

Provost's Advisory Council  
Monday, December 9, 2019  
8:30-10am, Lynch Center, Fulton 515

In attendance:

Sharon Beckman (Chair)	Gregory Kalscheur, S.J.	David Quigley
Anthony Annunziato	William Keane	Catherine Read
Joseph Carroll	Jonathan Laurence	Tracy Regan
Mary Ellen Carter	John Mahoney	Ronnie Sadka
Thomas Chiles	Mason Marek	Akua Sarr
Joseph Du Pont	Allison Marshall	David Scanlon
Kristin Flower	Madeline McCullough	Billy Soo
Yonder Gillihan	Gilda Morelli	Thomas Stegman
Stacy Grooters	Karen Muncaster	Sasha Tomic
Angela Harkins	Claudia Pouravelis	Thomas Wall
Regine Jean Charles		

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1. The summary of the November 7, 2019 meeting was approved. It will be sent to the President's Office. All summaries are posted on the Provost's Office website and members are encouraged to share them with colleagues.
  2. Proposed revisions to course evaluations: Kathy Baily, Chair of the University Council on Teaching and Billy Soo, Vice Provost for Faculty

Billy Soo began with an update on the work that the University Council on Teaching (UCT) has been doing for the past year and a half regarding course evaluations. Based on feedback from faculty and students, a UCT subcommittee was formed to review the existing course evaluation questions and online instrument.

The committee, which was composed of faculty from each school and some students similar reviews, and looked at instruments used by peer institutions. Based on the committee developed a number of recommendations. These recommendations were shared with the Council of Deans and the next step is to meet with Deans and faculty more broadly to discuss the recommendations.

Kathy Bailey discussed the recommendations, which include:

- x Revising some of the existing questions. The recommendation is to change not all, of the current questions. Research suggests that questions about the material is learned are more useful than questions about instructor quality.

- x Conduct a study of potential bias in the existing evaluation instrument. In speaking with peer universities, some report a slight bias based on a number of factors including gender, ethnicity, age, class size, type of class (required versus elective), etc. others report no bias. The committee recommends that the Office of Institutional Research and Planning conduct a study on whether there is bias in our evaluations.
- x Allow departments and schools to supplement questions in the survey by providing a question bank. A question bank already exists, but is not widely used. The bank would provide schools and departments with a list of well thought out questions. They would

A council member

core, this is a good program that would benefit both BC and the common good, albeit from potential funder with a bad reputation.

Bob added that the department understands the concerns about Koch Foundation funding, but noted that in doing research, there was a surprising agreement between the Foundation's research agenda and that of the BC faculty. Accepting funding does not constitute an

contradict academic values and establishing a clear policy on gift donations from  
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#### 4. Provost's Report – David Quigley

David provided some brief updates.

- x Just over 600 students were admitted to the class of 2024 via Early Decision 1. The transition from Early Action to Early Decision has been productive, with a very strong cohort of admitted students so far.
- x The February meeting will be dedicated largely to an update on University plans for budgets and construction.
- x The City of Newton this week voted to move forward with an eminent domain claim on part of the 300 Hammond Pond Parkway property.