

# MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE

October 8, 2009

(with continuation on October 13)

**PRESENT:** Senators Balco, Blett, Canedy, Decker, DiChiara, Fonte, Gray, Hansen, Hill, Machuga, McCloskey, Mellodge, Pedro, Pense, Poggio, Rosiene, Russell, Sekou, Shepela, Siegel [reporting], Tetel, Weinholtz, and Wetherbee; and Maria Marques.

**GUESTS:** Professors Karen Case and Jay Stewart

## CALL TO ORDER

Chair Shepela called us to order at 12:20 PM.

## MINUTES

We approved the Minutes of the September senate meeting, without amendment.

## APPROVAL OF APPOINTEES

We approved the appointment of various faculty members to Board of Regents' Committees:

- Glen Adsit [[adsit@hartford.edu](mailto:adsit@hartford.edu)] to Degrees & Ceremonials
- Ed Gray [[gray@hartford.edu](mailto:gray@hartford.edu)] to Institutional Advancement
- Ingrid Russell [[irussell@hartford.edu](mailto:irussell@hartford.edu)] to Finance Committee, and Investment Subcommittee
- Elizabeth Petry to Physical Plant
- Sharon Shepela to Strategic Planning, and University Education
- Robert Decker to University Education
- Paul Siegel to University Education

## BENEFITS TASK FORCE

Karen Case, our faculty representative on the Task Force, reminded us that Friday, October 23 is the deadline to send in our health, dental, etc., benefits options

One important change this year is that dependent children who are still full time students can be kept on our family health plans until age 25 (only until 19 if not full time students)

Amount of premiums is determined by whether one chooses the "core" or the "enhanced" benefit, and by one's annual salary. Those making \$75K and above pay the highest premiums.

Case asked the Senate to offer her feedback about this income-based scheme, and to the wisdom of a proposal being considered by HR to collapse the core and enhanced programs into one intermediate program.

New wording in the tuition exchange policy has been approved. The key difference is the addition of the word "normally" so as to make clear that there is not categorical prohibition against a faculty member's dependent being supported for more than 4 years. Also in the offing is discussion of whether to institute opposite-sex partner benefits. The committee is looking too at child care, flexible spending, health saving accounts, long term care insurance, and benefits for part-time faculty.

## PART TIME FACULTY

Jay Stewart walked us through the key features of the recently conducted survey of Part Time faculty. Culling together the email addresses of potential respondents was itself labor-intensive, as he had to go to multiple sources and knows he still missed whole categories of individuals. Our response rate was approximately 35%, with a fair number of these “dropping off” from likely Survey Fatigue toward the end of the instrument.

For most items, we first asked whether the issue under discussion was “UNIMPORTANT TO YOU.” There was no “IMPORTANT TO YOU” choice; rather it was assumed that if respondents did not “unimportant,” we could infer that their responses as to how “satisfied” they were with a state of affairs was coming from persons who did think the issue important.

Broad categories we wished to tap included:

- Compensation
- Teaching and Work Support
- Personal Office Space
- Collegiality

Overall, the greatest dissatisfaction was reported on salary, but even here, the mean was 2.55, somewhere between “somewhat satisfied” and “somewhat dissatisfied.”

On a more global measure of overall satisfaction with conditions here at the university, over 50% were “very satisfied,” and about 80% were at least “somewhat satisfied.”

Very few respondents knew about the online Adjunct Faculty Handbook, or the existence of a university ombudsperson whose job it is to field faculty grievances. (One grievance brought to our attention that would seem to within his purview was a long-term adjunct taking advantage of the free tuition benefit suddenly being categorized by Public Safety as a student, thus having to pay much more for a parking permit than do faculty members).

There was some discussion about the genesis of the G3 category as a way of giving adjuncts the security of knowing that they would be offered a total of 6 courses, none of which would be taken away during the academic year. Concern was expressed that, good motives notwithstanding, G3's simply are not paid enough.

The Faculty Affairs committee will review the Stewart report and come back to the Senate with specific recommendations. We want to make sure PT faculty get to see the report and discuss it. They and all of us will be able to view the [report on the Faculty Senate website](#). It may also be worthwhile to have at least one public forum to which PT faculty would be invited.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **ADMINISTRATION LIAISON–**

Senator Gray reported from his service on the Educational Technology Steering committee (and 2 of its subcommittees). Upcoming issues including ramifications of the plan to make all dorms fully wireless-capable within 18 months, and brainstorming over the next generation of classroom technology. For example, we may want to design classrooms so that the projection screens don't block the traditional blackboard (or white board), and to give faculty more flexibility in setting the lighting levels in the room from moment to moment.

We agreed that attention to maintenance of equipment and software is as important as focus on initial purchase.

