

FAC Report to CLA Senate, Spring 2021

The FAC met with the Dean Reingold for a little over an hour on April 4th to discuss several issues of concern raised by faculty and graduate students in our annual survey conducted shortly before spring break. We shared the five questions below with the dean prior to the meeting. The report summarizes the dean's responses to our questions.

Keith Shimko, Chair FAC and Professor of Political Science

Manushag Powell, Professor of English

Jill Sutor, Professor of Sociology

Ian Lindsay, Associate Professor of Anthropology

Dawn Stinchcomb, Associate Professor SLC

William White, Associate Teaching Professor of History and Cornerstone

Christine Wuenschel, Associate Professor Rueff School

Q#1

A number of faculty in lecturer positions were concerned that promotions to senior lecturer were not accompanied by any increase in salary, which is something they had been led to believe would be the case. Can you discuss the issue of salary increases for promotion within the lecturer ranks.

The dean recognizes this is a problem. He agrees that when the senior lecturer classification was created in 2018 there was an understanding that promotion raises would accompany elevation to senior lecturer. Covid financial pressures apparently created problems in this respect. The money for such raises would need to come from the CFO's office (CLA has more lecturers than any other college: about 75). He noted that CLA currently has a proposal at the CFO's office to get these raises, which would apply retroactively. So the dean agrees with the sentiment and frustration expressed by many in the survey on this matter. The issue is getting the resources from the university to fund these promotion increases.

The dean also indicated that he thought promotion raises at Purdue were too low across the board for all categories of faculty and that he has advocated or increasing them.

Q#2

On the graduate student funding front, can you address two issues: first, efforts to raise stipends to match recent increases in the cost of living; and second, limiting graduate students to .5 funding (e.g., a graduate student cannot, for example, get .5 funding as a TA/RA and an additional .25 as an receptionist in the BCC).

The restriction to .5 funding overall funding reflects the dean's belief that graduate students are primarily students, not employees who happen to be part-time students. In terms of increasing funding in light current increases in the cost of living, the dean noted that stipends have increased in his time here from an average on \$13.5K in 2015 to over \$19K this year (and higher in some departments). Furthermore, the college intends to pass along the 4% merit increase slated for faculty raises to graduate student stipends as well.

Q#3

There appears to have been recent exodus of African American women faculty in the CLA. Why do you think this is? What can you do to address this?

Though the dean expressed regret at the loss of these faculty members, he mentioned that several had left for particularly attractive positions (Brown University, a deanship at UI Champaign-Urbana, and Georgetown). He explained that in many respects he viewed this as a success for Purdue in that it provided an environment in which these scholars were able to build the sort of scholarly and service records that positioned them for these very prestigious positions.

The dean was asked about the results of this year's hires in CLA in terms of increasing diversity. He declined to answer, noting that the hiring process is still underway for many of the lines. This data will be available in the fall.

Q#4

A good number of people raised concerns about the college becoming a place divided into the haves and have nots (as evidenced by the great disparity in hiring this past year). Do you think these perceptions are accurate? And even if not, do you view this perception as a problem?

The dean rejected the characterization of have/have-nots. To the extent that departments were being treated (or seen as being treated) unequally, this was needed to bring resources such as departmental faculty size in line with enrollments and majors as well as the research profile of the department in light of the college's research goals. The dean maintained that levels of inequality throughout the college have gone down. Though the dean did not use the term "right-sizing," this is probably an accurate characterization of his preferred way of describing what is going on instead of unequal treatment and/or haves/have-nots.

Q#5 (if time)

Very briefly, can you identify what you see as the 2 or 3 major accomplishments of your first 7 years as dean.....and what do you see as your 2 or 3 priorities over the next few years?

With regard to accomplishments he referred us to the letter sent out with his seven-year review survey from the provost's office. In terms of future priorities, the dean stressed the need to continue to build connections between CLA and the STEM disciplines in terms of research and learning (e.g., the Degree Plus initiative).