



Meeting of the Academic Council

Monday, June 24, 2024

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

VIA ZOOM: <https://vcfa.zoom.us/j/83449856023?pwd=OLhXLItvVocrtCyn1iYTIDXURLa1eL.1>

IN ATTENDANCE:

Faculty:

- Film: Marya Cohn
- Graphic Design: Natalia Ilyin
- Music Composition: Carla Kihlstedt, Roger Zahab
- Visual Art: Eshrat Erfanian, Mario Ontiveros
- Writing: Adam McOmber, Sue William Silverman
- WCYA: Linda Urban

Staff and Administration:

- Andrew Ramsammy (Interim President), Mary-Kim Arnold (Academic Affairs), Katie Rasmussen (Dean of Students), Tia McCarthy (Library), Rafael Attias (Film), Carol Beatty (Music Composition), Katrine Trantham (Visual Art), brandon brown (WCYA).

MINUTES

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from May 2024 meeting

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the minutes from the May 24 meeting as presented.

Policy Actions

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the Faculty Grievance Policy as presented.

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the Faculty Emeritus Policy as presented.

It was noted that both policies are effective as of July 1, 2024.

Overview of Institutional Priorities, Policy Alignment, and Initial Timeline

In her Dean's Report, Mary-Kim shared a summary of current institutional priorities:

The Academic Council is convened and authorized by the [VCFA Governance Policy](#).
[Academic Council Membership](#)

1. SCALE: Organize the academic faculty and staff to be scalable for growth as we plan for the next stage of VCFA's development;
2. ALIGNMENT: Bring academic and administrative policies of VCFA into closer alignment with the policies of CalArts;
3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Prepare for VCFA's comprehensive self-study and re-accreditation.

She previewed organizational change proposals in development that would help align the organization's staffing structure to better support these three priorities.

In the discussion that followed, members raised questions about process and approvals, how decisions would be made, the timeline for any significant changes taking place, and how best to preserve the individual strengths and histories of each program, while also acknowledging the need for college-wide realignments.

Mary-Kim reminded the group that there are some changes that are necessary to maintain accreditation – for example, more focused attention to evidence-based learning outcomes and measures of student success.

Other issues like staff and faculty structure, we have more discretion over, although we will need to be working in close coordination with CalArts.

There was further discussion about what changes might look like, and Mary-Kim and Andrew assured the AC that there will be ongoing opportunities to discuss and to adjust plans as needed.

Andrew pointed out that changes we make need to be budget-neutral in the current fiscal year, and emphasized that the CalArts affiliation presents an opportunity to build a stronger foundation for future growth.

Andrew also reported significant progress toward the closing transaction with CalArts. The closing date has been postponed to August 2, based on the timing of the remaining real estate transactions, but we are on track to close.

Residency Updates

Katie Rasmussen reminded faculty to book travel for residency and reviewed a few policy items with the Council, including our policy around demonstrations, sexual harassment, and COVID response.

Highlights of the residency to include an informal dinner gathering prior to the Faculty Meeting on the evening before residency begins.

Discussions wound down with an announcement about enrollment. We are now at 58 incoming students (up from 32 last month).

Andrew congratulated the Council and the team for their work in outreach and admissions, and reflected on the many changes and accomplishments of the prior six months.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM. Notes compiled by Sam Jacobson, Program Director, Writing, and Mary-Kim Arnold.