

Faculty Senate Faculty Only Meeting
Tuesday, November 8, 2016, 2:00 p.m.
Minutes

Attended: S. Anderson, H. Burt, D. Clough, A. Coleman, Hien Nguyen, K. Rotella, K. Taylor, J. Seabury, S. Valente, J. Wampler, S. Wood

Absent: J. Berry, J. Harding, M. Majeski, K. Pelletier

Guest: D. Cummings

Called to Order: 2:05 p.m.

1. The Minutes from the October 13, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Several corrections were made. Sandy Wood clarified that she has not volunteered to be the elections officer, but to define and write up the responsibilities of the Elections Officer. Kathy Taylor moved that the Minutes be accepted as amended, seconded by Karen Rotella. The Minutes were accepted unanimously as amended.

2. David discussed the issues related to the Senate's ongoing efforts to define and revise the Governance Structure as it relates to all college standing committees, reporting that he and Kathy Taylor have been in discussion with the chairs of the Academic Standards Committee, GEAC, and CEAC with specific reference to the Faculty Senate being the umbrella organization over all of them and to whom all would report, with Faculty Senate then reporting all relevant committee business to the President. The plan is to have a draft motion ready for the beginning of the Spring semester with action on that motion to take place during the Spring semester and (in the best of all possible worlds) to have this governance structure in place by the end of the Spring semester.

Discussion followed, the highlights being as follows:

- The question of buy-in by the President was raised, which led to a discussion of whether there is a need for revision/clarification of the Faculty Senate mission.
- While no decisions have yet been made, there appears to be general interest in the involved committees.
- David Clough stated that the governance issue will be brought up to the President at the next Executive Committee meeting, focusing on why this change in governance needs to happen.
- Jane Wampler expressed that there is among the faculty a considerable confusion about the roles and relationship between CEAC and GEAC, something she believes would not have happened if something like the proposed governance structure had been in place. While the GEAC and CEAC should remain autonomous, it would be helpful if each committee could report out to the Faculty Senate at the Senate meetings. GEAC and CEAC would not be in a subordinate role to Faculty Senate. Of particular concern is the GEAC role in applying the general education competencies to all students in all programs

when, by her calculation, they really only apply to about 37% of the student population.

- Kathy Taylor added that there are distinct advantages to having a unified voice of the faculty, leading change, and getting everyone around the table to ask and answer questions, something facilitated by the proposed governance structure.
- Sandra Valente added that historically, GEAC developed out of a Faculty Senate subcommittee on general education competencies before it evolved into a standing committee of its own.

3. Sandy Wood and Jane Wampler reported on their work on clarifying and revising the procedure for election of officers. Their main conclusions were as follows:

- The context for the election process needs to be clarified by setting forth standards for all to follow.
- No one up for election should serve in administering election of either general Senate membership or of officers.
- An online service (like Survey Monkey) could be used provided it is on an account owned by the Faculty Senate, not by an individual person.
- Sandy gets kudos for her work on the sample nomination and sample ballot forms.
- At the December 6th meeting, Sandy will bring sample nomination and ballot forms for review.
- They also suggested creating a central repository for Senate information in order to create sustainable information despite who is in a particular office or position. There was some discussion of where such a repository could be located, with further discussion tabled until the next meeting.

4. Kathy Taylor reported on progress toward a common read related to a Spring semester talk by the author, as we did with Michael Roth's book last year. A lively discussion on the current BOR initiative on retention and recruitment interrupted the discussion (see next item), but when the conversation returned to the Spring Book Discussion and talk, it was reported that

- An invitation has been extended to President Nunuz of ECSU
- However, it has been suggested that as Nunez would speak without a fee, we might have her make a presentation earlier in the Spring semester and use part of the Faculty Senate budget to pay another speaker later in the Spring semester.
- The two speakers brought in by Kathy LeBlanc last spring from St. Joseph's University were suggested as the paid speakers. Those who went to their presentation last year were very impressed, and the speakers have a book which might do for the books discussion.
- Since last year's collaboration with CFT for the Michael Roth book discussion/presentation went well, Kathy suggested we might do the same again. She agreed to bring it up to CFT.

5. The way that the BOR's retention/recruitment task force is being handled occasioned a very lively discussion. Del Cummings, the NVCC representative to the Faculty

Advisory Committee shared his understanding of and thoughts about the process. What he reported is as follows:

- This is an initiative that we need to take very seriously. There is a meeting the Thursday following this Faculty Senate meeting at which the initiative is to be discussed and the questions about retention and recruitment to be answered are to begin being developed.
- For many, the issue of faculty representation on the committee is problematic; initially there was to be mostly College Presidents involved. However, each campus has been allowed to pick three people. NVCC has chosen Del and Kathy Taylor as faculty leader representatives and Bonnie Goulet as a non-faculty representative. President DeFilippis is involved as is Sarah Gager.
- David recommended waiting to see how the Thursday meeting goes before sharing further information with the faculty at large.
- Because Kathy Taylor has a competing commitment, she is unable to attend the Thursday meeting and asked for someone to attend in her place.
- Although several senators were disturbed at how rushed the process appears to be, Del pointed out the opportunity to make the Thursday meeting a positive statement so that more faculty involvement can be encouraged as the process goes on.

