

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

April 15, 2010

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)
Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)
Dianne Hirning (DH)
Chizu Jaret (CJ)

Randy Jasmine (RJ)
Jack Lounsbury (JL)
Ed Reber (ER)
Dennis Wignall (DW)

DW: First, let's go over the results of the SurveyMonkey survey that was sent to both full-time and part-time faculty. Everything that was put forward for approval was approved. There was a ~4:1 ratio for the leadership shift issue. One hundred eight people took this; I like SurveyMonkey because it has a higher level of participation than the 30-40 people that typically show up at faculty meetings – we get three-fifths rather than one-fourth or less; it gives us a stronger voice. The new RTP nominees are Tim E., Candace, Karmen, Kyle Wells, and Glenn Blakely. I only received one negative vote about putting this vote on SurveyMonkey and how the questions were phrased. I haven't responded to it; everyone else I've talked to has been positive. I think a concern has been how these are controlled, but once the survey is set up, I can't go in and change it. It also records IP address so people have a hard time voting more than once. In the past, with pen and paper votes, it's less confidential filling out a slip of paper while sitting next to people, etc. Plus, then votes are under the Senate President's control when s/he gathers them and there's potential to alter them to what s/he wants, so I like SurveyMonkey. Curt W. asked for three more RTP people, but because we have new programs and departments, it was a call on my part to try and get those programs and departments better represented on RTP because some of their faculty will go up for tenure and promotion in the next year or two. Next, FSEC next year: we will have Brad Barry, Darl B., Jen Ciaccio, Li Lei, and Munir will return.

RJ: Who is in the Education Division on the list?

CJ: To replace me.

DW: Darl considers himself in that division.

JL: So, am I off too?

CJ: I don't know.

DW: Well, we don't have the full FSEC here today, so I don't know where people are in their terms. I think there's a staggered term participation so we don't get a complete overhaul in any one year.

RJ: I thought Costel was off too...?

DW: I'll poll everyone on our mailing list and find out where people think they are, then check with Donna about where they are in administration's records. I'll do that before end of semester so you'll know!

RJ: It seems to me that Darl takes *your* place, JL.

ER: Well, Darl is a one-person dept.

CJ: I talked to Brenda about it when I saw Darl's name, but no one wanted to do it! She said Darl can speak for us, too. Do we want someone from the Education Department itself?

RJ: But Darl is technically a department chair, and department chairs can't serve on this committee!

DW: Yes, that's why Brent was off of the list. Darl self-nominated. I'll review it more and we can have another vote come Fall to see if we need to change 1-2 positions.

RJ: Yes, to fill in gaps with people.

DW: Some weeks ago, ER made this proposal for the Faculty Senate President-Elect to come from the entire Senate rather than just within the FSEC. I know Ed said "faculty," but I wrote the survey with "Senate" in it.

PA: ...which is dues-paying members, right?

DW: Yes.

PA: Along those lines: we've discussed that it should be only for faculty that have tenure...?

DW: I think it's important; the Senate President should be tenured so as not to be co-opted at times. What do you think?

ER: I don't know that there's a need to do that; with new incoming faculty, we'll have huge numbers that won't be tenured but that should be able to serve. We should leave it to the individual.

DW: Well, it's taking on a role of vulnerability. I've talked to many people about PA coming in; if he went through his role as President, it puts him in position of having to confront people.

ER: I suppose it depends on the particular administration – that might make a decision about whether your name would go forward.

PA: So you (ER) served as untenured President?

ER: Yes, and I don't think people even thought about it.

DW: One thing with growth: we're getting a much more diverse range of faculty in terms of experience. I'd guess, ER, that when you served it was more homogenous, but this new diversity brings up concerns of vulnerability. It's certainly worth a vote from all faculty.

RJ: Or maybe decided by strongly *encouraging* tenure be considered important by people considering running. We're still the ones that will solicit people; we can gear it that way. I just don't think there needs to be a *rule* in place.

ER: Yes.

DW: I like that; it's flexible. Sitting in a position and having to deal with administration a lot, Donna feels very confident in the FSEC and Senate, and we have a mutual respect and collaborative approach. That brings up another point: faculty has to have a way to interact, and I asked her about setting up a Senate-only list on e-mail, but most associate deans are still paying dues. But if I created a voting-Senate-only group, she wasn't happy with that – she wants to keep tabs on things.

