

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Jan. 12, 2012

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)

Brad Barry (BB)

Jen Ciaccio (JC)

Ami Comeford (AC)

Rob Cowan (RC)

Varlo Davenport (VD)

Jerry Harris (secretary)

Dianne Hirning (DH)

Jie Liu (JiL)

Jack Lounsbury (JaL)

Matt Smith-Lahrman (MS)

Kyle Wells (KW)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

PA: Welcome back! I hope everyone had a good break. A couple of items first off going into the second semester: I wanted to make sure we're aware of who's finishing up this semester and who's continuing on. (Asks representatives present). Those of you that are at the ends of your terms, please find someone in your department that is willing to serve on this committee and can meet at this time. Let them know what's involved and the importance of representation. As you identify names, please let me know. Technically, we're supposed to vote on the new representatives in this meetings, so I'll collect those names. OK, the other item is graduation—we'd discussed the possibilities of either condensing finals into four days to create a reading day *or* moving grad to Saturday, and the consensus seemed to be for the Saturday thing. We've conveyed that in our meetings with the President, and it's on the College Council agenda, so we'll continue sending that message.

MS: But that wouldn't take effect 'til...

PA: ...2013. Next: Shannon McBride is employed by college to inform faculty and help them write grants. Two or so years ago, you may have gotten an e-mail on that. She's still actively volunteering her time, and we're going to invite her to the Jan. 26th general Faculty Senate to talk about the process and its advantages. We met with her yesterday and talked about how if all faculty are like AC and I, grant-writing is barely on our radars, but grant-writing should eventually be an office at this institution. Having heard that, she's going to target more administrators and staff, but it's good information for faculty to have. So please spread word of that to your constituents.

DW: This is particularly important over the next 2-3 years because junior faculty will help develop and maintain university status, and that status comes with more grant-writing responsibility. It's an expected behavioral norm at the university level, so what we ought to do is alert our junior and incoming faculty to keep this on their radars.

VD: So she has an office?

PA: No, she's mobile; she'd come to your office. I'll send out her contact information.

AC: She's very open and interested in helping faculty to the extent they want to be helped. She's also developing a guidebook and handbook that will eventually be available. It'll include how to find grants for your particular area, and she'll give us an overview of that in our meeting. But it's all on *our* terms—we'd contact her and set up appointments, and she'll coach us through the process. She's not there to *write* the grants for us, but to do all the other stuff.

DH: The library also now has a new guide for locating foundations in certain content areas.

PA: A lot of this falls under the Development Office, and she's steering information to them. Especially in light of that, some of us are advisors for student groups and getting students involved in grant writing is important, too. OK, I think the rest of what I had today was follow-up on our last meeting. We talked about gathering information and identifying the purpose of this body and polling our respective areas to see what the perception was for the need of this group as far as what items should be addressed. In the past, we've talked a lot about policy revision, but as we look forward, we need to identify our overall purpose. Administration has been very open to our participation and input, so I think we've made great strides in being present and they're interested in hearing from us. I want that to continue, but we broke at the end of last semester with the assignment to gather department-level information for

what our faculty wants on the radar. I'll start with stuff I've thought about. A concern that I have that's new is the Rate My Professor support from our Student Government. I don't know how much experience you've had with it, but it seems to be a pop culture thing; it's run by MTV, and they don't seem to have a tight policy on accuracy—anyone can post anything they want, even if they haven't taken your class! I think it's silly, especially if we're putting money into it from the Student Government funds. There are signs around campus, and it's on the flat screens, so I think that got money from Student Government coffers.

KW: No, they actually got *paid* for that. I actually post my actual evaluations so students can get information from the source.

PA: But students aren't generally aware of that, and I think it broaches some issues that are not helpful to our efforts to create a positive, credible environment.

DH: If there are signs, that tells students it's viable.

PA: We also talked about parking last time—my concern is that passes are being given out to lots of people that aren't faculty. I see students that have no parents here as faculty getting out of cars with faculty permits on them. My third concern is library security. As we've met before, I've become more and more concerned about securing our holdings. Let's go around the room for all the other department concerns.

BB: I had one request from one member—apparently, Weber State considers finals week as face-to-face time/contact hours, so we should meet for fewer weeks.

JC: Or get paid for a couple of extra weeks.

MS: So they have shorter semesters than us? Then there's our reading week!

RC: In Chemistry, we already don't finish the syllabus!

BB: My other concern is adjunct pay and working conditions, but that's from me, not from my faculty.

PA: You're a faculty!

MS: Aren't we supposed to meet with students during finals?

DW: Yes, but that can now be done technologically, too.

PA: That's a fine line. BB, what did you mean by "working conditions?"

BB: Pay is primary, but if that can't be improved, there are other things we can do.

PA: We mentioned that to President Nadauld in November, and he agreed and will talk with Donna about the budget.

VD: Did the concept of giving them parking stickers show up?

PA: No.

JaL: From my area, one idea was that joining the Faculty Senate entitled a faculty member to a half-price parking sticker.

MS: Are we doing anything about creating more parking?

PA: They made 70 more spaces over by the bus stop.

MS: Yes, but President Nadauld said that by 2015, we'll have 20,000 students!

DW: ...and implied 300 faculty!

DH: The grand plan is to have a parking structure, but the low cost of permits won't generate enough revenue to cover building costs.

DW: That's going to be revisited just because it costs less than 10% for a parking space on a flat space than in a structure.

PA: It's like \$30K per slot in a structure. OK, so JC.

