she underscored the value of the college's shared governance and highlighted the efforts made by the college over the last several years to update governance documents such as the bylaws, RPT guidelines, teaching load standards, and workload policy guidelines. Dean Ardis thanked the working group of faculty who carried out the first crucial stage of work in developing the CHSS workload guidelines during Fall 2021-Spring 2022 and noted that the second phase of development will focus on creating local academic unit guidelines. The dean underscored the need to honor and recognize the different types of contributions faculty make to their academic unit, the college, and the university during different stages of their careers and that our collective work is part of a united educational mission.
 - Dean Ardis explained that the process of updating the RPT guidelines has fallen behind given the multiple ongoing projects but next year the committee will continue a bottom-up process for considering substantive updates, researching peer institutions, and provided a possible scope of working themes such as DEI and community-based research. The revised guidelines are anticipated to be implemented beginning in AY 23-24.
 - Dean Ardis expressed her gratitude to the Resources and Long-term Planning Committee for their work with Michele Schweitz, on conducting the research center review and ushering through the re-chartering/chartering process of several CHSS-chartered research centers. She also noted that one proposal for a new research center is under review.
 - The dean expressed her congratulations to the many CHSS faculty members who were recognized with university teaching excellence awards and she provided save the dates for an end of semester coffee hour and the CHSS Humanities and Interdisciplinary Programs and Social Sciences degree celebrations. She closed by thanking Chairs and Directors as an important faculty assembly committee as well.

- **Announcements from the Chair**

- Esperanza thanked Dean Ardis and expressed her gratitude to the CHSS Faculty Assembly for their engagement and support, and recognized the many accomplishments achieved together over her last four years as Vice-Chair and Chair. She thanked Ellen for her work as Secretary as well as Charlotte who served as Interim Secretary. Esperanza also thanked Jim for his support as Vice-Chair, Ted as Parliamentarian for advising on all things related to governance and the nominations process, and recognized the key roles of Jenna, Jaime, and everyone at the dean's office.
- Esperanza reminded everyone that there are still two vacancies on the CHSS Executive Committee for the coming academic year, and encouraged colleagues to nominate themselves for the Vice-Chair and Secretary positions from the floor. She reiterated the value of this experience from both a professional and personal perspective.
- Esperanza clarified that the voting ballot for the Faculty Workload and RPT Guidelines will be sent electronically the following week.

- **New Business**

- Justin Ramsdell, Co-Chair of the CHSS Faculty Workload Guidelines, highlighted changes made since the last discussion of the CHSS Faculty Workload Guidelines, which aimed to address all faculty comments and concerns with the original draft of the Workload Guidelines. Justin first thanked all members of the Working Group and encouraged others to thank them as well. He provided a brief overview of the timeline of their work and discussed the main changes in terms of (i) non-material changes in the text such as correcting typos, (ii) expanded or clarified definitions, and (iii) new text additions that were not in the original draft.
 - The second group of changes included expanded description of what is meant by "typical" teaching load, teaching duties outside the typical teaching load, and service outside one's 'home', or local academic unit (LAU). Justin also highlighted other areas of the document that needed clarification. He shared that individual LAU's will be responsible for deciding whether thesis and dissertation direction or committee membership counts as research, teaching or service and that the joint appointment section was also further clarified thanks to input from jointly appointed faculty. He also noted clarifications made to GTA supervision in order to recognize the potentially significant mentoring involved and that remedies proposed to compensate duties outside the typical teaching load may not work for every LAU.
 - Justin highlighted new text additions pertaining to the potential scenarios outside the typical teaching load section and the addition of a new section that outlines and clarifies the definition of "Administrative Duties".
 - Justin noted the omission of "Emotional Labor" in the document and confirmed that it is the intention of the Working Group to make it visible and revisit its eventual incorporation once LAU's draft their guidelines. He opened the floor for discussion and questions and clarified that while they were not accepting further comments or feedback before the vote, the guidelines are still a working

document and will likely be revised further once LAUs begin to process and apply them to their individual situation.

