

## Minutes of the Academic Senate

October 23, 2008

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Brother Charles Hilken at 3:00 p.m. on October 23, 2008. Roll was called and the following Senators were present: Chair Brother Charles Hilken, Vice Chair Tom Poundstone, Past Chair Carla Bossard, David Alvarez, David Bowen, Jerry Brunetti, Gerry Capriulo, Zach Flanagan, Marty Rokeach, and Parliamentarian Valerie Burke. Absent was Ed Tywoniak.

Also present were: Michael Barram, Vice President Michael Beseda, Vice President Keith Brant, Dean Tom Carter, Scott Devlin (College Bookstore), Provost Beth Dobkin, Tomas Gomez, Mary McCall, Dean Frank Murray, Jeff Sigman, Associate Dean Chris Sindt, Elizabeth Smith, Vice Provost Frances Sweeney, Carl Thelen, Dean Russ Tiberii, and Ted Tsukahara.

2. Minutes of the October 2, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved by voice vote.

### REPORTS

3. Chairperson's Report - Chair Brother Charles reported that due to the current financial crisis, many students are having difficulty getting the loans to pay for tuition. The college has allowed those students owing \$500 - \$1000 to enroll in Jan Term.

The Academic Administrators Evaluation Committee (AAEC) will be evaluating President Brother Ronald Gallagher this fall. The timing of the evaluation has been moved up in order to have the results available for the Board of Trustees prior to their January meeting.

### *Consent Agenda*

New Course Evaluation Form – Chair Brother Charles reported that the item was received from the UEPC and placed on the consent agenda. There was some question about the UEPC stipulation that focus groups be authorized to accumulate a random selection of students to participate in order to determine how the students interpret or possibly misinterpret the items on the form. Senators questioned how this would be accomplished and whether the new form should be approved prior to the focus group feedback. Vice Chair Poundstone said the AARC had a suggestion to rearrange several items on the form. A MOTION was made by Senator Rokeach and SECONDED by Senator Brunetti, and supported by Senators Flanagan, Alvarez and Vice Chair Poundstone to remove the item from the Consent Agenda. This item was then placed on the agenda under New Business.

4. Vice Chairperson's Report – Vice Chair Poundstone announced that a lecture will be held on Monday evening October 27, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Brother Charles regarding his recently published book, *Memory and Community in Medieval Southern Italy*.

Two faculty forums will be held on November 20, 2008 and December 3, 2008 on the core curriculum models. The department chairs will be asked to discuss the CCTF common assumptions and models at November department meetings.

5. Past Chairperson's Report to the Board of Trustees – Past Chair Bossard reported that the Board of Trustees met on October 10, 2008. She presented the following report as the faculty representative.

The Core Curriculum Committee is making excellent progress in invigorating the Core Curriculum. Three models for Core Curriculum updating have been put forth and are being discussed in October and November at a series of faculty meetings and open forums. The models require various amounts of change in the curriculum. Discussions of and suggestions for modifying these models are being widely solicited to keep the process of updating the Core Curriculum very inclusive of the Saint Mary's Community.

The Academic Senate sent in its BOSS report on restructuring last spring. This year is the Academic Senates first full year with all restructuring changes in place. So far the changes seem to have decreased duplication of efforts and increased efficiency in faculty governance.

The BOSS Task Force on Communications sent in its report on how to improve communications between administration and faculty in May of last spring. The recommendations are being applied this year in Academic Senate Committees and other faculty committees on campus. The efficiency of the recommendations will be reassessed in spring of 2009.

While the faculty is disappointed in Br. Ron Gallagher's decision to withdraw his support of salary goal 2, they look forward to working with him to rectify the situation.

The College Committee on Inclusive Excellence met over the summer and developed a well-received mission statement, and an Acts of Intolerance Protocol for students, faculty and staff, to be placed in the Student, Faculty and Staff Handbooks. Much discussion has occurred in the senate regarding the Acts of Intolerance Protocol and the CCIE is redrafting the document to reflect some of the suggestions to clarify and improve it.

There is still considerable interest in some faculty members for a reconsideration of Saint Mary's College of California dropping out of the US News and World Report Survey of Colleges and Universities. A motion to encourage reconsideration of this decision is being further discussed and refined in the Academic Senate Meeting later this month.

