

Provost's Council
Meeting of December 13, 2018
Bacon-Crary Meeting Room
Thursday 13 December 2018, 9:00 — 12:00 EET

Present:

Ehab Abdel-Rahman	Provost
Alaa-Eldin Adris	AP-RIC
Aziza Ellozy	AP-TLT
Ahmed Tolba	AP-SEM
John Swanson	AP-AE
Heba El Deghaidy	Interim Dean, GSE
Hassan El-Fawal	
Ghada Elshimi	Dean, ALA
Sherif Kamel	Dean, Business
Adham Ramadan	Dean, Graduate Studies
Alia Shoeib	Interim Dean, SCE
Marco Pinfari	Associate Dean, HUSS
Shahjahan Bhuiyan	Associate Dean, Undergraduate Studies GAPP
Kathleen O'Neill	Director, Academic Affairs Projects

1 Approval of Agenda

Vote to approve agenda

11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain 7 Pending

2 Approval of Minutes

Vote to approve minutes

11 Yes 0 No 0 Abstain 7 Pending

3 Speed Round (2 minutes per Council member)

- 1. Business-** People know about the VLAB but few people know about the Center from Entrepreneurship. I have been speaking to the IFC and World Bank and we're getting funding. We are getting funding for the MA in Fintech. We are revamping the degrees. So far we have restructured the area of finance. We trying to cross the divide between departments. I am trying to get faculty in finance and economics to teach in the other program.
- 2. Graduate Studies-** We are completing the admission cycle for spring. We have a higher number of applicants. I expect we will offer admission to a larger number starting spring. We are also getting applications for fall. Preliminary review indicates higher numbers of international applicants for fall. It's still too early, but it's promising.

3. **AP-SEM- GEM report.** One of the authors. This report has been ongoing since 2015. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor is an annual report and we represent Egypt. We collect about 2500 responses. We do a global analysis. The launch of the report is next Monday. University of Florida has a student exchange supported by a study abroad alum. We have expanded the agreement to include faculty exchange. AP-RIC will be leading the faculty exchange component from AUC. Dean Kamel will be leading the hospitality executive education components. Four members of the Washington Consortium came and met with many of us. The informal response was very positive. They will send a formal response soon, and we are very optimistic. We have hired a US-based recruiter and a consultant to help with international recruitment. North Carolina State came last week. They came to check out the campus. California State system came earlier this semester. They represent 23 campuses and over 400,000 students.
4. **Budget-** Version three is expected to be finished next week. We are meeting with people and revising the numbers. We need to optimize the budget process.
5. **GAPP-** Last weekend we hosted a workshop. We had 11 student presentations, and we published their papers. We had many governmental employees participate in the workshop. We are also reviewing programs across the school, looking at alignment across the school and restructuring. We are pursuing a donor to establish an endowment for another PhD in global affairs, that should include economics and political science.
6. **SSE-** Last week we welcomed our associate dean for external relations and partnerships, Dr. Mohamed Allam. He will be responsible for ESS and external partnerships.
7. **LLT-** We are opening 24/7 until 19 December.

Provost Abdel-Rahman thanked Dean Elsayy for her transformation of the library into something that has changed not only AUC, but Egypt.

