

Committee on Priorities and Resources
Meeting Minutes – April 4, 2023

In Attendance: Professor Nusrat Chowdhury, chair; Professor Frederick Griffiths; Professor Jonathan Obert; Professor John Rager; Interim Chief Financial Officer Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*; Chief Human Resources Officer, Kate Harrington, *ex officio*; Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, Mike Thomas, *ex officio*; Interim Director of Financial Planning, Ashley Travis, *ex officio*; Assistant Director of Family Giving, Emily Ziomek; Mollie Hartenstein '23; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Assistant Registrar Syd Cooney; Yvette Kiptoo, '23

The meeting came to order at 8:45 am.

Proceedings:

CPR reviewed the proposal to elevate Film and Media Studies (FAMS) program to an academic department at the college, and its impact on college resources.

- If approved, FAMS would be the smallest department at the college, with two faculty FTE's. Currently the smallest departments are Russian and German, each has three FTE's plus a lecturer.
- The benefit to FAMS in becoming a department is increased access to resources. The current proposal involves shifting faculty to the new department. Additional growth may include future faculty members, additional ADC hours, and technology. The request envisions a consolidated space for faculty offices and a screening room. Overall, the proposal will increase the budget and costs for FAMS.
- Programs are created more often than departments and requests for new programs have grown in recent years.
- Most recently, in 2014, Environmental Studies was converted from a program to a department. The justification for that change included the size of the program and student interest, plus the number of faculty involved.
- Other programs, many larger, are not asking to become departments; their current setups meet the needs of the faculty and students. Examples include the Neuroscience, and Biochemistry and Biophysics programs.
- The Committee agreed with the Provost that there is a need for concrete guidelines about how small a department should be.
- The Provost has also assured, in response to the FAMS' proposal, that regardless of whether they are a program or a department, the chairs will be compensated according to the new compensation scheme.
- CPR will write a memo summarizing the conversation, and bringing the pros and cons discussed to the attention of the Faculty Executive Committee. CPR does not have to express an opinion.
- Pros: Intellectually, the proposal makes sense. Also, FAMS as a department could offer additional courses such as video production, currently taught through ARHA by an adjunct.

- Cons: The FAMS proposal is for a very small department. The current moment of budget tightening may not be the right time to commit the resources for an additional department. CPR also felt the need to demonstrate student interest in a larger FAMS.

Adjourned 9:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,
S Hegarty