6. Provost's Updates – Provost Dobkin reported on the following:

- Associate Dean Chris Sindt is Chair of the Graduate Council. He is leading the application process to the National Council of Graduate Schools. She explained that once a semester all graduate program directors are also included in the Graduate Council meeting.
- The CCIE completed workshops mandated as part of the Senate Action. Soon she will open up to faculty the possibility to obtain grants for work projects related to the CCIE.
- The Climate Survey should be available soon.
- The Acts of Intolerance Protocols are being reconsidered.
- The Cabinet has been developing the following draft budget language to clarify the hiring cap:

All job announcements will contain language indicating that hiring is conditional on availability of funding. On campus interviews will be postponed until after February 1<sup>st</sup> and no long-term contracts or employee commitments either informally or formally will be made prior to that date. The College will evaluate and assess the renewing of regular contracts that happens to expire during the next three months and will consider these as well as temporary, i.e. lecturer, and independent contractor arrangements as necessary to sustain the existing level of service. Tenure track searches will continue with the understanding that a guarantee of funding for these positions will not be possible until after February 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Summer school proposal is on track, led by Vice Provost Sweeney. A four week schedule has been decided and they are in the process of planning a schedule of 8-12 courses.

7. Undergraduate Educational Policies Committee (UEPC) – UEPC Chair Paul Zarnoth reported that Hoang Vu will report all appropriate curriculum approvals to the Registrar's

office. The UEPC received reports regarding the summer school initiative as well as the core curriculum proposal. The following items were approved:

- An individualized major in Digital Gaming and Communication.
- A course name change for History 114 from The Reformation Era to Early Modern Europe.
- Change to the prerequisite for physics 10.
- The new course proposal form, which is listed under New Business.
- The Senate Action regarding Procedures for Discontinuance of a Department or Program as amended by the Provost. The UEPC accepted the Provost's amendments and the amendments made by the GPSEPC.

The UEPC continues to consider a proposal for a new course in Economics, Multinational Enterprises.

8. Graduate & Professional Studies Educational Policies Committee (GPSEPC) - Senator Brunetti reported on the following as the Senate liaison to the GPSEPC:

- The committee received a report from the Committee on Teaching and Scholarship regarding the new course evaluation form. The graduate programs are looking to use a common evaluation form.
- Dean Tom Carter reported to the GPSEPC on Proquest, an electronic program to keep dissertations and theses.
- SMC has joined the Council of Graduate Schools.
- Discussed the WASC visit in fall of 2009, which will focus on graduate programs.
- The graduate bulletin continues to be discussed. The Provost would like something in place by the fall. Each of the graduate programs at SMC are very different and it is difficult to create a format that will work across the board for graduate programs.
- Graduate housing; currently there are 8 graduate students but there is an agreement to allow up to 18. The program will continue next year.

9. Admissions and Academic Regulations Committee (AARC) – Vice Chair Poundstone reported that the committee met on October 22, 2008. Hoang Vu reported to the AARC on the new course evaluation form. The AARC reviewed graduation requirements, which was tabled from last year. It was reported that 57% of those students that walked at graduation 2007 had completed their studies. Leslie Welty will report at the next meeting on the “graduation project”. Vice Provost Sweeney asked about the involvement of the AARC with the assessment of first year advising. Vice Chair Poundstone said he communicated the Vice Provost's inquiry to the AARC chair Lynyonne Cotton; he will follow-up with her on the issue.

10. Program Review Committee (PRC) – Senator Rokeach reported as the Senate liaison to the PRC. The committee continues its work on the reviews submitted, however four departments have requested extensions on their program reviews.

11. Report from Vice President for Development Keith Brant – Chair Brother Charles introduced Keith Brant. He presented a report on the Comprehensive Campaign. A detailed report is on file in the office of the Academic Senate. The campaign is in the silent phase for the first four years of the seven-year campaign. At this time the focus is on getting the current donors on board and expanding the donor base. His one concern is the College's ability to invest in the campaign given the Board of Trustees announcement of the hiring freeze. In order to launch a campaign, he will need to hire staffing. It is very important that SMC is speaking with its donors during this time.

Priorities are continuing to be developed. He is currently working on a prospectus and in the process of setting goals; what are the types of things we want to accomplish during the campaign? For example, at the end of the campaign it is hoped that SMC has a much stronger volunteer base among the Trustees and Regents.

