

Feb 13, 2024 | [CPEP February Board Meeting](#)

Attendees: Jamila Michener, Steven Kim, Toni Murdough, Katherine McComas, Esta Bigler, Keisha Slaughter, Bryan Sykes, Mary Katzenstein, Maddie Reynolds, Rob Scott, Betsye Violette, Thomas Jones, Dr. Lindsay, Emma Li, Richard Rivera, Paula Ioanide, Ghazah Abbasi

Action Items:

Jamila to send outline of distribution requirements of the bachelor's degree

Notes

- Approval of last meeting minutes; voted to approve
- Discussion on designating a secretary for note-taking responsibilities and designating note-taking responsibilities if they are absent
 - Jamila will send request after the meeting to vet who might want to take that responsibility for note taking
 - If no one volunteers, we will continue to rotate note-taking responsibilities
- Keisha:
 - Tentative grad date: May 17, 2024; expecting 13 graduates; half completed grad requirements in 2021 but DOCCS canceled graduation that year
 - Recruitment for instructors has begun for Fall 2024; deadline soon
 - Graduates and men who have 45 or more credits taking part of BA classes via continuing education department; in communication with Dean about which classes to offer next
 - Nervous to take on Cornell classes in BA soft launch
 - Continue to have debate club at Cayuga Correctional facility; hoping to have Cornell debate team go against Cayuga team
 - Rethinking entrance exam process annually in each facility; take on 12-18 student cohort depending on facility; sit for entrance exam for 90 mins; choose from 2-3 questions in response to reading; thinking on changing to three readings with 1 question per reading; also thinking about conducting interviews—meant to make entrance exam more accessible; student may not perform well on exam but be very motivated to be part of college courses
 - If they decide to pursue interviews, were hoping to lean on the Board to assist
 - Keisha will follow up with request
 - Clearing process for those who have not been inside facilities for a while
 - Would love input from Board on interview questions
 - Jamila: Great to be proactive about enrollment; is the interview component going to be optional if you don't feel you performed well on the interview? Or will everyone be interviewed
 - Keisha: still at the beginning stages of thinking through interview process; students have suggested this process; hope is to review entrance exams first; select 20-24 to interview; it's a lot to do, many details to work out; great to know students before they enter program outside of orientation
 - Timeframe: earliest is Five Points end of March; ideally early April
 - May need to shift toward more open enrollment; waiting to hear more from community college partner on that

- Financial aid process progressing; waiting on DOCCS to sign MOU so that they can begin receiving federal financial aid; hoping for Mar 1, 2024 signature; needs to go to Middle States;
 - Time is not sufficient to get Pell grants for this summer;
- Do we have an official name for BA degree?
 - Jamila: It's been changing; not sure if that's where it land
 - Proposed name: "Organizations, Management, and Society"
 - Not sure how all of this will translate to CPEP context
 - Mary: Does this mean there's no humanities major?
 - Jamila: Requirements that span the liberal arts; something that we can start with to establish the BA but hoping long term, it will not be the only major; Mary (the provost) is trying to think through most feasible major to meet deadlines
 - Esta: is there a sense of the distribution requirements that people would have to take or are we not there yet?
 - Jamila: there is a sense but cannot name them off the top
 - General part time BS curriculum contains 50 courses a year; most in business management, policy space;
 - Fundamentals: writing, career development, inequality
 - Humanities, Social Sciences distribution requirements
 - Courses in the major itself—shaped by major in markets, organizations, etc.
 - It will be different for CPEP; Mary open to tailoring for incarcerated students
 - Rob: the component of online curriculum will be on eCornell; populated from current classes; prisons version of online bachelor will be a special case; ability to meet degree requirements in coordination with Mary;
 - Keisha: for soft BA launch - 10 students
 - The Bachelor's courses being offered at CCF semester or our soft launch , are CLASS 2812: The History of Writing, Hieroglyphics to HTML, and PLSCI 2225 Healthy Plants, Healthy People
 - Have had students who have not been in CPEP who pursued other college programs interested in the BA; imagines a smaller group; advice is to do it well and start small; by students performing well in these courses, it will help with admissions for Fall 2025; that's been communicated to students
- Maddie: A grant from Radical Librarian Institute to do creative writing workshops in prisons; workshops are being facilitated weekly at all three facilities; Maddie rotating around the facilities; Tony facilitating Auburn workshop; Ken coming in this semester;
 - Three authors will come in March to do workshops: Nancy Miller Gomez (poet) in Santa Cruz coming to all three facilities; Brent Weeks; George Saunders will do a WebEx visit to Cayuga
 - Undergrad student is facilitating at Cayuga; two MFA students at Five Points; overall a cool project
- Student Engagement Committee: proposal to increase TA stipend

