

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

WORKING MEETING

February 5, 2015

In attendance:

Brent Albrecht (BA)

Clint Buhler (CB)

Robert Carlson (RC)

Alex Chamberlain (AC)

Timothy Francis (TF)

Jim Haendiges (JH)

Jerry Harris (JDH; secretary)

Linda Jones (LJ)

Curtis Larsen (CL)

Erin O'Brien (EO; President-Elect)

Sandy Peterson (SP)

Helen Saar (HS)

Nate Staheli (NS; President)

Samuel Tobler (ST)

Don Warner (DoW)

NS: I've got on the agenda just one report from the Faculty Senate President. I don't have a lot to report other than that we're deep in strategic planning, and I think our resident experts on the subject can address those issues if we like. We haven't met with *[Academic Vice-President] Bill [Christiansen]* this semester but will after this week. On that note, we've been meeting with the president twice a month, and last time talked primarily about strategic planning and other non-Faculty Senate issues. All's well there, nothing to report. As we talk to Bill, is there anything from Faculty Senate we want asked or addressed? I think we've talked before—there's an Academic Planning Priority Task Force that's been created; I didn't put anything on the agenda, but CB has been asked to sit in on that and represent Faculty Senate. Is there anything you'd like to address about that?

CB: We haven't really met yet, but it exists.

NS: The intent is to create resources to create a master plan.

CB: Right now it's just research and data gathering.

NS: I have Jim on the agenda; we nominated he and JDH for the Policy Steering Committee. Do you want to talk about that meeting?

JH: The two things that immediately came to mind is that we've been looking over the policies, and last time we met we talked about background checks, the Constitution and Bylaws, interim appointments, electronic signatures...we were mainly invested in representing the Faculty Senate for the Constitution and Bylaws. And then there was also a section on outdated policies that are getting deleted. One topic that came up, as part of the whole transparency of the process issue, is the Faculty Evaluation Policy that's coming up. In my department, one of the knee-jerk reactions that happened was that people said "there's this long, arduous process that's very top-down—are we as faculty able to evaluate people above us?" Martha said there was a whole section she'd originally had in there about that and it was taken out because the President wants to evaluate administrators—I'm paraphrasing and hope that's correct.

JDH: That's correct as I remember it.

JH: Martha said that on the one hand, that's how it goes, and do we want to fight back on that, but on the other hand, do we want to fight to be faculty members with the ability to evaluate higher up administrators? Do we want that fight or let it rest?

JDH: She did mention that for whatever process the President puts in place, he *will* be open to faculty input on evaluating them, but it wasn't specified how or when he would solicit that input—procedurally, it wasn't mentioned, but as a concept it will be there. So we'll have the ability to give input when *he* is evaluating the administrators.

CB: Is the question then that we want to make policy for that procedure? For how the faculty gives the President feedback?

JH: I don't know that that's spelled out; we just have the right to do it, but it's not a strong power to evaluate—we'd just be on committees, and we can be part of those if someone's being evaluated, or there's an appeal—we just don't have a direct way to evaluate.

AC: Has the faculty *ever* had the ability to evaluate their supervisors?

CB: That seems unconventional for anything.

RC: I sent an e-mail response about this to the Policy Office, and I said that there's been a strong emphasis on student evaluation of faculty, and it seems like an appropriate parallel for faculty evaluation of their supervisors. I don't see why they are different in any way. There are clearly some things that students are incapable of evaluating us about, and things that they can; there are some things about our supervisors that we don't know enough about and thus couldn't evaluate them effectively, but others we do and could. So there should be a role for our input that is specified in policy that goes beyond every 3 years for department chairs and every other year for a small committee of faculty regarding deans. That seems remote. But we should be able to do something more regularly.

NS: We'll make sure that this is an agenda item for our next meeting with the President. If I can summarize it: we're OK that he wants to talk, but that we want more involvement—I think he's concerned that we want ultimate say, which obviously is not appropriate, as you said.

RC: It should be *part* of the process, the input from *all* faculty, not just a small committee, and it should be a systematic evaluation just like the one for students to evaluate faculty.

DoW: Do other campuses have this ability?

NS: I don't know.

HS: It's pretty standard in industry.

NS: We'll take that to the President—that's a great conversation, and exactly why we're doing what we're doing, so we can represent the needs of all the faculty.

