

Minutes of the Academic Senate

January 13, 2010

1. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Steve Cortright. Roll was called and the following Senators were present: Vice Chair Steve Cortright, Tomas Gomez-Arias, Laura Heid, Sam Lind, Keith Ogawa, Phil Perry, Marty Rokeach, and Ed Tywoniak. Absent were Chairperson Tom Poundstone, Past Chairperson Brother Charles Hilken and Parliamentarian David Bird.

Also present were: Dean Tom Carter, Sue Fallis, Interim Dean Larisa Genin, Susan Marston, Associate Dean Chris Sindt, Ted Tsukahara, Hoang Vu, Associate Registrar Leslie Welty, and Interim Dean Roy Wensley.

2. Minutes of the December 3, 2009 Academic Senate meeting were accepted as submitted.

REPORTS

3. Chairperson's Report - Vice Chair Cortright assumed the role as chair in Tom Poundstone's absence. Vice Chair Cortright announced that the membership of the Core Curriculum Implementation Committee (CCIC) has been confirmed. Members are: Cynthia Ganote, Ted Tsukahara, Robert Gorsch, Mindy Thomas, Zach Flanagan, Vidya Chandrasekaran, and Paul Zarnoth (for spring 2010 being replaced by Jim Sauerberg in fall 2010.) The first meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2010. Vice Chair Cortright expressed concern over the delay in the meeting date given the pressing business facing the committee.

Consent Agenda: The Technical Theatre/Design Track in Performing Arts, the name change of Performing Arts: Theatre" to "Performing Arts: Theatre Performance and Theatre Studies", and the reformatting of Psych 104 "Test Construction" to "Special Topics in Assessment and Testing" were approved on the consent agenda. All items were forwarded to the Senate from the Undergraduate Educational Policies Committee.

4. Vice Chairperson's Report - Vice Chair Cortright reported that the Committee on Committees (CoC) has placed a proposal on the agenda under New Business which will call for the election of the January Term Committee membership.

5. Graduate and Professional Studies Educational Policies Committee (GPSEPC) – Senator Heid reported that the committee will meet to review the Masters of Arts in Teaching Leadership (MATL) program, which was fast-tracked three years ago.

6. Admissions and Academic Regulations Committee (AARC) – Senator Tywoniak announced that the College has hired a new Dean of Admissions, Michael McKeon. The AARC is in the process of developing an analysis template to be used for the evaluation of the first year advising cohort. Surveys will be sent to faculty in the near future.

OLD BUSINESS

7. Discussion of the format of UEPC meetings – Vice Chair Cortright reported that the UEPC posed a question to the Senate at the December meeting concerning the appropriate balance of open and confidential meetings of the UEPC, specifically the upcoming meetings to be held in

February regarding the closure of SIMS. Senator Lind explained that the UEPC has had considerable debate and apprehension about criteria for determining when the proceedings of regular and special UEPC meetings should be closed. Senator Lind said the Senate discussions in December suggested that most of those present felt comfortable that the majority of meetings are open, but the Chair should have the prerogative to close a meeting when topics of a sensitive nature would be under discussion.

Hoang Vu added that this question has been pending since the creation of the new committee structure. Some have questioned whether all meetings are to be open and announced.

Senator Ogawa said information regarding meetings has been published and he expressed confusion that faculty have viewed the meetings as closed. Ted Tsukahara agreed: the meeting schedules are posted, but perhaps all agendas and minutes could also be published. He served on the executive board of the Senate during the restructuring of faculty committees, and he said it was the intent that all faculty committees dealing with faculty business be open. Senator Tywoniak added that confidentiality is to be maintained in certain instances. He suggested that a statement from the Senate could clear up any problematic perceptions regarding the open status of faculty committee meetings.

Senator Rokeach said the Program Review Committee investigates systemic strengths and weaknesses of a department. Would it be appropriate for the chair to declare a meeting confidential should administrative issues arise in its course? Vice Chair Cortright suggested words to the effect, "...discretion of a chair to close a meeting or parts thereof."

A MOTION was made by Senator Tywoniak and SECONDED by Senator Lind that the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate will issue a statement regarding Faculty Handbook criteria on open and closed faculty meetings and chairs' discretion to close a meeting or parts thereof. A few faculty felt that all meetings should be open, including sabbatical proposal deliberations. It was suggested that the Executive Committee use the definition of "personnel matters" from the Handbook in its statement to faculty.

The motion was approved by majority voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

8. January Term Committee Membership Proposal – Vice Chair Cortright introduced the following proposal (which includes both the resolution and revised Faculty Handbook language).

Resolved:

1. That the proposal of the Committee on Committees and January Term Committee entitled "January Term Committee Membership" be adopted;
2. That pursuant hereunto the Faculty Handbook be amended as indicated below:

Faculty Handbook entry 1.7.3.7 shall be amended as follows:

1.7.4.11 January Term Committee

“Role: To recommend to the Vice Provost for Academics guidelines and policies for the January Term; to review proposals for courses offered during that term, including independent study proposals; to supervise catalog publication for each January; to evaluate pre-registration results for that term; to recommend policy regarding coordination with other 4-1-4 colleges; to recommend

and review other activities undertaken in January; to review and evaluate each January Term at its conclusion.