8. **GSE** is ending the semester smoothly, with 8 students expected to graduate. Last week we welcomed British University in Dubai to sign an MOU. We are welcoming a DVP next semester. We are finalizing a gift agreement for \$64,000 to fund PPD students. We are opening discussions with Northampton University in the UK for an MOU.
9. **RIC-** We have completed a review of 15 research centers. We have tried to let the centers know of the gaps that we have identified based on a rubric that was communicated to the centers. We have agreed to a year to allow the centers to fill the gaps. These include deviation from original mandate and lack of governance. For the centennial academic program. We have lined up 10 international conferences. We have other events like the Orhan Pamuk lecture and the 1919 Revolution music repertoire. I want to thank everyone for their input, particularly in the centennial labs for new areas of research. We will have 18 months of the centennial program, and then we can see which can be sustainable.
10. **TLT-** The task force that Dean Ramadan and I are co-chairing on graduate education will be producing its report in January. The task force on grade inflation finished its first part, and I will present the status to date. We are also working on the learning spaces. We have been interviewing consultants to select one who can help lead us through the project. Objective 1.4, which deals with communication between students and deans and chairs. We selected 7 departments and have conducted the focus groups and the reports are out. We are working with the chairs. We selected two departments from each school that we selected through the dean. There are common themes. The students were direct on what worked and what didn't work. We didn't try to generalize the results. We selected students who are seniors and graduating students in the undergraduate programs. We have one online program that is accredited by MSCHE, and that is Pro-Green. If we

get another program accredited by MSCHE, we will not need to go back to them again. We have just hired a new associate director of CLT who is heading the digital education unit, and we are staffing that unit.

11. **ALA-** We have a lot of CORE developments, that are a separate agenda item. We are working on joint hiring between ELI and RHET that will make hiring more efficient. It will also help to align the two departments. We are also re-examining the Arabic requirements for students who have not completed their Arabic requirements in the schools. We are looking at moving part of the curriculum online. They are content based theme courses. This will help to alleviate the fact that many students stall in these requirements because the courses are four days a week, and occupies too much time in their schedules. We have a DVP coming to RHET in the spring. She has wide experience in strategic plans and teaching. I think many of us can benefit from her visit.
12. **AE-** Next week I will be sending out the chair and dean reviews so we can start the process right at the beginning of the spring semester. The idea is to have it completed by 1 April.
13. **HUSS-** POLS has done good work restructuring the undergraduate programs. The HUSSLab is also producing good work. We are doing a photography exhibition next week downtown. Dean Switzer is at the ARCE/SEA conference downtown today. La Traviata is streaming on Saturday as part of the METLive. There is also the Messiah concert on the 17 December from 8-10:30.
14. **Faculty Affairs-** All adds are online. We will be circulating the P&T schedule very soon. We need to have the contracts finalized by March, and we need to bring the top candidate to campus in February. If you have a position that you want filled, you need to tell us by Monday so we can budget. If we are not told, we are putting zero budget for that line in next year's budget. Faculty leaves have all been sent to the deans.
15. **SCE-** We are conducted a conversation with the UN. We are pursuing webinars for some programs. We have concluded an agreement with EgyptAir to train the flight attendants and pilots between Downtown and New Cairo. SCE is working on transforming the Falaki building. We have transformed three classrooms.
16. **Provost-** Send PC the BoT agenda in February. We are preparing the budget and are meeting with the deans and associate provosts.

4 Core Curriculum Restructure

Review of the Presentation

Question: How do you know which students took the course as a major and who takes it as a core requirement?

Response: Core courses have to be outside the student's major. We look at who is enrolled and then filter.

Question: Do we have a policy that eliminates courses if it has not been offered for x number of semesters?

Response: No.

Question: Is there any policy that requires revision of the courses?

Response: There should be program reviews. Courses should be looked at as part of the review. This is part of the viability study.

Comment: We need to have a marketing person who looks at how to sell the core curriculum to people who do not understand what we are trying to achieve through the core curriculum.

Question: Is there a reason we do not require a quantitative analysis course?

Response: We do through the learning outcomes quantitative knowledge is part of the courses. There is also push back from SSE as to why their majors need to take some of these courses.

Follow Up Response: No one has been willing to take anything out of the core to be able to put something else in.

Response: In the next few years we will have to review our curriculum holistically because all of the new schools and programs that are opening are changing the way education is being considered and the ministry of higher education is accepting these new programs.

5 Viability Study Update

I have met with three school chairs and I have received very detailed feedback from their faculty/chairs from a fourth dean. There is very deep suspicion on this issue.