RC: Evaluation isn't just up or down—it constructive for meaningful parts of their jobs.

NS: If we're all collegial, I think that's important.

EO: I just Googled this: there's evaluations and instructions at different schools with different guidelines, but they're being done by a variety of institutions. It looks like typically there's *ad hoc* committees that include faculty that are engaged in this process. So there is precedent on that. This has come up in conversation in the past, and one of the things that's come up is the potential for a conflict of interest—that these are people that have power over faculty, so whatever is in place, faculty can't feel that their positions, or even their comfort levels, are at risk if they criticize their supervisors. So there would have to be a degree of anonymity; I don't know how. But not complete anonymity—in such instances, people can get carried away with their statements if they can't be tracked back.

AC: They'd be difficult to make really anonymous.

CB: Especially if you're trying to provide evidence for something.

EO: True—that is an issue. So there's not an easy answer.

RC: But there should be some way to do it, whether the feedback goes to the supervisor above them, so they don't directly see it, and it'll get filtered down back to them so they don't have access to the original responses.

BA: What if the faculty of a department met without the chair and provided collective feedback to the chair? No one would know who said what.

EO: That's not true—there are departments where chairs would immediately hear what happened in the meeting.

NS: I think our course is to make sure the President knows of our request that faculty be involved in the process *somehow*.

RC: And more extensively than what's in current policy.

NS: The Policy Committee has been well received. I think it's good for the trustees.

JH: The advantage is that there are more stops [*where people read the policies*]. The thing about policy is that people don't read it and then freak out when they see something in it later. It's more chances to speak, and some things will move around or get kicked back, and there's things that come up with policies still under review when they get to us. By the way, has Academic Integrity been submitted?

NS: It's being discussed with Bill this morning. And then I think it's a new item for Academic Council, but not uploaded for the 30-day comment period yet.

JDH: One other issue that came up at the Policy Committee meeting was representation on the Faculty Senate: basically, the issue is that the President feels really strongly that representation on the Faculty Senate should be proportional...Martha didn't specify to us whether that's to department or school or whatever, but more than having just one person from every department, he wants it to be more proportional percentages of the faculty within each unit.

CB: Didn't we already resolve this?

RC: We don't have to agree with the President on this; we had this exact vote.

NS: He knows that.

EO: I suggested to NS in response to this is if the President feels strongly about this, that it might be good to put this to the General Faculty for a vote so we end up with what the majority of faculty would actually prefer, so it's not down to "us or him" and an argument.

CB: The issue with that is the exact issue with having proportional representation here. The point of not going strictly proportional is to protect the smaller departments that don't have as much vote. So if we put it to a general vote, we've basically just agreed with the President's plan.

BA: That's an excellent point.

NS: I remember this conversation vividly.

EO: I'm not saying that individual departments don't have a strong, vested interest in having their voices, but how many decisions do we make in Faculty Senate that only impact one small department negatively? I'm not saying it couldn't happen; I'm just trying to envision a scenario where this matters.

RC: What they did in the proportional proposal is increase the size of the Faculty Senate, so that no department gets *less*—only some get more, if that makes sense. Small departments would have just as much representation as in the current proposal, but bigger departments have significantly more.

NS: CB's comment is that it will water down those that need strong representation.

CB: I still see problems with that kind of representation...?

DoW: Are we senators or representatives?

BA: I also remember concern brought up during that discussion that the Faculty Senate would become too big even with *one* representative from each department. If it's proportional, it could be even bigger.

AC: In the interest of stopping rehashing arguments we've already had, I think we had a really good discussion about this, and it took a long time...would the president be willing to come in and have the same discussion with us? He might not be considering the points that were brought up.

NS: I think so, but here's the negative: the Constitution and Bylaws is already posted for 30-day review, and already written the way we decided.

EO: We could be asked to revisit it and go through the policy process all over again.

NS: But we *could* convene a meeting—I'm sure he'd love to do that. The current version's 30-day review is up Feb. 15, and then it goes to the General Faculty for a vote where it needs two-thirds approval; then it goes to Academic Council and on up.

CB: The faculty *did* have a vote—we went back to our areas and requested input on this very thing—we didn't just make an executive decision. I think we can all see the benefits of both sides, but I don't know if it's worth revisiting.

