

Cornell Prison Education Program
Advisory Board Meeting
12 February 2020
Minutes

Present: Jan Zeserson (chair), Tom Owens, Darnell Epps, Nancy Koschmann, Andy Borum, Judy Appleton, Lauren McLeod, Esta Bilger, Katherine McComas (vice provost, *ex officio*), Mary Katzenstein (via zoom), Rob Scott (executive director, *ex officio*), Tess Wheelwright (associate director, *ex officio*)

Excused: Dave Sanders, Ifeoma Ajunwa, Peter Enns, Sheri Johnson

Jan called the meeting to order at 3:04pm

Membership of the Nominations and Curriculum Committees. These are standing committees under the by-laws; members must be nominated and voted on by the board. Jan solicited nominations and volunteers from the board. All received unanimous approval.

Nominations Committee members: Jan Zeserson (chair, by bylaws), Judy Appleton, Peter Enns.

Curriculum Committee members: Tom Owens, Andy Borum, Lauren McLeod, Nancy Koschmann (chair of curriculum committee will be voted on by the committee at their first meeting). Note that the board agreed with unanimous approval to waive the 30-day notification period stipulated in the bylaws, Section 2.14.b.

Update on Student Voice. Auburn CF administration has approved the formation of a CPEP student council. Kyri has asked students for nominations, and a vote among the students will be held on March 11; we'll have four councilmembers in seats before middle of next month. This student council provides a formal mechanism for students to communicate with the CPEP staff and board. The pathway(s) of communication is still unclear. A Student Voice ad hoc committee of the board (originally Rachel Aleks, Willie Marshall, Ray Roe) hopes for similar initiatives at Elmira, Cayuga and Five Points. Nancy, Darnell, and Lauren expressed interest in continuing work on Student Voice; and Dave (absent) expressed his interest at earlier meetings. At Tess' suggestion, a first informational step will be for members of this ad hoc group to meet with program coordinators Kyri, Betsye, Keisha, and Nicole to share some student voice -- grievances, wishes, priorities -- as they regularly hear it.

- **Update on Granting of CPEP Baccalaureate Degrees by Cornell.** Katherine reported her efforts to move us toward being able to grant BA or BS degrees to our CPEP students. She has formed an ad hoc committee (task force) to help explore this. The committee (consisting of Katherine, Mary, Darnell, Peter, Tom, Tess, Rob, Esta, Jan) has met once in January and scheduled two more meetings in early spring. The first meeting (B.A. Task Force Minutes appended to these Minutes) focused on general brainstorming including:
 - Understanding the history of this discussion (Mary provided this)
 - Our relationship with DOCCS (Rob and Tess)

- Consideration of the many programmatic issues (size of program, colleges involved, degree granted, majors, advising, etc.)
- How to bring this issue logically to the higher administration at Cornell
- Suggestion of a symposium to explore this with peer institutions that already have BA/BS programs (see below)

Proposed Symposium. Rob discussed his proposal for a symposium tentatively titled Elements of Baccalaureate Education in Prison, to be held at Cornell and Cayuga CF on 24-25 April (handout provided). He proposed five panel discussions:

- BA curriculum, majors
- Collaboration with other institutions
- Visit to Cayuga CF, talks with capstone students
- How to do library research in the prison environment
- Beyond the degree, re-entry

Reserved the Princeton-Yale rooms at the Statler which can hold about 55 people. Esta indicated that we need a target list of participants, a moderator for each session. Judy raised concerns about using the Princeton-Yale rooms for this many people; a single long-narrow table is a problem in that space (she will check on this). Discussion ensued about who to invite besides the obvious.

The board unanimously supported moving forward with this symposium.

Proposal to Create a Tier of CPEP Research and Teaching Fellows. This discussion was tabled from the previous board meeting. This proposal comes from a sub-committee consisting of Mary, Esta, Judy, Jan, and Katherine, and is intended to address the issue that there are many CU faculty who are supportive of CPEP but not able (for various reasons) to serve on the advisory board or teach a course. The committee proposes to recognize this support by designating some of these individuals as CPEP Research and Teaching Fellows. The proposal is appended to these Minutes.

It was proposed that we should initially nominate potential fellows. Judy suggested that we need to do some trolling, suggesting these individuals without actually discussing it with them (yet). She also suggested that there needs to be something substantive to make them want to accept this designation – convening the fellows with the board, instructors, students once a year; Katherine suggested a gathering for lightening talks from the fellows, guest lectures, etc. It was also suggested that junior faculty (who are busy getting tenure but doing research or teaching related to the goals of CPEP) should be strongly considered.

The question arose about how many of these fellows there should be and what the term of the appointment would be. There was a general consensus that six and perhaps as many as ten was a good number for a pilot group, and that we should consider staggered, three-year terms. A sub-committee of Jan, Judy and Esta volunteered to follow up on this. Tess will create a Google doc for board members to submit names and a couple of lines about the nominees'

research or teaching related to CPEP's mission. In the meantime, members may submit names to Jan by email.

Overview of Spring 2020. Tess provided an overview of our Spring 2020 courses (two handouts). There was universal feeling that this was a great summary. Several suggestions and questions were raised:

- Add information about undergrad TAs, also noting those involved in CPEJ minor and those taking the on-campus Reflections course
- Judy asked how many courses are listed through Cayuga CC versus Cornell or other partners, and how these fit into the Cayuga CC graduation requirements. Tess will add this information to the narrative that will be appended to these Minutes.
- Jan asked about financial support for non-Cornell faculty teaching CPEP courses. Rob explained that an agreement had been worked out in each situation where CPEP paid part of the cost of the instructor's salary for teaching the course (varies with institution). In all cases, our share is small compared to what we pay our grad instructors (\$3,500).
- Mary noted that Cornell faculty and students teach most of the courses that are rostered through Cayuga CC.
- Judy pointed out that if we move to a BA/BS degree program, many of these CCC rostered courses will not fulfill Cornell graduation requirements (Algebra, for example).

The next board meeting will be in mid-May. Look for a doodle poll from Cathi Root.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27pm.

Submitted by Tom Owens 14 FEB 2020