JC: In our department, and issue that came up was a concept on maternity leave and solidifying that as an actual policy. The way it's now applied is different and on a per person basis. You have to get it, but one person was told that because they were going to deliver mid-semester, they couldn't teach the first half of the semester, but other people have been told differently.

MS: That's against the law. We need something standardized.

AC: We've had that issue in our dept., too.

JC: Also, research credits for teachers—work-time compensation for that and funding to go to conferences.

DH: We have Professional Development for that.

JC: Well, but this is different—it's for students to go to conferences and their advisors to go with them. Right now, we get 0.1 credit for overseeing research, which is nothing. But as we're moving to becoming a university—well, even at any college with a biology program, research is a requirement. Anyone in such a program that will apply for higher degrees and medical schools has to have research experience.

KW: That's probably a Workload Committee issue. If people can document what other institutions do—when people have done that in the past, proposals go through that committee easily.

PA: So can we redirect that? As far as funding, there have been some requests for Professional Development that involve students.

JC: Well, for example, the UCUR (Undergraduate Council on Undergraduate Research) conference this year, there are 12-13 professors with students going, and even more students than that—funding all of them would decimate the Professional Development budget!

PA: But they should still be considered there. I think the answer is to increase the Professional Development budget.

AC: I take students to conferences, and that has been an issue. It seems that this issue needs to be considered as something that has separate funding. Either that or redefining “Professional Development”—I think advising students *is* professional and therefore could be covered. Maybe that committee needs to take up the definition of the committee, which comes back to what VD brought up last year about role statements.

PA: In the interest of getting through everyone’s issues today, let’s just state the items and we’ll discuss them at greater length later.

JiL: Our department never had a real meeting on this, but one thing that came up in talking is: can we have a longer winter break and a shorter summer break?

PA: We’d need to include in that how it would affect the summer schedule.

RC: It’s an issue for students that want summer jobs—it’s who gets there first that gets the jobs...

DW: Would it also impact the block courses?

JiL: Also, in our department, we have an issue of switching department chairs. We like the current chair, and he’s willing to continue—is there a policy about that?

JC: There’s a 2-term limit and they have been enforcing that lately.

DW: As an offshoot of that, who decides who’s the chair? There are too many departments where deans and vice-presidents are deciding that. Whomever the chair of a department is should be *entirely* a faculty decision.

MS: In our department, we got to vote, but it was pretty clear in the policy that Don or Donna got to decide; we just got to recommend someone.

RC: JC already covered Physical Science’s issues.

VD: At some point, I’d like to readdress the role statement thing.

DW: In our department, an important issue is overload pay for full-time faculty—we think we should be paid at the contractual, professional level when we teach overload classes; otherwise, it’s a freebie for the college. The same goes for summer teaching. Everywhere else, such pay is a percentage of your contractual salary. That’s the fairest approach. It’s no additional cost to administration because if there are enough students to make the course, then there’s enough money for instructional costs. Second, we’d like to see some sort of policy/movement to assist our 0.74 and 0.5 colleagues move in a full-time direction. Right now, they don’t have benefits or anything, and there’s no clear path to move them out of those positions. Again, if we’ve got the classes, we’ve got the money, but that doesn’t cover benefits. But we need to give them a sense that they can move forward.

DH: From the library, we already addressed the security issue, and that’s a huge issue both in terms of physical material and personal safety for faculty, staff, and students. Another issue was about role statements.

JaL: In our dept., an issue that came up was why are faculty the only group that’s evaluated from both above and below? A few years ago, we started down the road of evaluating administration, but where did that go?

PA: That came up in our last policy meeting, too. But the issue kind of died.

MS: In our department, we think every course should have an equal number of teaching days and hours. Some classes get shafted, for the same credit. All should have the same number of contact hours.

JC: Like in the falls, the Thursday classes get shafted.

DW: But the Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes and the Tuesday-Thursday classes meet for equal numbers of hours.

MS: Yes, but that doesn’t account for missed days due to holidays.

PA: At BYU, the solution to that problem was to make Tuesdays Mondays in weeks where the ends of the weeks were off for holidays.

MS: The other issue was that we need an explicit nepotism policy. It’s not that people are hiring relatives, but it’s hard to get couples appointments. We need an explicit policy for that.

VD: I lived that problem. The policy is that in the end, it’s up to the President and there are presidential exceptions, but that the President is not inclined to make exceptions.

MS: So there’s no policy.

JC: There is—for example, Erin O’Brien and Marius van der Merwe in Biology.

VD: It’s a loss because sometimes those couples have a lot to offer.

KW: In our dept., the first issue was an Adjunct Bill of Rights, to say that as an adjunct, you'll be invited to graduation, be treated like a faculty member, etc.—not that they'll necessarily take advantage of any of it, but at least they're invited. Our second issue was also the role statement thing. We have a faculty member that taught here in the 1980s, was tenured, and doesn't have a terminal degree; he left for a while and came back after the policy had changed, so now his lack of a terminal degree is a problem.

PA: Yes, our first issue for this semester is the professional equivalency one so people can have flexibility in hiring. Administration wants something set up for that, too.

RC: We had that situation, too, where we had a full-time person that only has an MS move down to part time; if she came back...

KW: We need to be clear on this as we move to university status. We really rely on these professional faculty, and we have to define those rights.

VD: USU has a "clinical" category.

PA: The model we've been using is USU's. We're out of time today, so that will be the first issue at our next meeting. My impression is that USU's is a viable model—not everything in it applies to us, but they have clearly defined categories and terms.

MS: Can you re-send that to us?

JC: We already go it.

PA: The next meeting for the General Faculty meeting on the 26th; our next FSEC meeting will be the 19th. Thanks everyone and see you next week!