

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD FACULTY SENATE

Minutes from meeting of December 8, 2009

PRESENT: Senators Balco, Blett, Canedy, Comiskey Decker, , Fang, Fonte, Gray, Hansen,Hill, Lashgari, Lei, Lewis, McCloskey, Mellodge, Moshlepour, Pedro, Rosiene, Russell, Shepela, Siegel (reporting), Tetel, Weinholtz, Wetherbee

Also: Maria Marques, Fred Sweitzer, Jean McGivney-Burelle, Katherine Black, guests

Chair Shepela called us to order at 12:22 PM

FRED SWEITZER FOR THE NEASC STEERING COMMITTEE–

Sweitzer led us in a discussion of the 3 key organizing questions he is using to prepare for our NEASC self-study [the bullet points emerged from discussion]:

1. What Are We Doing Well?

- We are flexible (able to make changes to courses and curriculum as needs arise)
- Administrative leadership is extraordinarily accessible
- We encourage and to first-rate teaching
- We offer a wide array of support services for students
- We are small but offer the kinds of things one normally associates only with much larger institutions
- We “rescue” some folks who might not otherwise get a college degree
- The faculty do the amount and quality of scholarship normally associated with places that have lower teaching loads
- We have seen much improvement in recent years in internationalizing the curriculum and in attracting students of color
- We enjoy a stellar reputation in the greater Hartford area

2. What might need fixing?

- We need to pay more attention to students who are just below the top rung
- We need and deserve, as an institution as a whole, more of a national and international reputation
- We need to entice non- Hartt and HAS students to take advantage of the work provided by those entities
- We need more Writing Intensive classes
- We need to attract more faculty and staff of color
- We need to pay attention to grade inflation
- We need to showcase our own faculty’s research more widely, and publicize better when “stars” from outside come to campus to speak or perform
- We need to provide the kinds of facilities (including labs and meeting spaces, open 24/7) that foster faculty research and help graduate students do research and build community
- We need to shore up library facilities, especially associated with programs that do not now

automatically get such attention (as through cognate discipline accreditation)

3. What does “Student Success” mean to us?

- Students have the chance here to be exposed to classmates from many different backgrounds, thus producing a richness beyond what GPA’s might reflect
- A multitude of field experiences
- A “back back of skills”
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Commitment to Community
- Intellectual Curiosity

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE–

The committee has been working with Fred Sweitzer on implementing key recommendations flowing from the survey on part time faculty: Development of more reliable email lists; creating a listserv and a newsletter for part time faculty; compensation

Vice Chair Russell is also on the NEASC faculty committee

The committee sponsored the second CARS gathering recently, and encourages all faculty to indicate their willingness to present their research or artistic creations in a future gathering. Themes for such presentations can emerge naturally from the profile of faculty who step forward. More information about the CARS symposia can be found at:

<http://uhaweb.hartford.edu/compsci/cars/>

Chair Shepela indicated that the FPM language approved by us in spring on the Scholarship of Engagement has stalled at the Council of Deans level. We will take some time at our own January meeting to review talking points supporting that vote, to prepare us to help lead discussions in our respective schools and colleges. Senators expressed interest in reviewing documents in advance of that meeting.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE–

Senator Decker walked us through the committee’s long list of recent actions taken. We voted to approve them.

There was an extended discussion of a matter currently tabled by the committee, pending receipt of a bit more documentation. The matter dealt with the Barney School’s seeking to remove the CS 110 pre-requisite for number of its courses, and the resulting need to officially notify the Computer Science department and Arts and Sciences about the change.

We finished our Tuesday business at 1:47 PM, to re-convene on Thursday, December 10

UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD FACULTY SENATE

Minutes from meeting of December 10, 2009

PRESENT: Senators Balco, Blett, Canedy, Fonte, Gray, Hansen, Lashgari, Lei, Machuga, McCloskey, Mellodge, Pence, Poggio, Rosiene, Sekou, Shepela, Siegel [reporting], Tetel, Weinholtz

Also: Maria Marques; President Harrison; Provost Pasquerella

We were called to order at 12:25 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes from the November senate meeting were approved.

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The slate of candidates for the Grievance committee were approved.

PRESIDENT HARRISON—

President Harrison reminded and updated us on some figures related to the shortfall of incoming and returning full-time undergraduate students. We did a better job of predicting and budgeting for the former than the latter. We have experienced an increase in the number of graduate students and of students in non-traditional programs. Our financial status was also affected greatly by our need to increase the discount rate on tuition. “If I had to put it in a single sentence, ‘we have fewer students, and they are poorer.’”

Interventions taken to handle the shortfall include the 10% holdback on units’ operating expenses, and a (somewhat flexible) requirement that staff positions will be kept vacant for 6 weeks before filling them.

Interestingly, registration for spring is actually a bit ahead of where we were last year at this time.

Planning for the next few years is hampered by uncertainty about enrollment and about the economy in general. Families too have to feel confident about the economy, confident enough to be willing to take on debt to pay for tuition and fees.

We are opting for a conservative approach, and the Board of Regents approved a 3% tuition increase and a zero percent merit pool for salaries. (Promotion-related raises will still be funded).

We are the least expensive of the private universities that comprise our comparison group, and near the middle of out-of-state tuition charged by public universities in the group.

Much discussion ensued about the individual “tales of financial woe” students have shared with their professors and advisees. It was also suggested that faculty can be asked to get more involved, as they had been in more dire times in the 90s, to “close the deal” with families who are wavering.

PROVOST PASQUERELLA–

Much of the Provost's office's time has been devoted to student retention issues, and she offered some details about this.

Sabbatical announcements were sent out. We were able to accept 12 out of 16 proposals.

In response to a question, the Provost indicated we cannot promise that faculty members who leave will be replaced in the foreseeable future. The issue will depend on the specifics and the need to prioritize as per the strategic plan.

The provost also pledged to explore ways to remove impediments to having faculty engage in interdisciplinary teaching with colleagues.

We adjourned at 1:40 PM