# Faculty Senate Special Session DRAFT Minutes

### December 9, 2019

### SU 319

Present: Mark Siders, Marc Koyack, Michael Parker, Ellen Siem, Jesse Longhurst, Aprille Phillips, Paul French, Laurie Kurutz, Kemble Yates, Matt Moreali, Brian Fedorek, Tiffany Morey, Cynthia Hutton, Paul Condon

Absent: Jeremy Carlton, Prakash Chenjeri, Kristin Hocevar, Enrique Chacon, Justin Harmon Michael Stanfill

Guests: Dale Vidmar, Elizabeth Whitman, Charles Weldon, Elizabeth Whitman, Steve Petrovic, Alma Rosa Alvarez, Carol Ferguson, Sherry Ettlich, Chris Lucas, Alena Ruggerio, Erin Wilder, Britney Sharp, Sarah Guenther, Sue Walsh, Kylan de Vries, Jeanne Stallman, Linda Schott

Meeting called to order at: 4:00 pm

[Secretary’s note: This is a broad overview. The video is available, and Vidmar’s PowerPoint presentation will be posted separately in the Senate drive to supplement what is here.]

1. Report from Transforming Gen Ed Task Force

* Vidmar stated that this was the first quarterly report on task force.
* The task force directives were specific: they are not looking at models of delivery yet, not looking at what courses/departments look like yet. The work they are doing is supposed to be laying a foundation. They are focusing on the learning outcomes we want students to carry with them into their lives
* The task force looked at PLC work, then generated list of campus stakeholders, surveyed the campus about learning goals (3 questions), and got feedback from 16 different departments. A lot of the feedback was not about the foundation, not about learning goals
* Sharp reported that the task force wanted to know what students think, and did a survey of students, especially around learning goals
* Overall students think they are achieving learning goals more or less in their gen ed classes, except for financial literacy
* Sharp stated that, anecdotally, some responses might vary depending on race, on major, etc. but there was no way to track this in the data they collected
* Students were asked to pick their top 5 learning goals, and Sharp ranked top 6
* Sharp edited responses presented to reflect what was “important”
* The task force generated 11 learning goals based on faculty feedback, the same 11 used in student survey
* The task force settled on term “capacities,” and then identified 6 of them: Communication, Critical Thinking, Creativity & Innovation, Collaboration, Cultural Capacity, Career & Personal Development
* Now task force will dig deeper in the capacities and look at models of delivery, state regulations, etc.
* Petrovic asked about the wording of the capacities in the document; Vidmar explained that these are not the “final” edited capacities yet
* Sharp stated that employers want students to have skills that they don’t have, and that students want career development
* Anderson asked about the proficiencies that went along with the capacities, and who would be working those out. Vidmar responded that the task force will work out learning goals to feed the capacities and proficiencies to feed those learning goals.
* Ferguson noted that there was no summary of the faculty feedback in the presentation. Vidmar responded that they were talking about learning goals only when they solicited feedback from faculty. And the summary of those eleven learning goals came from the faculty feedback. Gay added that the program feedback was more variable in form than the student responses to the survey.
* Yates noted that these capacities do not seem to include quantitative skills. Vidmar responded that the quantitative skills would probably fall under critical thinking and possibly also under creativity and innovation.
* Fedorek asked if there was any discussion of the difference between a capacity, a skill, etc? Vidmar stated that a capacity includes skill, knowledge, and dispositions.
* De Vries commented that the idea of a capacity is that it’s not finished. Students will continue to grow in those areas.
* Vidmar stated that students know what courses they took but not what capacities they have. They take math courses but can’t talk about “quantitative literacy.”
* Siem asked if the task force was thinking about transferability. Vidmar stated that their directive was not to think about that yet.
* Thatcher noted that these capacities are all transferable skills; students need to be able to see the connections between the content they have covered in classes and the bigger world. That’s what they do in OAL. They need to see the interconnections between classes, and then with the world.
* Gay stated that in the task force’s last conversation about what these capacities should be, it was determined that they are all are cross-disciplinary and not in “buckets.” Thatcher noted that this was systems thinking.
* Fedorek stated that he went to KCC on Tuesday with crim students, and they were collaborating with people in other disciplines. Collaboration between programs would be nice to see, more than just “teams” in classes
* Vidmar stated that the task force wants to see thee goals weaving through curriculum. Explorations weren’t really working like explorations, they were really going into disciplines, and maybe that’s where the employers weren’t seeing the skills they wanted