Jamila: Starting this conversation from standpoint of envisioning what we want; putting aside cost and feasibility for now; it's going to be a challenge; there may be constraints down the road, but for now focus should be on logic, reason, possibility

Steven: The proposal started from the standpoint of recruitment; what are challenges of people wanting to teach in the CPEP curriculum; if we needed to bump the stipend, what would that number need to be and why to continue having high quality instructors

- Comparison with other prison education programs and cost of living increases
- What can we as a Board to bring this into reality?
- Beginning of a conversation; not put forward as a proposal to agree/disagree with

Maddie: market research based on reaching out to other programs; Rochester most similar to CPEP; \$5000 came about b/c Rochester was aiming to pay this by 2025

Jamila: thank you for all the work in doing this research SEC members

Richard: I agree with the proposal; think it's fair; by doing this may get better quality instructors

Steven: Clarifying that it would be easier time recruiting instructors

Jamila: Closest to Rochester model; how are they paying for this? What's the size? How is Reggie doing this?

Maddie: can follow up to answer these questions; Rochester has more institutional support; have more in-load instructors; not sure but thinks there's more institutional buy-in

Rob: second chance Pell funding; programs that started later than CPEP are closer to financial aid systems; coming straight from admissions process; tuition translated to 1 FTE in kind; Cornell way of getting where we get is the Cornell way; have not heard a lot about challenges to this proposal; have no major conceptual objections to setting it as a horizon

Jamila: timeframe for when we want to reach \$5000 stipend?

Steven: knew that there were a lot of questions still up in the air re: funding structure; not enough information for solid timeline

Jamila: appropriate flexibility

Katherine: express appreciation for the proposal; makes sense and will continue to work with Rob and institution to move this forward recognizing budgetary challenges currently faced; remain committed to give this proposal full airing

Paula: proposal to adopt \$5000 as goal by X year we determine so that sending a clear message that we want this to be a commitment that is taken into consideration

Jamila: would be on board with this

Mary: need to keep sight on the fact that we have trouble recruit from Cornell and have to go outside Cornell; there has been such great interest in the past; some of it really is the about the stipends that are not available in the humanities in the way stipends are more available in the sciences

Jamila: Keeping this a live issue so that we don't keep kicking it down the road

Richard: bridge gap, we shouldn't lose sight of the puzzle; how do we tweak the recruitment process to get more people from the humanities involved; people in humanities are inspired but they should be paid

Steven: in our survey to instructors, we do recruitment call;

Keisha: When there is personal relationship to someone within the department, response is better; best instructors from word of mouth

Ghazah: Are most instructors grad students? Right now getting paid \$3500/course; pretty notable discrepancy between people teaching non-incarcerated people vs. Cornell students; curious that grad students have voted to unionize, could bring this to their body

Jamila: Have a moment to keep checking this proposal on our agenda; vote to make the Board stance clear

Happy to make a motion to take a vote but that would not bind CPEP

Jamila: Make a motion that CPEP aims to increase instructor pay to \$5000 as soon as possible

Esta: Seconded the proposal

Vote: Unanimously approved the motion

- Richard: Dean Faiello passed away; CPEP student who has been out for less than a year

1) Prompting prior to our next board meeting to think about committees + board secretary

- Next year, SEC committee members will cycle out; would like to get one more person in the next several months
- Nominating Committee for Board; possible new Board chair; have promising lead; have one more spot to fill; Jamila will fill if Board Chair is filled
 - Next year will be banner year in terms of people cycling off; so will need a robust Nominating Committee
- Board terms different based on position (faculty, grad, etc.); Board chair, two consecutive terms

2) Center for Racial Justice and Equitable Futures—Director is Jamila

- Ways to advance the work of CPEP through that center
- Group of undergraduates that brings coalition of criminal justice work groups