

FCAFA Proceedings - 26 April 2023

Present: Ron Lembo (chair and Professor of Sociology), , Cate Zolkos (Dean of Admission, ex officio), Gail Holt (Dean of Financial Aid, ex officio), Maria Heim (Professor of Religion), Jill Miller (Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies), Angie Tissi-Gassoway (Chief Student Affairs Officer), Nicholas Torres '24, Jalen Woodard '23, Loretta Alarcon '24

Absent: Matt McGann (Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, ex officio) and Sonya Clark (Professor of Art and Art History)

1. Survey to Assess Thriving on Campus Continued

- a. General concern expressed about non-thriving students, though as a whole, faculty are broadly thrilled with the quality of Amherst students
- b. Recognition and discussion about how struggle looks different across students
- c. Also important is the growth experience for students during their time at Amherst
- d. Good fit at Amherst can be categorized by curiosity, excitement for learning and other range of experiences
- e. Concern expressed that attributes would be beneficial over names
- f. The open curriculum can be framed as 'freedom to do...'; rather than 'freedom away from...'

2. Humanities versus STEM Focus at Amherst Continued

- a. Four to five years of humanities enrollments are down
- b. Rare for science majors not to take humanities courses
- c. Change the conversation about majors and careers and the relationship and impact
- d. Could use a new flag to identify courage and investment in the humanities; examples of writing programs - based on competitive talent and interest
- e. Next meeting, bring a definition to discuss expanding the SCIR tag to include humanities

3. Listening session with faculty

- a. FCAFA organized in the fall 2023 an open response event
- b. Invite faculty to share promising characteristics in their disciplines
- c. Collect data and use to inform a question-based survey
- d. Faculty are eager to support students and ensure they are successful
- e. Possibly have multiple sessions
- f. Open to all disciplines (vs. segmented) and FCAFA can invite a diverse set of voices