* Ferguson asked what skills do employers want that we are not teaching. Sharp responded that she didn’t remember but thought teamwork was one of them.
* Schott stated that it is pretty common to hear this from employers, but maybe the real problem is the metacognition that allows students to describe to an employer what they have. It’s more a communication and labeling issue. A History faculty member at her previous institution tied learning outcomes to workplace skills, to jobs in the real world. Schott did not think that that we are not teaching them these skills, but perhaps not all of them are getting to the level needed, and we’re not labeling what they are learning explicitly enough
* Gay stated that the metacognition needs to happen at the level of design of the curriculum. Max Brooks has stated that we need to articulate skills and values as they relate to personal and professional purpose
* Vidmar commented that LEAP outcomes, AAC&U outcomes, a lot of those outcomes linger on
* Moreali asked if there was anything surprising in the student survey. Vidmar responded that they don’t want strands and buckets. We are helping them to transfer their skills. They would like to have classes free over a certain limit
* Sharp stated that the survey wasn’t surprising. It went to just ASSOU Senate first and was worded in a way that made it hard for them to answer. Then they broke the survey down into actual learning goals so they could understand it better. The strands are confusing; this is less confusing.
* Gay noted that the students have been very vocal, very forceful about the student perspective
* De Vries stated that emotional intelligence and financial literacy emerged as important to students, which is telling. It’s interesting to see how some schools and programs are addressing this need around the country.
* Condon asked about emotional intelligence, and what students wanted to be taught. Vidmar responded that they included the 5 basic skills, and empathy. Gay added that they identified a capacity for self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.
* Siem noted that it would be great if students could articulate things like “I learned critical thinking.”
* Vidmar stated that University Studies is about getting a liberal arts education, and that’s what these are.
* Hutton asked if there was any conversation around the tuition model and compartmentalizing. Vidmar responded that the burden is pushed on students and if students don’t find value in courses they are required to take, it colors the conversation. It has to be more relevant
* Anderson asked what was next, she thought the models were next but was wondering about outcomes and proficiencies.
* Walsh stated that there wouldn’t be models without outcomes and proficiencies; it’s an iterative process and the models and proficiencies are on the table now. The next update will be the end of winter term, and the task force has specific benchmarks to achieve.
* Vidmar stated that the task force worked on learning outcomes for big goals and proficiencies, and then started talking about capacities. The learning outcomes will get matched up with capacities and then proficiencies to go with those.
* Gay asked senators and guests to have conversations with the campus and their programs; the task force will keep doing work, but can take feedback Once they get into proficiencies the task force will need to have some subcommittees with participation from others
* French asked if there was a recommended number of courses. Gay responded that there is a chorus of people saying to reduce the overal number of courses, and Vidmar said that the task force wants to streamline the curriculum.
* Vidmar said that in terms of models, what’s next is looking at some articles they have found plus the PLC research, then they will form a schemata about what kinds of things people have done. No departments and no gen ed at all are the extremes out there. If the task force finds something to pass along, they will.
* Jablonski asked if the 6 Cs were developed before or after student feedback. Vidmar said it was after. Jablonski said he would like to have more confidence in student response rate, 232. Sharp responded that she felt it was a good response rate that captures everyone. They did a lot of outreach, which she explained.
* Walsh said that weighting the different responses has been pretty even. She noted that the students provided more feedback than faculty. There will be more opportunities for feedback. Sharp noted that they have talked about having focus groups too.
* Sharp said that every single response said they wanted change and that they were unsatisfied
* Walsh stated that the task force has other data points to use as well, like the NSSE data
* Ruggerio stated that one of the things on the task force agenda is seeking feedback on the models
* Schott thanked the task force for its work
* Schott noted that The National Association of Scholars, a conservative think tank, profiled 60 universities on social justice education, including us. This may show up in the press. If you read their executive summary, it is horrifying. Their report picks on our mission, vision, values, sustainability, social justice, etc.
* Kurutz suggested the best response to this is to use it for marketing.

Meeting adjourned at: 5:11 pm