RJ: Yes, but at the same time, there are matters that we need to vote on amongst ourselves, and discussion needs to be amongst ourselves, too. When we had face-to-face meetings with lunches, it seems rude to ask administration not to be there, but it may be what we have to do. We have to decide *who* is administration, too, because Sue Bennett, as of next semester, will not be administration anymore. Where do we draw the line?

DW: I'm anticipating a major review and Constitutional overhaul.

RJ: Fine, but we need to be firm on the idea that we need a forum of some sort where we discuss things as an independent entity before we discuss things with other groups. I understand Donna's reaction.

JL: We don't keep tabs on everything *administration* does...!

DW: From Donna's perspective, she sees it as being potentially divisive, but she sees herself as faculty more than administration, and if I were in that position, I would struggle about having divided loyalties.

RJ: So we need to be sensitive in how we handle this, and note that we appreciate dues-payers, but we need to clearly define our group.

DH: She may see herself as faculty, but we don't report directly to President Nadauld – she has to differentiate between the fact that we report to *her*. Whatever she hears gets directly reported, and perhaps there are some issues we're not ready to have *be* reported.

DW: Whatever connectivity we have uses campus servers, so then there's the issue of whether the college supports a "voting-Senate-only" forum, or should we go outside campus servers – there's a crossover with what the college controls and what we use – it's the same issue with e-mails: they can watch for inappropriate use, etc. That can be cause for dismissal, so they have the freedom to monitor that. I'm in agreement that we need a forum, but we need to think about *how* to do this.

RJ: The problem is that more people participate in on-line things like SurveyMonkey, but the best way to participate is face-to-face – have a vote, seconds, discussion time, etc. Technically, they could do the practical version of "listening at the keyhole." But we've gone so far in this direction that without tempting people with food, on-line is how we have to do things now.

ER: It is in the Constitution that we can ask people not to come – we already have that provision. The Senate once voted a no confidence vote in the President, and they probably wouldn't want to be there for that...!

DW: I'd find it hard to go up to Donna and tell her she can't come!

RJ: We just set a time aside in advance, and announce it in advance, so people know what are the appropriate times to be and not be there are. Moving a listserver off campus might be perceived as confrontational. We need to be as open and forthcoming as we can while still maintaining autonomy. Until we have other technological options, face-to-face meetings are still best.

DW: Well, our by-laws require monthly meetings, but we haven't been having them because attendance has been poor, so what's the point? I'd rather put something on-line, get feedback, and share. Plus, having our minutes on the website is helping people be informed.

DH: Have any of us asked our departments about not having meetings?

RJ: Yes – they're happy with things that make their days easier. Initially, there were questions about paying dues but not getting meals, but then, when told we were losing money on the meals, they were fine with it, but they seem to prefer this new system.

DW: We've been approached by both staff organizations – on May 10, they will have another of what have been successful social gathering to which all campus employees were invited (including families) – it cost them \$1200 last year. We now have a request from Dennis Cox (the Staff Association President) to donate \$600 to their event this year. I'm comfortable asking for a couple hundred, but \$600 makes me nervous, so I'm asking you. Faculty and families are invited to this, too.

DH: It was really nice last year – not cheesy or boring.

PA: On campus?

DH: Yes.

RJ: Can we afford \$600?

DW: I'm pretty sure we can.

RJ: Back to the point about the meetings: maybe we have two meetings/semester with a meal – not to bribe people to come, but we can have important issues taken care of there. I bet we'd've had close to 108 people if we'd had a meal.

DW: I'd say we wouldn't have approached 100 – whoever sets up the room we use sets it up for 80 and we've never filled it. In the last few years, fewer people come.

RJ: But in the past, we've had waits for seats! But anyway, we need the social aspect.

DW: I've been thinking about having two meetings with the social aspect...please bring me options on which way to do this because we're going to have to implement something in the Fall!

DH: With Martha being so involved in scheduling, cataloging, etc., I'm wondering if I could ask her what days are *most* open across campus during lunch – I know they've been adding and adding classes, so it's different at the Health Science building than here, yet they might want to come.

ER and RJ: Ask Sharon Lee.

PA: It's probably going to be hard to find an hour when everyone can come!