NS: OK. Do we need a motion? It sounds like it's already been decided. We'll go back to the President and thank him for his input, but say that we've already discussed it and taken it to our constituents, and we think this is the best way.

CB: Some of these areas that are "underrepresented," like Psychology and Criminal Justice, will eventually split and gain chairs, and then gain representation.

NS: We can revisit this as we grow. Other institutions have at-large appointments, and that was part of this discussion—there are minority groups that have expressed interest in having a seat at the table so their interests are represented. Early on, I felt that the senators represent their interests now, but they felt maybe it needed to be addressed in another manner. That brings up another question: would you consider having an at-large appointment—an associate member with no voting rights—that could represent minority or other interests on campus? Or does that open a can of worms?

AC: Can you give me some examples of what form that might take?

EO: A person that would come to these meetings, be involved in discussions and debates, but couldn't vote on issues.

RC: How would they be chosen?

EO: That would need to be discussed.

RC: If it's just an open, General Faculty vote, then it wouldn't necessarily meet the minority interest; it would just be some other, random person.

EO: I guess we were envisioning—this was raised by a faculty member, and as we began to have conversations about this, we realized there might be issues that require something new. As an example, those of us involved in starting the strategic planning process: a lot of us at this table are involved in that, so we don't need a special representative, but if we have Program Development, or special taskforces involved in doing something that is going to affect the community as a whole, having someone from such a group that sits in on these meetings regularly so they can stay apprised on what's going on on campus and what could impact them. Faculty groups who feel that perhaps their representation isn't representing them could be brought up for consideration, and there could be a decision made by this group as to whether or not that should result in someone being appointed.

RC: Our current Constitution and Bylaws—the proposal that we have—allows for guests, and they can request a meeting, and we can decide to let them sit in or come and present to us. That provision is still available.

NS: The biggest thing here is that we want people to know that we're sensitive to diversity and minority issues and that we're meeting the needs of all the faculty, especially those special-interest groups. We're not a lobbyist group, but I think that that person/people representing those groups can and should be invited to present their thoughts and views and trust that the senators representing their constituencies will make the decision that are in the best interests of them and *all* the constituents.

RC: I don't like the idea of an at-large member filling that role because they'll almost never be voted in by a general vote, and then when you start targeting specific votes from specific groups, it becomes a never-ending problem.

NS: So the solution is that we just need to be sensitive and invite those persons.

EO: Do we start having standing invitations? So that people know that they are welcome to every meeting. Some of these people on campus may ask for that.

NS: I don't think we'd have a problem having that.

DoW: If we had select invitations at certain times, that's fine, but if it's open for people to come to all the meetings, you'll have rabble-rousers come in and take up all our time.

NS: Good point. So the suggestion would be that each of us contact members of these groups and let them know that they're invited; they just have to contact the Faculty Senate leadership.

CB: If they have an issue they want raised, let us know, and we'll make it an agenda item, and that they're welcome to come to make sure it's addressed.

EO: That's a different level of input because that's "I have a problem with something that has happened," vs. being involved in some debates that would impact certain groups. It may be that we need to start keeping in mind that the decisions we make in this room have impacts on smaller subsets of our community. And to maybe table some decisions that might have such an impact and invite someone from this smaller group to come and participate. That's something we probably ought to keep more in the forefront as we discuss some things. Just using this as an example: we have an adjunct representative that we all agreed could be here because we didn't feel that they were well represented by the different school and department representatives.

RC: How far in advance is our agenda posted? That may be another mechanism for instead of having standing invitations, if the agenda is posted and everyone knows it, then they don't have to just ask to put an issue on the agenda; they can also see issues coming and decide if that's a time they want to visit.

NS: A week ahead of time—is that sufficient?

CB: The *newly structured Faculty Senate Executive Committee, acting as a* steering committee is supposed to meet and come up with that, so that would be the appropriate time to do that.

NS: So when we go back to report to the individual that's approached us about this, we'll represent what's been discussed here. I think we always have been sensitive to the needs of such minority groups.

CB: I'd like to know if there's been an instance where someone felt they weren't being represented or where something went awry so we can watch for those things and make sure they don't, or if it's just preventative—that would be a different feel for the whole issue.

NS: It's tough—there's different pockets of occasional discussion about different things. In some situations, they might feel they're not being represented, and in others it's preventative. We just need to be sensitive to situations, and I think we have, in general.