The first part of the campaign is dedicated to engaging the stakeholders and he will be engaging faculty with types of research is taking place, involving faculty in the fundraising effort. A series of letters from the President will be sent to the donors to discuss the needs and aspirations of the college. The President will host a series of dinners with small groups of donors.

Priorities are categorized in three ways:

- enhancing scholarship and fostering intellectual skills (library, student scholarship, chairs, professorships, resources for teaching and research, guest lecturers, creative arts)
- scholarly engagement, service and spiritual exploration (more funds for Jan Term travel, study abroad, investing in centers, service learning, mission and ministry center, Lasallian institutions around the world)
- spirit of the community and athletic tradition (building a student life center, supporting intercollegiate athletics, and expansion of technology and multimedia resources on campus)

12. Report on the Bookstore – Scott Devlin reported as the Textbook Manager at the bookstore. He showed a video on the policies and procedures of the bookstore relative to buying and selling books. He reminded faculty that book orders are due. Due to the holidays between the fall and spring semester, he must order earlier as many publishers shut down their sales and warehouse operations for up to ten days during the holidays. The price of books is the largest issue of complaint from students. Once a new edition is released, he cannot buy the old edition from the publisher. The bookstore has a policy that for core classes or classes on the introductory level, they will order the study guide unless the faculty member notifies them that the study guide will not be needed. He also requested that the bookstore be notified when a course is cancelled or a section added, course number changes, instructor changes. The college does receive a percentage back of all sales at the bookstore, however the sales are down this year.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

13. Senate Action S-07/08-17 - Procedures for Discontinuance of an Academic Department or Program not Mandated by General Financial Exigency – Chair Brother Charles explained that this action was approved by the Senate last year and forwarded to the Provost. Provost Dobkin amended the document and returned it to the Senate over the summer. The Senate sent the document back to the UEPC and the GPSEPC for review and feedback. Both committees accepted the Provost's amendments, and the GPSEPC suggested adding two headings and repositioning the last paragraph to the beginning of the document. A MOTION was made by Past Chair Bossard and SECONDED by Senator Flanagan to accept the revised document. Professor Tsukahara asked where the document would be placed in the Faculty Handbook. Chair Brother Charles responded that he would send it to the Provost for consideration by the Faculty Handbook Committee, but he suggested Faculty Handbook Section 2.8.5.2. The motion was accepted unanimously by voice vote.

## NEW BUSINESS

14. Motion Regarding the US News and World Report Rankings of SMC – A MOTION was made by Senator Capriulo and SECONDED by Senator Rokeach to open the floor for discussion of the following motion.

Whereas the Saint Mary's College of California Academic Senate is deeply concerned about our continuing fall relative to our Masters University West cohort in the US News college rankings. There is a strong faculty consensus on campus and in the Senate that we want to continue to improve the academic quality of Saint Mary's College in the future, and that we would like to see such improvements recognized by a myriad of outside agents including US News and World Report. We understand that the actual rankings at least in some part have dubious merit regarding true institutional values and strengths. At the same time we understand that, in the minds of many parents, students, alumni, donors, fellow academic institutions, potential faculty, and in the work of continuing to build our community to be the best it could be and informing the overall nation's attitudes regarding Saint Mary's, the rankings do matter.

And whereas we need to recognize that several of the US News categories can in fact provide revealing indicators of institutional quality. Among them are freshman retention, the six-year graduation rate, faculty salaries, the percentage of class size under 20 and over 50, the student-faculty ratio, the percentage of full-time faculty, SAT/ACT scores of entering freshmen, the acceptance rate, financial resources, and the alumni giving rate. Additionally we need to better assess the learning needs of our students. If we concentrate on the US News data, and not the percentage weights or the aggregate rankings, we can see that Saint Mary's has been losing ground to our peer institutions in several categories. Additionally, other institutions have been moving ahead of us who weren't there before, e.g., Chapman University, Pacific Lutheran University, University of Dallas, and Seattle Pacific University. This calls for some fact-finding and critical thinking.

Be it resolved that the Senate embark on an urgent mission, starting immediately, to regain our lost footing in the US News rankings and address the major indicators of institutional quality, including freshman retention, the six-year graduation rate, faculty salaries, the percentage of class size under 20 and over 50, the student-faculty ratio, the percentage of full-time faculty, SAT/ACT scores of entering freshmen, the acceptance rate, financial resources, and the alumni giving rate. To that end we charge the Senate immediately to assign to a suitable faculty body or bodies the following tasks.