DW: Or an hour-and-a-half! But I think it *is* important to have get-togethers. I'm wondering if this May 10 thing may be an opportunity to have something like this then...?

ER: I think it'd have to be a faculty response, though – it *is* after graduation, so many faculty may be gone, but staff are still here...

DW: OK, if the faculty approves the \$600, we can go, but if not, we can't show up...? I bet we'll get a mixed response from the faculty like we've had in here.

ER: But it could be *our* season-ending event, too, if we contribute.

PA: If we did our own, when would it be?

DW: If we wanted just a lunch, probably the last day of scheduled classes – Apr. 29? What about in two weeks to have a General Senate meeting to wrap up the school year? I'm not sure our budget could sustain both \$600 *and* a lunch meeting...

PA: Is the Staff Association using Campus Dining?

DW: No – they're doing a grill and handling it themselves. Campus Dining is expensive and I don't know how the Staff Association is getting away with not using them... Well, we'll mull it over some more, and I'll pose the \$600 issue to the faculty. I'm getting a more positive reaction for a Faculty social event in two weeks.

RJ: We could also in that time decide if we need to have any other elections for people whose terms are up or departments not otherwise represented...

DW: What you see in the SurveyMonkey thing is what I got!

RJ: Maybe JH can keep official records of terms of service along with notes at the beginning of each year...

DW: Let's go through the last couple of things on the SurveyMonkey vote: the Faculty Excellence Committee's basic items on the student evaluation form: 88% support the language, overwhelmingly.

RJ: I think it's important that the Faculty Excellence Committee has real discussions about what these tools are used for – how are they used within departments, to determine RTP, etc. – that's a discussion that people need to engage in. I'm no social scientist, but I know one could tell me a lot about this. I read these questions – and these are an improvement – but I want to know what value *others* are placing on the students' responses from these, how concerns raised by them are addressed, etc. – are the people that are assessing us with this thing seeing it the same way as those *receiving* the filled evaluations?

DW: I agree about application; it should be at the department level, with faculty chairs.

PA: Aren't these handled mostly by RTP?

ER: So departments can use them, deans, RTP, etc.

DW: So, multiple layers of use. Now we have good language in this tool, but how is the tool used?

RJ: Associate deans, deans, etc. need to read this tool and use it to assess, but there need to be ways to help people deal with review comments.

DW: In the RTP committee, we've discussed "pre-decision" situations, to get information back to candidates on how to look for decisions, get feedback so that any weaknesses are addressed before the application/decision process is undertaken. I see this tool as part of that, and the RTP committee needs to be part of that.

RJ: Has there been anything other than anecdotal evidence of serious discussion of the changing nature of this tool when we switched from paper evaluations to on-line?

DW: With this semester, we'll have had four semesters of this...the problem with this is that it's confidential, so the question becomes: if it's a data source, how do we compare the on-line

evaluations to the paper evaluations, especially considering the amount of time for students to fill the on-line ones out while waiting for grades, etc.?

JL: Are they doing every class this semester? It used to be every Fall, but not every Spring...?

DW: Yes, that's how it is now. It's set up so that tenured professors don't get reviewed except every 2-3 years, but student evaluations happen to everyone and go into a database somewhere. This is a heads-up: Donna said that they've actually done review of adjuncts and others and decided whether or not they're going to succeed, but if they're on for a year contract and let go in the Fall, they still get paid for the Spring. She has great difficulty believing that someone can maintain a professional presence in a class if they know they'll be gone at the end of a semester! So that may be why adjuncts, etc. are evaluated in Spring but *everyone* in the Fall – Spring is a check-up for adjuncts, etc.

RJ: I see these as a tool to help me as an instructor, but administration sees them as tool to determine whether to keep me or let me go.

DW: So we've got some neat things coming up and on the agenda: I'll ask faculty if they want to participate in the May 10 event or not, and count that the majority vote rules.

DH: If they don't want to do that as Faculty, would it be appropriate to talk with Dennis Cox and tell him that Faculty, because so many would be gone, chose not to contribute, but some may want to come, and could they if they donated toward the cost?

DW: I think that's reasonable, but not 'til we've had vote.

RJ: Then if it does get turned down, maybe tell them that if it were earlier in semester, Faculty might want to participate!