RC: What's ironic is that we often have trouble finding people willing to be senators, yet someone feels left out!

NS: I think I get a feel where we're at on that issue; is there anything else on that?

LJ: If the President wants to come talk with us about this, I don't know how that affects the 30 day vote...

EO: You mean have a special meeting, where we can talk to the President directly...?

LJ: Yes.

RC: I move we keep the current process going for the current version of the Constitution and Bylaws moving forward, and other discussions are open for revising in the future. But there's no reason for a last-minute rushed addressing of this issue that we discussed thoroughly.

NS: Second? (AC? seconds.) Further discussion? (None.) All in favor? (All ayes.) OK, that's how we'll handle it, and the President will just have to understand that we said "no." The next issue on the agenda is Bowling for Kids' Sake: R.C. Morris approached me; he works with Big Brothers, Big Sisters a lot, and they've contacted him to see if we would get involved in this Bowling for Kids' Sake. He asked me to contact the senators and give you these fliers to take back to your constituencies and see if they want to participate. What it is is that you try to raise \$500 for a team—it's a fundraiser—and then on Mar. 28, 2015, there's times where you go bowl, and you compete across departments or whatever. We can have a traveling trophy if we feel like we want to do that. It's more for collegial fun.

EO: And you're supposed to dress up as a superhero.

NS: You can if you would like. All I'm asking for is to take this to your faculty and report back to us next meeting.

EO: Or just e-mail R.C. Morris.

NS: Yes, why don't you do that. I'll let him know we distributed this flier and charged the senators with going to their constituencies and see if they want to form a group, and that they'll get with him with their interest. Departments, schools, whatever. What's your general thought—will faculty participate in this?

RC: What do we do other than show up and bowl?

NS: Raise \$500.

EO: Basically get students to pay you to dress up as something goofy.

CB: Asking students for money?

EO: We have, in the past, had fund-raisers for students to dunk faculty, so...

CB: But not asking for money in class.

EO: It's more of a "spread the word that this professor will dress up silly if enough money can be raised."

NS: This is my vision: it'd be really fun to have groups of faculty participate, and I'd love an administrative team, and faculty teams, and have a competition; it could even be advertised in the paper. I think the community seeing this would be good.

RC: Yes, it would help our relationship with community a lot.

NS: OK, so take that to your constituents, and I'll have R.C. send this to staff, too, and I'll take it to administration. And maybe student government will want to participate. OK, next: the need for faculty for Strategic Planning committees.

EO: I sent this out via e-mail: in case you didn't see it, the goal is to keep this strategic planning process as open and with as much involvement as we can manage and still make things work. What is going around is a list of six goals—if you attended the town halls, you've already seen these. These are the major, general, broad goals of what we hope to accomplish in the next 5-7 years as part of the strategic plan. The names on here are chairs of each committee—each of the chairs is on the Strategic Planning Committee. We want volunteers, and we need you to help promote this. I've already received over 20 volunteers just in response to my e-mail this morning, but we want people that are excited about this and want cool growth and development at DSU. If you have a preference, awesome. We're trying to keep these small enough to function but diverse in background. Also, the President has requested that we have a gender balance, and include racial and ethnic minorities where possible, etc. But we need volunteers—we don't want to appoint people that don't care about these things. We want to get these working groups up and running next week to keep on our tight deadline—we have four weeks before the next set of meetings. So these groups need to be doing stuff. So I need volunteers by end of this week so I can get that information out to the chairs.

NS: So your request is that if you know of faculty members that might be interested, just e-mail.

EO: Yes. We probably have more offers than spots, but we want everyone to be considered. Staff is doing this, too. We haven't had any sections neglected.

CB: But within certain schools, no one's volunteering for a particular committee, but another school has, say, seven volunteers...?

NS: They'll try to balance all that out. But if you have recommendations, please forward those to EO.

JH: Are there any schools that need to be prodded?

EO: I haven't seen a lot from Health Sciences so far. We don't want e-mails going to different committee chairs and both claiming you. We have a bunch of Behavioral Science volunteers, and Business has good representation.

CB: In my own area, which is so across the board in academic programs—you don't have to serve on a strategic planning taskforce to have input. If there's something you'd like us to look at—you've done some research, you have some ideas—you can forward those ideas without being on those committees.

