

**Provost's Advisory Council
Summary of April 29, 2010 meeting**

Bert Garza
Pat Byrne
Pat DeLeeuw
Elyce Purcell
Lillie Albert
Brian Jacek
Anna Rhodes
Katie O'Dair
Gilda Morelli

Ana Martinez Aleman
Rosanna DeMarco
Don Hafner
Hassan Tehranian
Tom Wall
Francine Cardman
John Spinard
Anthony Annunciato
Marilyn Matelski

Dick Clifford, S.J.
Callista Roy
Ce Shen

- It was observed that post-tenure review of teaching by tenured faculty is less emphasized by many departments and that there are fewer structures supporting continuing review of teaching.
- It was noted that an important step in assessing teaching effectiveness is clarity about what a department means by “good teaching”; this may vary from discipline to discipline, but the criteria need to be articulated.
- Some cautioned against an overreliance on quantitative data in evaluating teaching. The importance of qualitative information (e.g., comments from students on the course evaluations) was noted.
- It was pointed out that students' expectations are critical elements determining how successful a course or an instructor may be.

3. Provost's Report

- Members of the Council--particularly Pat Byrne as chair of Council--were thanked for their service this past year.
- Latest changes to the draft Sabbatical Leave policy were distributed. Members were asked to review the distributed version (and an electronic version will be provided so that Council members can share it with colleagues) and provide feedback directly to Pat DeLeeuw.
- The building of Stokes Hall and the renovation/refurbishment of Gasson Hall are on target. There will be significant disruptions to the campus during the next eighteen months.
- Admissions reports that students are accepting admission and submitting deposits for incoming class of 2014 at a faster rate than last year. The incoming class continues the trend seen in past years of greater diversity (particularly geographic diversity) and academic ability.
- The University’s accrediting body, NEASC, has made clear that assessment of student learning outcomes will be a continuing expectation. The Provost’s preferred approach is to keep the assessment tasks in the hands of departments and schools, rather than to create a new and potentially cumbersome structure.
- It was reported that this Fall's Opening Days for freshman will include an enhanced academic component programmed by the college and schools.
- Members of Council were asked to urge colleagues to attend Commencement. Faculty are also urged to attend the Baccalaureate Mass on the Sunday prior to Commencement.

The Chair noted that this past year's topics for the Council’s review have included emergency plans for H1N1 and academic continuity; the use of summaries vs. minutes in documenting meetings of the Provost's Advisory Council; the Long Range Financial Plan; teaching awards and teaching assessment; undergraduate pre-major and major academic advising; initiatives adopted by the University Libraries; and financial aid and need-blind admissions.