Comment: I have been approached informally from colleagues in graduate programs expressing concern and distress about what these are all about. When I try to understand what the issue is. It's not clear why people are being asked for feedback, and it's not clear what the process is. How are we going to combine differing elements that apply differently to the various programs. I reiterate that I am happy to meet with every department to explain and answer any question.

Question: Do we agree what we are going to do with this information that we are collecting?

I think I made a mistake asking the deans to send out the request before we completed the process.

My rationale for having this viability study, based on what I have said before, do you think we should do the study? If you think we should not do it, please let me know your reason.

Comment: People realize that the implications of possible outcomes. Because of this seriousness, they want a clarity on the procedural issues. If they provide candid feedback, they are afraid that the program will be closed the following year. How do we get from here to where we want to be?

Comment: The process is not drawn in a clear way. The flowchart of the process should lead to a final outcome.

We don't have an answer about what the Provost is going to do with the information until we go through the process. Please send people to me so they can yell at me and I can explain the process.

6 Grade Inflation

This is a process in which we learn as we go along.

Review of the presentation

The chair or dean can have as much information that they want. It can be overwhelming. The task force is pointing out the possibility of the data.

Comment: One of the concrete measures is that chairs must meet with faculty members at the end of the department to look at the grades.

Comment: This analysis is fantastic, but we need strong actions. Do we need a policy where we must have a curve.

Comment: The grade comes from the assessment. If we accept that our assessments are objective then we should accept the results, but if the assessments are not objective, that is a problem. We need to think about what we are able to accept.

Comment: To empower the chairs or the deans, what are the repercussions?

Response: The performance rating of the chair or dean.

Follow Up: There needs to be program buy-in.

Comment: If there is learning outcome based learning than if they have achieved the learning outcome we need to accept the outcome and a curve would not work. What about external evaluators?

Response: There would be push back on the grounds of academic freedom and more work for the faculty.

Comment: One of the measures that we can take is to require students complete the student evaluations.

Response: There are a lot of issues related to do. If you force students, they will just fill in anything. Some faculty discourage students to fill the forms. Some faculty incentivize students to complete the forms. There are simple things: don't give bonuses, don't drop the lowest grade.

Comment: Do we train our faculty to assess the students, and by faculty I mean full-time and adjuncts. Does every faculty member have to be trained on how to assess students?

Response: No.

Comment: It will be useful to move away from the model where faculty encourage students to complete the evaluations. The faculty should not be part of the cycle.

Response: We are in the process of redesigning the student evaluations. We are starting with addressing the purpose of the evaluations.

Comment: If the major requires students to have a high GPA for declaration, this creates hassling by students for the higher grade. Are there certain courses where the grade inflation is more prevalent?

Comment: I think part of this is related to faculty mentoring. This is one area where we have not been very successful. How to manage a course, how to manage these types of requests, how to manage pressure.

7 Morale of Faculty and Staff

This has been an issue for the last ten years. There is lack of communication from the administration. We need to find an issue of addressing the morale.

Comment: I think one of the issues we need to look into is the use of the AFR. We ask the faculty to put effort into the AFR, and we as chairs and deans are required to put feedback on that AFR, but I don't think there is a feeling of differentiation between those who put time and effort into this exercise versus those who don't submit at all. I would hypothesize that there is an increasing number of faculty not submitting an AFR in the last three years. In the end, it culminates in no recognition.

Response: Please feel free to reach out to Dahlia Saad to find out the number of faculty who have not submitted an AFR in the last five years. She will not provide names, only numbers.

Comment: My experience from this last year is as follows: not every chair and dean provides feedback. This is not always for a raise, it's a comment on our performance for the following year. This is why we are changing the way chairs and deans provide feedback on the AFRs. We have made this mandatory so that the assessment cannot be submitted without filling these sections.

Comment: I think shared governance relates a lot to morale.

Response: The term is shared vision of governance. This does not exclude shared governance, but this term came from our MSCHE report, who indicated that we do not have a shared vision of governance.