### **BENT LARSEN TRACHTENBERG–**

Senator Wetherbee reported that the call for nominations has gone out.

There was some follow-up discussion as to what additional hoops, if any, last year's

nominators need to jump through if they wish to re-nominate folks whose eligibility is being “rolled over” from last year. Maria Marques indicated a mailing will be sent out to those nominators in the near future.

Also, it is possible that stipends might be higher than last year. If so, a follow-up mailing beyond the call for nominations already disseminated will be sent out.

**At 1:40 PM, we ended this portion of the meeting, to reconvene on Tuesday, October 13**

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## **MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE**

**Meeting of October 13, 2009**

(continuation of meeting from October 8)

**PRESENT:** Senators Balco, Canedy, Decker, DiChiara, Fang, Fonte, Gray, Hansen, Lewis, McCloskey, Mellodge, Moslehpour, Pedro, Pense, Rosiene, Russell, Shepela, Siegel (reporting), Tetel, Weinholtz, and Wetherbee; President Harrison, Maria Marques, Provost Pasquerella, Vice President Rizzo

### **●PRESIDENT HARRISON**

The university is going through difficult but not crisis-level financial challenges this year. Last year’s surplus of about \$2.5 million was put back into reserves. The October census reveals we are down about 150 full time, undergraduate students, including about slots for new students. We planned for that level. But the 100 or so downfall in returning students was a bit of a surprise. The financial challenge is made larger by our having to increase financial aid (our “discount rate”) more than anticipated. One notable challenge has been admissions to Hillyer, who have decided against Hartford in larger numbers than in past years, apparently to go to 4-year programs to which they have been admitted. Might this speak to a need to better market the fact that admission to Hillyer can be an “articulated” way to seamlessly move to another college within the university?

Some discussion ensued about students already here who did not return this year. Were a disproportionate number on academic probation? Can we gather data more effectively by having exit interviews conducted at the department level?

Might we want to more aggressively market to students already in community colleges, including creating more articulation agreements, but also sending university representatives to college fairs in those settings?

Some good news: the number of non-traditional and part-time graduate students is up; so is the percent of students of color. We also did unusually well attracting students who live in Connecticut. Perhaps this represents an increase in commuter students.

Unrelated announcement—the Deadline for proposals to the Commission on the Status of Women is this Thursday, October 15.

### **●PROVOST PASQUERELLA**

The university’s first case of H1N1 has been confirmed. We are again encouraged to be flexible in course assignments during this flu season, and especially to be prepared to make

assignments available on Blackboard.

The Sustainability committee met recently. A webcast on sustainability on campuses is scheduled for October 21<sup>st</sup> at 1 PM.

Activities and meetings related to strategic planning, assessment, and accreditation continue to move forward.

The provost's office will fund the cost of the federally-required print ad for any faculty position likely to result in hiring an international candidate. Without such an ad, the cost of arranging for the candidate's work visa is dramatically higher.

Dean Voelker is chairing a committee charged with creating a theme around first year students can have common experiences. Next year will likely be a year focused on the environment, with plans including having all entering students view *An Inconvenient Truth*, read Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, etc.

### ●VICE PRESIDENT RIZZO

Don Rizzo shared with us an updated version of a presentation he recently made to our Board of Regents. Despite financial and staffing challenges, we raised \$10.4 million in FY 2009. This is impressive under the circumstances, though about a third less than in FY 2008. The Annual Fund giving was down about \$200K and 400 donors from last year. The percent of alumni giving has also been down a bit.

Some discussion ensued on this latter point, especially seeking more ways to get faculty involved in helping create and/or strengthen ties with alumni. A 2-page email goes to alums each month. Might links include short videos of faculty talks, as well as virtual tours of campus?

There has been virtually 100% non-interruption of established pledges.

Because of staff turnover, we held 40% fewer face-to-face visits this year than last. Then again, we had one of our best years ever in Unrestricted gifts.

The office of Institutional Advancement will happily provide mailing lists to departments for NON-fundraising activities (such as assessment).

In response to questioning, Don indicated he was not aware if his office routinely receives a report of faculty publications and grants (a list which department chairs send to deans each year, but where it goes next has been a bit of a mystery).

### ●CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Senator Decker sought Senate approval for changes in MGMT 730 already approved by the committee. The Senate voted approval.

### ●FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Senator Russell reported that the first "CARS" presentation, focusing on Civic Engagement, will take place on October 30<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 to 5 PM in the Henry Roberts Room. Wine and cheese will be served.

The next CARS presentation will be on November 13<sup>th</sup>, likely same time and place (and similar array of refreshments).

Please contact your faculty officers with any thematic ideas for future presentations. We envision each presentation consisting of 2-4 or so faculty presenting for 15-20 minutes each.

**We adjourned at 1:40 PM**