

YUMA FACULTY COUNCIL
Thursday, October 8, 2020
2:00-3:00 PM
Zoom Meeting

Meeting minutes

Faculty Present: Francisco Villa, Christopher Gore, Karen Harag, David King, Rakesh Pangasa, Alex Steenstra, Ruth Whisler

I. Call to Order 2:02pm

II. Selection of Recorder: Karen Harag

III. Approval of Minutes Motion made by Christ Gore; seconded by Alex Steenstra

IV. Announcements

A. Covid Watch Arizona App

Francisco Villa shared that the updated app uses Bluetooth to increase contact tracing capabilities and is an overall improvement on the Health Check app. Recommended using State data, as the NAU data defaults to Flagstaff, which is inaccurate given our Yuma location. Chris Gore expressed that he is not currently using a tracking or health check app as he seldom goes into public places.

V. Current/Ongoing Business

A. SARS-CoV2 Pandemic

1. Faculty needs/concerns: Alex Steenstra relayed that business professors have speculated that when the time comes, students may resist returning to classrooms due to the convenience of virtual attendance. Chris Gore expressed that he prefers the classroom and hopes to return some time, but he has adjusted to online instruction. He is hoping to make adjustments for the spring semester to increase engagement, but in the end, it is the responsibility of the student to participate and attend classes. Francisco Villa is primarily teaching in-person due to the program needs, but strongly encourages students to attend virtually if they are feeling sick or have other needs preventing in-person attendance.

2. Student needs/concerns: Ruth Whisler technology is an issue for students. AWC is working to get internet access into student homes and has passed student names to that group. Students are experiencing many of the typical issues like writing deficiencies, but that is normal. Francisco Villa reminded other of the socially distance-capable computer lab and study space in the SR building. The AC computer lab is also open and properly socially-distanced for student use.

B. University Committee Updates

1. Liberal Arts Committee: James Latham serves and had no report

2. Yuma Curriculum Committee: Francisco Villa. Review sessions are underway, anything forthcoming should be submitted via email.

3. OBC Curriculum Committee: Kara Ahearn is the representative; relayed no report.
4. Faculty Senate: Ruth Whisler- Faculty Senate is available via Blackboard to follow discussions and access minutes and other updates. This past week's meeting focused largely on the desired characteristics of the next NAU President and was attended by over 280 faculty members, many of whom spoke directly to the two ABOR representatives. The recording and Zoom chat transcripts are available in Blackboard.
5. University Undergraduate Committee: Chris Gore relayed that the liberal studies task force is well underway. Karen Harag: I received an email with an updated draft. Could we ensure that all Yuma Faculty have access to that document? Villa/Gore will work to get this out to Yuma Faculty.

C. NAU Yuma Campus Updates: Francisco Villa sharing on behalf of Mike Sabath who strongly encourages Yuma faculty to send their comments and recommendations for qualities of the next NAU President to the Arizona Board of Regents at azregents@nau.edu

Dr. Sabath will be sending the following comments and shared them for our knowledge.

- Has knowledge and experience working with a Hispanic Serving Institution and Hispanic student population;
- Has experience with, or appreciation for, the role of a Branch campus and other statewide operations in areas of the state other than Flagstaff;
- Is willing to delegate decision-making authority and decentralize functions for academic units operating in settings that are far removed from the main campus; and
- Values the mission of the Yuma Branch campus to serve Hispanics and others in the US-Mexico border region and tailor its programming to meet their needs.

VI. New Business

- A. Yuma Assessment Committee Formation: Francisco Villa: This was a hot button issue a few years ago, but it will come back around with the Higher Learning Commission review, so it would be beneficial to collect relevant documents all in one place for easy retrieval. Chris Gore asked for context. Francisco Villa: It varies for each program, and may be predetermined in some disciplines. If there are changes in assessment tools and plans, they need to be measured and tested to ensure efficacy. Previously, some contention occurred between Yuma and main campus leadership. Ruth Whisler recommended looking first to the standards set by the accrediting body of the program. At some point you will be asked for assessment data to show whether your program is relevant and successful in achieving its aims. This is often in terms of whether the program is justified and worthwhile, meaning it

has enough students and other support. David King added that traditionally state universities have often relied minimally upon a comprehensive exit examination undertaken by students upon graduation. This the case for Criminal Justice. However completion was not then often became a condition of graduation as a score was. Francisco Villa relayed that he created an assessment plan because there was a time when you could not submit any curriculum changes until an assessment plan was in place. It is important to have and to maintain an assessment plan, because data points will be asked for or be useful in some future point. Alex Steenstra relayed that internally the university reviews all programs once every seven years in rotation to ensure viability.

David King gave specific examples of assessment types: As a specified score was not required for graduation in this comprehensive exit exam then students did not take this process seriously. In the private for profit higher education sector where assessment issues were under the microscope the standard procedure was to use individual course pre and posttest based quizzes upon assigned textbook learning objective items. A requirement of a 20% score increase between pre and posttest was the prescribed outcome goal. I have been completing pre and past tests for the last year, but recent changes with increasing online course communication has made this process impractical. Other strategies can include graduating student career follow up including employment, employment in the field of the major.

Chris Gore will reach-out to Flagstaff counterparts for their assessment plans to work off of for creating his own.

Francisco Villa will follow-up with Dr. Sabath on current procedures and the beat plan moving forward.

VII. Good of the Order

Alex Steenstra: Is there any information about plans for spring semester? As far as online versus in-person? For planning purposes, we need to know. No one was aware of any news; Francisco will reach-out to Dr. Sabath to inquire.

Spring Start-Up Meeting is scheduled for January 7th, 2021, 3:45-4:45pm

VIII. Next Meeting: Thursday, November 12th, 2020 2:00-3:00 PM, Zoom

IX. Adjourn 2:47pm

Motion made by Ruth Whisler

Second, Chris Gore