“Membership:

- Director of the January term (chairperson)
- ~~four ranked faculty members appointed by the Vice Provost for Academics for three-year (staggered) terms~~
- “– seven eligible members of the undergraduate faculty serving staggered, three-year terms (renewable), three of whom shall be elected, respectively, one from the School of Liberal Arts, one from the School of Economics and Business Administration, and one from the School of Science, and four of whom shall be elected at large from any undergraduate school
- “– ~~one student appointed by the student body president~~
- ~~Dean for Academic Development, ex officio~~
- ~~Registrar, ex officio~~
- “– one non-voting, *ex officio* representative from the Office of the Registrar

“Eligibility:

“Nominees for elective membership will have taught a minimum of two (2) January Term courses.”

[*Note:* The draft was adopted by the 2008-09 Committee on Committees in May 2009. It has since been adopted by the present January Term Committee. Elections will be staggered over a three-year period. As a result, the current appointed faculty membership (exclusive of the Director and Registrar’s representative) will be replaced over that period with elected members, making the January Term Committee thenceforth an elected, faculty committee.]

A MOTION was made by Senator Tywoniak and SECONDED by Senator Heid to adopt the January Term Committee proposal. Sue Fallis said the Jan Term Committee is supportive of the proposal and the gradual process to replace appointment faculty by elected members. She agreed with the removal of a student member, adding that the committee invites students to participate as the need arises. A roll call vote was taken on the motion as follows:

Vice Chair Cortright	Yes	Keith Ogawa	Yes
Tomas Gomez-Arias	Abstain	Phil Perry	Yes
Laura Heid	Yes	Marty Rokeach	Yes
Sam Lind	Yes	Ed Tywoniak	Yes

The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0 with one abstention.

9. Proposal for Chairperson’s Report on Faculty Service – Senator Rokeach presented the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

Whereas, members of the faculty should be discouraged from doing less than their fair share of a committee's work,

Resolved, In order to aid the Rank and Tenure Committee's assessment of a faculty member's service to the College, committee chairpersons will submit a brief description (just a paragraph or two), candidly describing the quality of work of any member applying for interim review or promotion. It is each faculty member's responsibility to elicit the letter from his or her committee chair.

Pursuant hereunto, the Faculty Handbook 2.6.1 under "Service to the College" shall be amended as follows: the first sentence of the last full paragraph shall read, "It is the responsibility of faculty to present clear evidence of their effective service to the College, in part by soliciting brief evaluations of their service from the chairs of College committees, for inclusion with the department Form B."

Senator Rokeach explained that the Rank and Tenure Committee receives information regarding the quality of teaching, as well as the quality of scholarship. Under the current system, the R&T Committee is aware of committee service, but not necessarily of the quality of that service. He consulted with members of the R&T Committee; they are in support of the resolution. In order not to excessively burden the R&T committee, or the chair of a faculty committee, the proposal calls for a brief statement regarding the quality of service. A MOTION was made by Senator Tywoniak and SECONDED by Senator Lind to approve. Vice Chair Cortright announced that he would abstain from voting on the issue, as he is currently a member of the R&T Committee.

Senator Ogawa noted that the resolution does not specify criteria by which a chair of a committee is to assess a committee member. He expressed concern about inconsistency or partiality among assessments; there are already enough mechanisms in place by which to assess faculty. The proposal calls for an additional mechanism. He expressed concern and noted that it would be more beneficial to recognize or reward individuals for their service. Senator Rokeach observed that effective committee service is required of all ranked faculty and implies evaluation. He acknowledged that evaluative judgment has a potential to be abused. On the other hand, all faculty service is not of equal effectiveness, and its assessment is a very real problem. Senator Lind said the proper form for peer review for teaching, scholarship, and service should be considered carefully. Is there another way to assess faculty service, perhaps by peers?

Senator Tywoniak said the resolution's intent is to encourage colleagues to serve effectively in the spirit of shared governance. The resolution implies a formative as well as an evaluative process, which could be quite valuable.

Senator Heid noted: currently anyone can write a letter to the R&T Committee; this proposal would formalize the process so far as service goes. Since the letters would be contributions to the Form B (and not, like volunteered letters, to the confidential file), candidates would see and could respond to them.

Ted Tsukahara noted that since roughly half of the ranked faculty at SMC are at full professor and that 80-85% of ranked faculty are tenured; the proposal would do little by way of constraining conscientious service. The spirit of effective service is needed, and it will help faculty to know how they are working together to carry out the work of the faculty. All good intentions could be misinterpreted, unless the faculty as a whole understand that faculty are responsible to one another for their work. If faculty are unwilling to do the work of the faculty, they should cede it to the administration.

Chris Sindt said it is possible that it could have the opposite outcome, giving full professors an incentive to do even less service.