- Several faculty members expressed their thanks to Justin and the Working Group in the chat and Esperanza praised Justin's leadership as Co-Chair.
- Seth Kaplan provided context for revisions to the College's P&T guidelines, the impetus of which was the introduction of the Interfolio platform and the need to update the guidelines to reflect and align with the logistics of Interfolio. A subcommittee, including Seth, Johanna Mollerstrom and Antonio Carreño Rodriguez, worked productively on the first phase of changes and Seth thanked Jenna and Jaime for their significant support and correspondence during this process. Seth clarified that the initial changes regarding Interfolio are somewhat uncontroversial as well as other changes made to accommodate the needs of smaller LAUs. The next phase of revisions will be more substantive and follow a bottom-up process to elicit comments and feedback.
- Seth screen-shared the document with changes highlighted and indicated that he and Johanna would be happy to answer questions or address concerns. Adam Winsler asked if faculty could make comments at the meeting and Seth affirmed.
- Seth highlighted teaching evaluations as one area that resulted in significant discussion given that the new course evaluation system does not include the two holistic questions about "Teaching Overall" and "Course Overall". The committee considered at length which items from the new evaluation should be used and Johanna further explained the underlying thinking of the committee for choosing to use median ratings for the items, "The course organization supported my learning", "The course clearly communicated course requirements to students", and "The instructor clearly communicated course content" for all courses taught Spring 2022 and beyond.
- Adam requested clarification about this interim approach and asked if the committee was considering including a fourth or fifth question or using an average of all items. He also questioned whether the version of the document that was accessible online was different than the one being viewed. Johanna responded that they did consider calculating an average but they did not decide to suggest that route given that some course evaluation questions ask the student to report what they did, which is not directly evaluative of teaching. Seth indicated that they are open to considering and further discussing other options and Adam indicated his support for this approach.
- Melissa Broeckelman-Post suggested in the chat considering an average of each of the four main factors in the course evaluation including Student Participation, Learning Outcomes, Course Environment and Experiences, and Instructor Preparation and Course Organization. Johanna explained that the committee felt that the three items under instructor preparation and course organization most closely aligned with what had previously been used and that there is strong preference for median ratings rather than averages given that students with strong opinions heavily influence the average. Melissa agreed that medians are superior to means.

- Esperanza provided some contextual background for the change in evaluation procedures and clarified that questions 15 and 16 that were previously used were discarded due to their documented bias in the literature. She suggested considering also incorporating the factor Course Environment and Experiences in order to provide useful information in promotion cases. Seth suggested moving on to review the rest of the document and in the future figuring out a process to determine which course evaluation items are the most valid.
- Seth summarized another change regarding another aspect of teaching evaluations, which now permits a current or former chair, an associate chair, or a program chair to conduct a teaching evaluation. Keith Renshaw inquired whether the committee had considered using an appointed chair designee or group to provide more flexibility for large departments like English. Adam suggested adding in language to that effect and Keith inquired whether there were any university-level conditions that prevent changes. Jaime Lester said that would be possible given that these are CHSS-level guidelines and further clarified that the attempt was to try to stay as close as possible to the original language. Seth requested that Keith provide revised language.
- Seth summarized a proposed revision regarding the role of the liaison who meets with the candidate and the department chair. The change allows for the liaison to communicate any relevant or significant information that s/he obtains about the candidate's case and that this information should be formalized and included in the CHSS P&T recommendation letter to the Dean.
 - Adam asked for further clarification on when and what information was allowed to be included in P&T discussions once the candidate's packet was sent out to external reviewers because previously. Seth confirmed that candidates the liaison could report updates to the CHSS committee but in the last two or three years, there seems to be a change toward not including that information in their deliberations. Seth confirmed that candidates are not allowed to update anything once their Interfolio packet has been submitted but understood that this information could be mentioned in the meeting and should be included in the letter to the Dean.
 - Adam asked why the meeting between the liaison and the Chair was deleted and Seth responded that it was redundant because it is stated previously.
 - Jaime Clark requested to return to the first page of the document and expressed her discomfort with the idea that a candidate could be penalized or their evaluation delayed if their department does not submit something on time given that this is out of the candidate's control. Johanna responded that this was included to demonstrate that deadlines matter and often the committee meets without all required materials on a case and there are consequences for not meeting those deadlines. Adam further added that, in his experience on the P&T committee, this stipulation of delaying a decision may actually help a