EO: And we're tapping people to be resources for these groups. Some groups will include community members, too. It's the people it takes to get the job done. If you have a particular skill, they'll use you.

NS: I left off an item from the agenda is something HS e-mailed me about earlier, so I'm going to turn this over to her now.

HS: In a Business Department meeting, the wait-list for classes came up. What happens is that the wait-lists are in an order, and the first person listed has priority. What often happens is that that person doesn't show up for the first two weeks, so they will never add, but #10 on the list, who's really interested, does come to class, but can't do assignments because they can't get into Canvas until they're officially in the class. I can't let them in because of their low position on the wait-list, but the first nine don't show up until the end of the second week when things kind of clear up and I can let them in. By then they've missed too much material. Part of it is that the Business faculty almost said "let's forget the wait-lists and give faculty the right to let the interested students in, and do drop-add cards." The other part is the technical issue that students that show up to classes that are not on the lists are not on Canvas. I don't know if this is a Business school issue...? But the Business faculty wanted to bring it up and get feedback from other departments.

RC: Those two issues are separate. Faculty *can* be given control in Canvas to add people that aren't enrolled, but the IT Department has been told not to because we don't want people taking the class if they're not paying. That can be changed—the technical part is easy; it was just an administrative decision—I don't know the exact reasoning. We had that when Canvas was first put up. But we could have that restored easily to give us at least provisional access. Isn't the wait-list supposed to last about a week?

IJ: Three days.

RC: Yes, it's a very short period of time.

CB: Every class I teach has, like, 20 person wait-lists. The way I've learned to manage this is that I sign the add card before wait-lists close if you come to class the first week. Then you're in, and that class will overbook, so then #1 on the list doesn't jump into the class when the wait-list is over. And if I've got enough seats in the room. o if I have 45 and add three, but I know that I'll have 4-5 administrative drops, then it drops back down under.

EO: In our department, we'd be chastised for messing with the system.

CB: They have to come for a week, and it's just before the wait-list closes anyway. We're allowed because we can sign an add card and put someone in the class. The authority is there.

RC: Some places are very strict about that.

CB: Right. The booking is based on seats. I don't sign *all* my add cards.

NS: Do you run into problems if you sign a select set of add cards and they jump ahead of certain other people?

CB: I always say I give priority based on two things: if they come to class the whole first week, and I have seats, then I take all of those names, and look at the wait-list and let them in in order of who is on the wait-list. If #1 on list hasn't shown up, they're not getting in, but if #5, 7, and 9 do, and I've only got two seats, I'll sign #5 and 7. It's messy, but someone not showing up *and* not having access for a week, and then all of a sudden they jump into my class, I don't know what to do with them because they've already missed a bunch and they're going to do terribly. I'd love if the wait-list went away almost immediately after the semester starts—they're useful until the second day of class.

CL: You can administratively drop people after the first day, right?

EO: Yes. But we're beginning to find that people will show up for the first day, and then not again for a week or two. If they show up the first day, you can't drop them.

CB: We fixed that issue because when I first came, we were being told to administratively drop before the wait-list was gone. It's a real issue, and the wait-list is clumsy after a week—nobody should be coming into a class that hasn't shown up.

NS: Did Business faculty have a suggestion?

HS: After our meetings, the consensus was just not have the wait-list and give the faculty the right to add those that show up the first week.

ST: In my experience, the purpose is to take pressure off the professor—if the professor is solely responsible to keep track of who contacted them first, after the class filled up, all of a sudden that's a lot of extra responsibility before classes even begin if you've got one of those courses that fill up quickly. They can register on Friday of opening week because they're freshmen and the class fills up, and someone comes to you and says "Hey, I'm the first one to talk with you!"—isn't that the point of the wait-list, to eliminate at least *some* of that?

CB: I'd advocate that the wait-list close at the end of the first week, by Friday afternoon.

IJ: I thought it was open only three days...?

EO: You can't register on the Friday of the first week. Putting your name in ends Thursday.

CB: But the wait-list doesn't close for 2 weeks. I was waiting for it to end to do my administrative drops.

NS: So we want it to close sooner...?

RC: And the ability for faculty to provisionally add students from the first day, then they won't miss the material—they'll have access to it.

HS: I'm personally OK with that.