Comment: You said that you would resend letters to faculty.

Comment: There have been new tasks and responsibilities added to faculty while at the same time release time has been reduced. Another issue is the type of contracts and the tenure process. This is particularly true for the younger faculty members. The case of the one faculty member has resulted in faculty leaving who did not trust the process. There are also issues about mandates from above without knowledge of the processes. This leads to feelings of dispossession. Other issues include the access policy where a faculty member was denied access because she had her child with her. This is again a top-down decision.

Comment: People always look at the one case but do not look at the cases where rejections at the department or school level have been reversed. This should also be considered and help with morale.

Response: If it is an academic decision, it should come back to the school.

Comment: Virtually no faculty member fails to fill out the AFR. There is a much larger number who complete it in a very perfunctory manner. Most do it quite seriously. The problems are the ones you mentioned. The use we make of the reviews is not serious. This should go into the P&T process. We may need to reconsider the responsibilities of chairs and what we expect. It's not that these issues are not appropriate to ask, but there will be enormous pushback because while they may be required on paper, but they have not been required in practice.

Comment: When it comes to faculty, the new contracts are an issue. Some of this includes the reduction in tuition remission at AUC and private schools. Many staff members fear losing their jobs due to the one-year contracts and the Logic project. I suggest the Provost go to each school

and speak with the faculty members directly.

Suggestion: If you are going to go to each school, go with a plan. We live off of rumors and we are defensive before decisions are made and then when the decision does come out, they are against the decision from the get-go. There is no sense of belonging. People keep saying they don't know.

Comment: I think chairs are very instrumental in dealing with the problem of faculty morale. I also think that chairs are part of the communication breakdown between the administration and the faculty. I have witnessed things that are discussed at the school councils but are not addressed or adequately addressed at department levels. I also think that part of the issue is a lack of shared vision of governance, and what is merit pay and why are more people not receiving it. People see it as an entitlement. They are a recognition of exceptional work. I think we should have a forum at the school-level on what is shared vision of governance.

Comment: I support the previous comment. I was alarmed that some people feel deans should be elected by the faculty.

Comment: I think there should be a plan for reconciliation with the Senate.

Response: The Senate issue is a symptom of the bigger issue of the mistrust. We have to admit there is mistrust and then we need to fix it.

Comment: There was mistrust between the faculty and the board. The deeper problem now is between the administration and the community.

Comment: The Senate is not a unified voice.

Comment: I think we need to speak directly to the faculty.

Comment: There are no clear mechanisms to listen to staff concerns and address them. The joke that is the system of staff appraisal. They don't feel comfortable going to HR.

Comment: The Senate does not represent the staff. Having two members of staff does not make them a representative body. They either need to increase the numbers or take the staff off and call themselves what they are: a faculty senate. Most staff don't feel like they could go to the Senate, and honestly, if they went, they probably would not be welcome. There are syndicates that do nothing and do not really represent the staff. There is no real representative body for the staff. Senior faculty are telling staff they don't belong at the 'university lounge' because they would have nothing to speak about. We call our office aids boys. They are grown men. Many have families. The issues permeate all the way down to the language we use to refer to each other.

Comment: There is always mistrust between the administration and the community, but the level varies.

Comment: What about an open forum? We need to accept that the first six months are going to be hell as people vent their frustrations, but we need to release the pressure. We cannot allow the unpleasantness to divert the process.

Comment: It's not realistic for the senior administrators to address the morale issues. It's the daily interactions that influence morale.

Comment: There is staff, there's the academic administration, there's the staff administration. If we're talking about faculty and academic administration. The faculty are waiting for someone to come to them. A lot of faculty want people to yell out. I think we need to consider dedicating ourselves to this process on a regular business. It's not going to be a mutual process.

Comment: They need to see a face in authority that they know who tells them that we are working on it.

8 Shared Vision of Governance

Vote to Table the Shared Vision of Government until the next meeting to give it proper time.

Approved.