Susan Marston stated that if the proposal represents a practice that faculty want, it should be available for all faculty, not limited to faculty up for tenure or promotion. If it is necessary to

evaluate the quality of service in a formal way, it should be an equitable process for everyone. The proposal has implications for how the college views and values service.

Senator Tywoniak said the Senate's (currently inactive) Rank and Tenure Subcommittee (RATS) has addressed the issue of post tenure and post full professor review in the past. Currently, there is no mechanism in place to conduct this type of assessment.

Senator Ogawa noted looking at the audience; very few faculty members were present, although the Handbook defines faculty attendance at Senate meetings as expected service. The college is in an era of continual assessment. He suggested that criteria must be developed in order to assess faculty service. He acknowledged Senator Rokeach's passion for service, but faculty also have a passion for teaching and scholarship. Service to students is a main criterion for faculty. Are we going to also assess the time spent on campus by each faculty member?

Senator Rokeach said it is not his intent to add a great deal of additional bureaucracy to the process. He agreed with Senator Ogawa that the College is in an age of assessment, and the rubrics are sometimes cumbersome and inflexible; that is not what he is hoping for. He added that recently four Senators sent a letter regarding quality of service on behalf of a former Senator to the R&T Committee. He was thankful that he did not have a rubric that had to be followed.

Hoang Vu stated that quality of service should be at the forefront. The College looks at teaching through student evaluations, chairs' and colleagues' class visits; candidates for promotion or tenure must explain their pedagogy, following the criteria provided. Scholarship is also evaluated through the criteria provided. However, for service, no criteria are provided. He is not convinced that a simple paragraph will do a service for candidates. He questioned how strongly service is considered by R&T, versus teaching and scholarship.

Senator Heid stated she would prefer, rather than mandating letters from chairs, a more organic process from within the rank and tenure. She preferred that the candidates write more self-reflectively and critically concerning their service, and that faculty and deans write letters to the Rank and Tenure file. Senator Heid suggested that the R&T chair's letter and the letters from the R&T Committee could address, in a formative way, the quality of one's service.

Senator Tywoniak said the goal is that our colleagues be engaged in the work of the College; the less punitive that process, the better off we are. There must be clear expectations. Many suggestions have been raised, but further discussion is needed.

Susan Marston questioned the department chair's responsibility in the R&T process. Who does the department chair contact to get information about the candidate? Is it consistent, or at the discretion of each chair? It could be a policy that the department chairs contact the chairs of the committees for feedback on a candidate's service. Senator Tywoniak clarified that the Handbook only requires chairs to contact other departments in which a candidate has taught. It is not mandated that a chair receive information regarding a candidate's service.

Ted Tsukahara said it is his view that the R&T process puts the emphasis on providing evidence on the part of the candidate. The candidate is responsible for providing direct evidence of effective teaching, scholarship, and service. The statements submitted are reviewed by a department chair and a dean. If the R&T Committee agrees that the evidence provided is not sufficient, the letter from the R&T Committee will be addressed to the candidate along with the dean and department chair. He suggested that additional Handbook language is not required. The goal to record evidence of effective service is a good one, but he was not sure of the best way to accomplish it.

Senator Rokeach said he would like faculty to feel more compelled to do their work without adding more bureaucratic layers. Perhaps Senator Heid's suggestion can accomplish this without adding more mechanics to the process.

Senator Ogawa said it is a faculty member's responsibility to discuss their service in their Form A. If R&T feels it is insufficient, it will respond accordingly through its letters.

Interim Dean Larisa Genin said she would like clarification of the definition of service. How does academic advising fit into service? It is a challenge to understand how much weight is placed on academic advising by the R&T Committee. Should advising be a fourth requirement of R&T? Would advising 60 students be equivalent to serving on one intensive workload committee?

Senator Tywoniak responded that during the discussion of academic advising last year with the AAEC, the question came up as to the appropriate place to evaluate advising. One approach is to look at it as service to the department and part of the overall service to the College. Another approach is to look at it as part of teaching, integral to teaching and should be evaluated for rank and tenure purposes through a candidate's teaching. The question deserves careful consideration. He suggested that a reconstitution of the Rank and Tenure Subcommittee of the Senate may be in order to address these issues.

Vice Chair Cortright reported that the R&T process is not a process of peer assessment, it is a process of peer review. The distinction between peer assessment and peer review is: R&T does not solicit opinions assessing a colleague's quality of work; rather, a case is made by the candidate on the basis of criteria which is public and common to all, and that case is scrutinized by the candidate's closest peers and supervisors. The results of this immediate review come before the R&T Committee with the candidate's original case, for a more disinterested review and recommendation on all criteria. It is not the case—as it might be were assessment at issue—that excellence in one area can compensate for deficiency in another.

Senator Perry also offered the situation where the chair of the committee is the candidate. Who would write the letter in that case? He suggested that this issue needs to be considered more fully in the spring when more faculty are available.

A MOTION was made by Senator Perry and SECONDED by Senator Lind to table the motion. The motion to table was approved by a hand vote of 7-0 with one abstention.

10. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathe Michalosky
Faculty Governance Coordinator