CB: By Friday morning, everyone will have met by then.

BA: We deal with this in Math every semester, dealing with the provisional students, because a lot of our work takes place in MyMathlab, and we're already provisionally putting people on the wait-list into MyMathlab on day 1 so they can do the work along the way. I don't know if this discussion affects my department at all.

NS: Talk with your faculty on this to see if there's additional insight we can give. Maybe shortening the wait-list and adding the ability to provisionally add is something we can champion. We'll go from there. The next-to-last item is this: DoW noticed students purchasing test banks and have all the answers, and he wanted to know if other faculty are having issues with this. I assured him that Academic Integrity was defining this as cheating.

SP: I had a student try this and the publisher contacted me because she didn't have proper professor identification.

NS: I've seen it elsewhere...people just find a PDF on-line...it's been sold or whatnot.

EO: One thing that happens, and I didn't realize this, and it's not common, is that we have students that are really good at going "Oh, I remember the wording, and the answer is A." They're literally bypassing learning the material. In one of my classes, I give the students a test bank from a different, older text book we don't use. That test bank is very good, and it's all multiple choice. In the past, I'd just pulled and tweaked problems from that bank because I figured that if they worked through the entire test bank, they know the material. But I've had a few students come in and say "No, no, I can just go over it, look at the answer key, and be done." I don't want that, so what I do is modify the questions to the point where they're no longer multiple choice whenever possible, and tweak things within an inch of its life, but having full access to the straight test bank, it happens with one or two students every semester—they just know which answer is "A."

NS: It might be test style, or discipline-based.

CB: With essay tests, it's pretty hard.

NS: I assured DoW that Academic Integrity will attempt to define those kinds of things as cheating and what the ramifications are and recourses are for students that get caught up in that.

CB: If we raise this as a real thing, we might raise the idea...I assume most faculty using TurnItIn.com thing with Canvas? Just reiterate and make sure everyone is. That they're going to get caught if they turn in the same paper to two different professors. Writing papers is big, outside business.

NS: We're trying to put teeth into it. Academic integrity is a big issue and becoming a bigger issue on every campus. We try and address several things in our policy. So watch for that as it comes through. The last thing is: Faculty Senate

Presidential elections. I think we're bound by previous Bylaws, which, with regards to the President-Elect, faculty nominate faculty that are tenured or will be and areas that have not been in a section that has already had a President-Elect within the last 5 years. Past Presidents are Paul Abegg, Amijo Comeford, RC, myself, and EO will be the next President. We want to keep it, and the bylaws make it that it has to be someone outside those areas.

CB: So what areas do we have, then?

NS: If we have to go away from this because we don't have candidates, that's fine. Music, English, Behavioral and Social Sciences, Accounting, and Biology have all been represented already.

CB: So it's at the departmental, not school, level...?

EO: Yes.

NS: So my request is: go back and ask some good folks and yourselves, those who have tenure or will be tenured, to consider it. I don't want to preclude people that would be good but aren't tenured.

CB: So they should be tenured as of this Spring.

EO: Yes.

NS: If there is anybody, for example Health Sciences, Education, Humanities, Physical Sciences, and Art haven't been represented—there are good people in those areas. I just bring that to your attention—EO and I will send an e-mail out asking for nominations, and present those names at the next General Faculty meeting and post those to the web. And during the next month, there'll be an election.

EO: Do we still use Russ */Ross/* for this?

NS: Yes, he's on standby.

AC: We put list of people nominated from different schools for something to do with the Faculty Review Board—one of them is no longer employed here...?

EO: The people put on the board were all employed, as well as the group of 10 that we can call up for *ad hoc* committees.

NS: There's a Faculty Review Board, and three chairs that serve 6 year terms, staggered, and at any time they can be randomly called upon to be chair of a Faculty Review Board if one is convened. We were asked jointly with the Academic Vice-President to get 10 names of people that met certain qualifications to be on an *ad hoc* standing committee. The way this works is: if a Review Board is convened, one of the chairs is randomly selected, plus four of the *ad hoc* members. Then the person being reviewed can toss out two, and we go get two more.

JH: These people know this, right?

EO: Yes. The three chairs we selected are Sue Bennett, Munir Mahmud, and Curt Walker.

AC: I move that we adjourn. (Seconded, all ayes in favor.)