- 1) **Continue** our self-evaluation and self-promotion to provide guiding insight on how we should change while acknowledging that outside peer evaluations matter and are a helpful way to judge the college's value to the larger society.
- 2) **Request** a full analysis from the administration and institutional research on all the categories used by US News and other evaluating agencies and how they are weighted; a historical picture of how our College has been rated in each and all of those categories over the last 10 years; and how the other top 15 Colleges in our Masters University West grouping have been rated in all of those same categories, over the same time period.
- 3) **Provide** to the administration a yearly evaluative advisory blueprint for changes that would improve the College vis-à-vis internal and external indicators of institutional quality.

Chair Brother Charles added that the "suitable faculty body" referred to in #1 above may be the AARC. Senator Capriulo argued that he would prefer a dedicated faculty body specifically interested in this issue. Past Chair Bossard expressed concern to form another faculty committee. Chair Brother Charles said that Vice President Beseda and the Provost Dobkin have offered assistance in this task.

Senator Rokeach said that freshmen retention, graduation rates, faculty salaries, class size, etc. every college takes note of, but he is concerned to link it to USNWR. When the various colleges withdrew their participation it was a statement of principle and he respects them for

this. The decision was made because they did not want to participate in what they felt was a misleading or “sham like” ranking system. He sees the motion as a way to join back into a system we do not agree with.

Senator Capriulo said it is important to recognize that many people do use the rankings in making decisions. Whether we like it or not, we are judged by it and whether we participate or not, the USNWR will rank us. We need to know how they are ranking us and how or why we are falling short.

Senator Alvarez said that as part of Brother Ronald’s vision statement is, “to be known nationwide for the strength of our academic programs as well as the distinctiveness of our curriculum in undergraduate and graduate education.” He said the motion would help SMC to move toward this goal.

Mary McCall said a new advising model has just been put into place to address freshmen retention. Many of the committees on campus are currently dealing with the various issues: the Registrar’s office is conducting the graduation project to deal with graduation rate, the summer school initiative also deals with the graduation rate, the Faculty Welfare Committee deals with the faculty salary issues. The ranking in USNWR should not be the standard, to be known for what we do well should be the standard.

Elizabeth Smith said there is no relationship between the participation and reputation, the decision to not participate has no effect on the ranking. She suggested that we look at the other schools that did not choose to participate and see if they went down in their rankings. There could be a benefit to understanding our movement in the rankings related to the factors, understanding what we are doing well.

Provost Dobkin said she is concerned when a group is sent off to complete a broad task with unclear consequences. The resolution has many aspects that various groups around campus are currently working on. She said what is needed is a reputational assessment and factors that seem to have produced it. That is a key question for the Institutional Marketing Group. The Institutional Marketing Group has a broad based membership including: (chaired by) Michael Beseda, Bob Ciano, Jane Joyce, Elizabeth Smith, Mario Alioto, Chris Carter, Mark Chiarucci, Heidi Donner, Dorothy Jones, Brother Donald Mansir, Keavin Miller, Dean Brian Jersky, Jane Camarillo, Tomas Gomez, Guido Krickx, Chris Sindt, and Lisa Moore.

Senator Capriulo said the academic reputation of the college first and foremost sits with the faculty. He said what is needed is a faculty only body that is advisory to the Institutional Marketing Group. If the work of the proposed group is redundant, then why has no one intervened to stop the slippage in the rankings? Senator Alvarez agreed that a separate body is needed. The committee that is needed will not just gather information, but also remind us where we are slipping.

Senator Rokeach said too much weight is being placed on the USNWR. He said he does not believe the notion that our reputation is slipping as precipitously as is being implied.

Provost Dobkin said she does support the direction the Senate is moving in.

Chair Brother Charles said that if the motion is approved, the next Senate meeting will deal with the issue of which body is to take on the task. A roll call vote was taken on the motion as follows:

Brother Charles Hilken	Abstain	David Bowen	Yes
Vice Chair Poundstone	Yes	Gerry Capriulo	Yes
Past Chair Bossard	Yes	Zach Flanagan	Yes
David Alvarez	Yes	Marty Rokeach	No

The motion was approved by a vote of 6-1-1.

15. The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathe Michalosky  
Faculty Governance Coordinator