

Minutes of the Faculty Senate (not yet approved)

Sept. 8, 2009

[Submitted by Paul Siegel]

Present: Senators Balco, Canedy, Carey, DiChaira, Decker, Fang, Fonte, Gray, Hansen, Lei, Lewis, McCloskey, Mellodge, Moslehpour, Pedro, Pense, Poggio, Rosiene, Russell, Shepela, Siegel, Tetel, Weinholtz, Wetherbee

● **WELCOME**

Chair Shepela welcomed us to a new academic year, and spent some time lauding the administration for demonstrating cooperation and transparency; she handed out the statement of Goals for the year, which the Executive Committee had worked on in May.

● **PRESENTATION BY ASSISTANT PROVOST FRED SCHWEITZER**

Schweitzer spoke about procedures for conducting faculty searches. His office's goals are to help us to attract the candidates of our choice, to share expertise learned by other searches; to make sure we follow the law so that we do indeed have authority to hire

There have been some revisions to the faculty search manual, available at the NED forms portion of the university's website. Any of us who will be involved in a search should read it online very soon.

The provost's office is committed to hiring a diverse faculty. Consistent with this goal we have a "Diversity Took Kit," and we will be more systematically tracking searches, and applicant data sheets, to help us broaden the diversity of the applicant pool for each search. Thus far we cannot afford pre-packaged software to help do all of this, and the assistant provost's office is doing much of this by creating our own database for each search. [Senator Moslehpour indicated he knows of some software packages we might be able to afford].

In the ensuing discussion, we were reminded that our faculty diversity figures are far behind where we need to be, and have been for a long time. Is not one place to start to make sure the search committees are themselves diverse? Schweitzer emphasized that our goal, long-term though it may be, is to have our faculty reflect the diversity of our student body.

As to Faculty Development issues, Schweitzer has modest funds available to support faculty proposals. Those which identify activities and purchases that will benefit many people on campus rather than just the immediate recipient of funds will especially be attractive. He reviewed for us the Engaged Learning Fellowships (we provided 5 last year), which grants course release time to create a significant learning intervention to be implemented in the next academic year; the Educational Technology Grants continue as well. His office is also ready to provide support (publicity, a shared reading list, etc.) for "study circles" related to faculty development

Schweitzer reminded us that the NEASC accrediting visitors' team will be here in the Fall of 2011, and that we are committed to engage in major Assessment activities, identifying Core Learning Outcomes for courses, etc., in preparation for that visit and beyond.

● **Administration Liaison Committee**

Senator Gray has been working with the committee, and especially with VP John Carson, on redoing the overall feel and consistency of the university's website. Goals include making sure that the site appeals to audiences of current and prospective students, and to create software such that individual units can swiftly update their own sites "as easily as typing into a Word document." Much progress has been made, including at a 2-day workshop in August. The full "user-friendliness" of the site may be still a few months off.

● **PRESIDENT HARRISON'S REMARKS**

President Harrison updated us on some of the disturbing incidents in the news regarding the president of the SGA, and a couple of reported crimes on campus.

Enrollment is down a bit compared to last year's new student figures, but still above the downturn for which he had budgeted. Returning students might be down by about 100 or so, and we are slightly up in graduate enrollment. Of significant impact to our budget was our need to "discount" the tuition beyond our usual rate, often as a result of appeals by parents of returning students, whose financial situations may have worsened since they had filled out the usual forms.

● **PROVOST PASQUERELLA'S REMARKS**

The Provost cited among her key priorities the implementation of the academic strategic plan; she will be taking actions always with an eye on the budget. We have done surveys over the summer on the overall campus climate, particularly with respect to gender issues.

There will be a full year's worth of activities related to Civil Liberties, beginning with a panel discussion of the Death Penalty on September 23.

This term's "Difficult Dialogues" topic is "what it means to be a private university with a public purpose."

In response to questions, the provost reviewed progress to date on environment + sustainability issues, including the awarding of several grants in the past year.

Much time was devoted to a detailed description of the Kenya Project, which involved participants from Hartford as well as from the University of Rhode Island and Brown. The team worked on clean water, sustainable agriculture, and human rights issues. The mission is daunting, with such a high poverty and HIV rate, and such an oppressive climate for women.

We ended at 1:42 PM to re-convene on Thursday, September 10

Minutes of the Faculty Senate (not yet approved)

Sept. 10, 2009

[Submitted by Paul Siegel]

Present: Senators Balco, Canedy, Decker, DiChiara, Fang, Fonte, Gray, Hansen, Hill, Lashgari, Lewis, McCloskey, Mellodge, Pense, Poggio, Rosiene, Russell, Shepela, Siegel, Tetel, Weinholtz, Wetherbee.

● **WELCOME**

Chair Shepela introduced a visiting academic from the People's Republic of China, and then turned the floor over to Mary Norris from the Student Health Center.

● **H1N1 FLU**

Mary Norris indicated she has been working with two committees, including campus and community leaders, to make plans. We see flu every year, and never had to close down the university. We have seen this strain before (but no cases of H1N1 are yet confirmed here now). We are working with HR to make contingency plans if large numbers of faculty come down with the flu, and with Aramark to make sure that students in quarantine will receive meals without having to venture out. If you wake up with fever and body ache, don't go to class. CDC says we need to be fever-free for 24 hours to minimize chances of passing the virus on to others.

For the most updated information we can go to www.hartford.edu/flu

● **CRIME REPORTS**

Chair Shepela shared with us a letter from Professor Harold Sandstrom to Public Safety, suggesting that students be advised not to walk on campus alone, and to have the 7777 number input for speed dial on their cell phones, keeping their cell phones on while walking about.

● **CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**

Senator Decker reviewed for us Mechanical Engineering addition of a new concentration, and Physical Therapy dropping their masters program to create a new doctoral program. We approved both changes.

A short discussion ensued about the differing meanings of having a "concentration" across units on campus. It was suggested there is even more inconsistency as to what the minimal requirements should be for receiving Internship credit. We determined to take no action on either matter at this time.

● **ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY**

Senator Poggio will convene her group soon, in that the President's committee on the issue will be meeting in a few weeks.

● **FACULTY AFFAIRS**

Results of last year's questionnaire to part time faculty will be a topic of discussion for this

committee, which will consider what needs to be addressed next.

Promoting and highlighting faculty scholarship and creativity is one of this year's goals of the faculty senate. To that end, the senate in collaboration with the Office of the Provost is exploring sponsoring a monthly meeting to showcase faculty work. The current plan is to hold this on a Friday afternoon. A suggested topic for the first meeting is civic engagement projects. If you have suggestions for speakers let us know.

● **STUDENT AFFAIRS**

Senator Siegel will be "Doodling" soon to set up an initial meeting. Guidelines for University Scholars must be sent out right away. Additionally, a faculty member has asked whether the committee might want to look into book store prices sometimes being higher than the publisher's "retail" price for a given textbook.

● **FACULTY DIVERSITY**

We are trying to identify a senator to chair the committee (or to co-chair with Senator Pedro, last year's chair, who has a huge increase in her administrative responsibilities this year).

There was no report from other committees, save to indicate they would be meeting shortly.

Chair Shepela walked us through the overall Faculty Senate goals for the current academic year. [The goals follow these minutes as an addendum].

We adjourned at 1:35 PM