6. The last meeting of the Fall semester will combine an open-to-all-faculty meeting with a holiday celebration. This meeting is scheduled for Reading Day, December 6, from 3-5 to encourage the most faculty participation. As the Senate will be paying for food at \$10 per person, RSVP's will be requested. The invitation will go out to all faculty, full-time and adjunct, as well as to the Librarians. It was decided to limit the attendance to faculty and librarians and not invite administration as this is a meeting as well as a party. The menu will feature a selection of sparkling wines paired with a variety of food choices with Peter Cisek, head of the Viniculture program, in charge of the wines.

7. There were several items of new business discussed:

- Sandra Valente agreed to represent David Clough at the Administrative Council Meeting at 1:00 on Thursday, November 10.
- Christine from the math department questioned the best way to handle student information that falls under FIRPA.
 - Shredding seems the best option, but there are significant time, paperwork, and expense involved.
 - David said he will talk to the Executive Council, Provost Troup in particular, about the administration picking of the cost and handling the shredding process.
 - Sandra Valente suggested that there should be a clear policy on how long to hold on to student records, as well as regarding how such records are defined. She pointed out that programs with outside accreditation often have special issues regarding FIRPA records. She suggested writing to the Attorney General regarding what the policy should be.

- Jane clarified that there would need to be one big purge of all the accumulated records, followed by regular, much smaller purges of such records. Ultimately, costs would be much less than the initial cost.
- There was also discussion of Associate Dean Ron Picard's request to send out a Midterm Progress letter, the general theme of which is that it was excessive overstepping of faculty prerogatives regarding faculty ability to work with their own at-risk students, as well as considerable duplication of what faculty actually inform their students. It was also pointed out that the letter was quite intimidating to students who received it. As a result, quite a number of faculty declined to share the letter with their students.
 - The LABSS Division gathered feedback from its faculty, which were then forwarded to Associate Dean Picard.
 - The question of whether there should be a Faculty Senate response was tabled until it was more clear what the issues arising from the letter would be.
- Finally there was an animated discussion of the UF grade and how it figures into the administration's calculation of Faculty GPA.
 - To begin with, a majority of the Senate members were completely unaware that there was a faculty GPA, never mind how it was calculated.
 - It was explained that at the end of the semester, the final grades of all of a faculty member's courses are averaged to identify his or her semester GPA, presumably as a measure of teaching effectiveness as part of evaluating faculty for tenure and promotion.
 - There was considerable concern about whether such a GPA accurately reflects a teacher's effectiveness since student failure the vast majority of the time is a result of student life issues over which the faculty have no control.
 - The issue for those who raised the it had to do with how the GPA is calculated. Prior to the initiation of the UF grade, N-grades (which the UF replaced) did not get figured into the Faculty GPA, just as W grades do not.
 - However, because the UF grade is reported as F on the students' transcripts, it is figured into the faculty GPA, which has led to a plunge in GPA scores for a number of faculty. Because the UF grade is used for students who never attended, who stopped attending early in the semester, and/or for students who have handed in little to no gradable work, those who raised the issue want to have the UF grade taken out of the calculation of faculty GPA.
 - It was pointed out that the purpose of the UF grade is to make the students accountable for returning financial aid money when they basically do not participate in the courses for which they receive financial aid.
 - Del pointed out that this GPA calculation is part of the system-wide retention efforts and offered to bring it up with BOR President Mark Ojakian, in particular to understand the strategy behind using faculty GPA as part of determining whether faculty should be promoted or tenured. One concern is whether it is valid to see it as a retention issue; another

was whether using faculty GPA as part of the promotion and tenure process brings up union issues. In fact, some wondered whether faculty could actually see their own GPA, and if so, where it could be found.

- The Senate spent some time debating whether and what the Faculty Senate ought to communicate about the various issues related to Faculty GPA as we want to address this issue (and others affecting faculty) with a unified voice.
- The issue was left unresolved pending getting further information about it.

Next planned Meeting: Tuesday, December 6, 2016—open faculty meeting and holiday celebration

Motion to adjourn made by Jane Wampler and seconded by Sandy Wood. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Althea Mae Coleman

Althea M. Coleman, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of English