candidate because previously, not having all materials on time contributed to negative evaluation of the candidate. Johanna suggested restating this part to more generally stipulate that the committee cannot proceed if a candidate's dossier is not complete.

- Esperanza suggested making a motion to revise wording on these two more controversial items and include them on the ballot next week for Faculty to vote on. She also expressed her support for changing the evaluation procedure to better reflect the holistic nature of teaching. Adam pointed out useful comments in the chat and suggested that those comments be considered in the next steps of revision. Johanna agreed and observed that in both the discussion and the chat, several colleagues seemed to coincide in favoring one rating per factor, which reflects the average of the medians. Seth clarified that the sub-committee originally did not choose to include some of the factors because they seemed to be more about the students than about the instructor but that they were open to including a mean of all four factors.
- Jaime Lester provided background on the need for a summary table based on the Provost's guidelines. Thus, the CHSS table reflects this expectation. Jaime also noted that this new change in course evaluations will create some challenges for candidates going up next year since this is the first semester it is being implemented.
- Adam asked for clarification about candidates who are going up for excellence in both teaching and research because it was unclear whether they needed to submit everything twice. Seth responded that they did not make any changes on previous procedures but intended to clarify the Interfolio procedure for candidates going up for both categories. Johanna further explained that letter writers are asked to speak to specific aspect(s) of research and/or teaching in a candidate's case and that template letters are provided in Interfolio but the actual letters that are generated are handled at the departmental level. Jaime and Jenna clarified that a candidate fills out a declaration of intent form and indicate whether they are going up for excellence in research, teaching, or both categories. In terms of the structure of Interfolio and how candidates are instructed to upload documents, Jenna said this could be handled on an ad hoc basis for cases that are both research and teaching rather than creating a separate template, given that these cases are not common.
- Seth asked for further comments on the change in teaching evaluation procedures. Esperanza responded that all four factors are interrelated and speak to teaching effectiveness. Melissa Broeckelman-Post agreed and verbalized support for using all four factors, which are meant to not only provide a summative evaluation but also constructive feedback for the instructor.

- Esperanza made a motion to extend the meeting to 4:30pm in order to announce election results and receive nominations from the floor for unfilled vacancies. The motion was unanimously approved. Esperanza thanked the sub-committee for their work and indicated that the wording change in teaching evaluations to include all four factors would be included in the document and sent for a vote next week.
- Esperanza announced the Spring 2022 CHSS committee election results.
- Esperanza opened up for the floor for nominations for the two unfilled vacancies, CHSS Faculty Assembly Vice Chair and CHSS Faculty Assembly Secretary. Esperanza encouraged faculty to consider nominating themselves and reported that Ted had reached out to all departments and that she had encouraged colleagues in MCL to do so. Esperanza reported that the professional parliamentary online workshop held on Monday, May 2 (3:00-4:30pm) about drafting bylaws was helpful and clarified that a seated chair's term cannot be extended. She said that the CHSS Executive committee may need to operate over the summer without an elected Secretary or Vice-Chair and indicated that as incoming chair, Jim could decide what he desired to do. Esperanza reiterated the rewarding nature of the work that these positions entail.
- Esperanza reported that all committee reports that she received were available online.
- **Comments for the Good of the Faculty**
 - There were no comments for the Good of the Faculty but several faculty members expressed gratitude in the chat to Esperanza and the Executive Committee for their work. Esperanza thanked everyone for their patience and collaboration and wished them a good summer.
- **Adjournment**
 - The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ellen J. Serafini, CHSS Faculty Secretary