

# FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Sept. 1, 2011

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*In attendance:*

*Paul Abegg (PA)*

*Brad Barry (BB)*

*Jen Ciaccio (JC)*

*Ami Comeford (AC)*

*Rob Cowan (RC)*

*Varlo Davenport (VD)*

*John Goldhardt (JG)*

*Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)*

*Dianne Hirning (DH)*

*Jie Liu (JiL)*

*Jack Lounsbury (JaL)*

*Munir Mahmud (MM)*

*Russ Ross (RR)*

*Matt Smith-Lahrman (MS)*

*Kyle Wells (KW)*

*Dennis Wignall (DW)*

PA: Welcome to the new school year! I've handed around a sheet of the new committee members. (Committee goes around table for individual introductions.) I think we have a great group this year and I'm excited to work with you. As for the second page in the handout: my goal this year is to increase faculty representation to include members from as broad a swath across campus as possible; let me know if you see anything missing on this sheet. Ed Reber sent this around last year to cover everyone. The only person not here today is Betty Stokes-Crane from Health Science; she's returning from hiatus.

RC: We had a sudden change occur last week in Chemistry that isn't reflected on this.

PA: The purpose of the list for us here isn't to provide something detailed; just to see what areas need representing.

KW: Where's Business on here?

PA: On the other side of the sheet. Also, we have a peculiar circumstance due to elections: we have two representatives from English (AC and BB), and there's nothing about that in the Constitution...?

BB: I haven't looked.

PA: Last year we opened up the elections to be campus-wide, and that's what's created this situation: AC was elected that way, while BB was elected within his department. What do people think in order to keep this committee objective?

BB: I'm under a 2-3 year commitment to be the representative for my department, so when AC was elected as President-Elect, that's what created this situation. I'll step down if that's what people want, but do we need to formalize this in the Faculty Senate Constitution?

DW: I think there's not supposed to be double representation, but because AC is here in a more administrative capacity, your role is different.

JC: It's always possible that one of you could abstain from a vote.

VD: Yes, if the vote is about your department. My other thought is: because English has the largest group of faculty on campus, is there a way to break down divisions within English?

JC: That would have to be permanent.

MS: And how many other departments would have to do that?

PA: So if we come to an issue that directly affects English, BB would vote and AC would abstain...?

MS: How do we know if something specifically affects English? Pretty much everything this body does affects the whole campus.

MM: I think we do need a policy on this to make things more concrete. (PA passes around a worded example of a statement for a possible Constitutional or by-laws amendment.)

PA: Are we comfortable going forward as is? One of my agendas this year is to amend the Constitution and by-laws to bring them up to date, and this could be part of that rather than something we deal with immediately.

BB: Each year, I'm spending more hours in meetings, so I like the idea of spending fewer hours in meetings! But I'm inclined to go in this direction if you'd rather...

PA: (Reads statement aloud).

RC: What is the term for the elected officials?

PA: Three years.

DH: One year for President-Elect, one as President, and one as Past-President.

MS: This statement is a bit unclear—what does “step down” mean? Immediately?

PA: In that case, it wouldn't be the person that stepped down coming back, but a newly elected person.

BB: So delete everything after “step down”...?

DW: This avoids overpopulating the committee, which makes it harder to reach a decisive action. I'd love to see you (BB) on the committee because you bring insight and compassion, but I understand the situation. I think we go back to JC's suggestion to keep you on and see how it plays out. If it comes down to a vote, you and AC can talk it over and one of you would do a single official vote to represent your department.

PA: Are you on the fringe of overload by being on this committee?

BB: No, but whomever is the representative brings material back to the department for further comment and consideration.

MS: It's more a question of redundancy, not burn-out.

RR: So this is really just a bug fix.

BB: We've also discussed the possibility that if AC can't make an FSEC meeting, I can step in.

PA: Well, if anyone can't make it to any FSEC meeting, please find someone to step in for you to ensure your department is covered and represented. Should we vote on this?

DW: (Calls question.)

PA: The options here are: keep both representatives on and enact this policy change to prevent this from happening again in the future, or to let BB go.

BB: I was hearing something different: to revise the Constitution that only one of the two representatives would be a voting member.

MM: If we are changing policy, it should be that there's only one representative, or else this committee becomes too big.

PA: So what are our two options?

MS: Either adopt now or not.

MM: Can we adopt it if it's not a part of a policy?

MS: I don't know.

DH: We could vote to adopt it and put it *into* a policy.

BB: Is there a difference between the Constitution and policy?

PA: The Constitution and by-laws determine how this committee functions.

MS: So we'd be voting to adopt this *and* do anything necessary to put this in the by-laws.

BB: “Policy” implies involving all faculty, not just FSEC members.

PA: We could wait to discuss this within each department before voting.

JC: Does the current Constitution/by-laws state that there can be only one representative?

PA: No, so part of the question is if we adopt this, when does it go into effect?

DW: I propose we table this until we get each department's views, or else we'll consume this whole meeting on this one issue.

BB: If it's only changing the Constitution, but not policy, we could settle this now.

DW: We're not really aware of where this does fit, but we could finish this at our next meeting.

PA: This is just part of the growing-pains process.

RR: If we're going to ultimately change the Constitution, this should just be part of that set of changes.

PA: Does everyone know where the Constitution and by-laws are? On the Human Resources site, there's a Faculty Senate link, and they're in there. So before our next meeting, please familiarize yourselves with those. OK: now, MM and DW will bring us up to date on post-tenure review.

MM: Last year when we talked about this, one thing that came up was that after a faculty member gets tenure, the Board of Regents requires that there should be a periodic (I heard yearly...?) review of tenured faculty. Since then, I've found out that there is a requirement for this, but there is nothing mentioned about how often...I thought the one year thing was, but it's not. Part of the question is whether or not we even have the resources for yearly reviews. Donna Dillingham-Evans says every three years would be fine, so we have to take a look at the frequency.

PA: As I've talked to colleagues at other institutions, a three year review is common. Do we have documentation of the Board of Regents policy? We probably should see exactly what that says. I've heard it referred to, but never seen it.

MM: Every three years sounds reasonable, and the faculty seem amenable to that.

DW: It's a complex issue—what overrides it is faculty apprehension: is post-tenure review to be a punitive policy? My basic feeling, and I've said this before, is that it should be *by faculty for faculty*, with no administrative control. The Faculty Excellence Committee and Faculty Development Committee are there to help people maintain and improve if necessary. If tenured faculty are reviewed in their third years, if there are any deficiencies noted by the faculty (not administration) that are doing the review, the *faculty* recommend options to address those that the Faculty Development Committee funds. Over the ensuing year, the faculty member is re-evaluated solely in terms of that deficiency; if it's been corrected, things just move forward. There just needs to be a documentation of the process. If the deficiency still exists, the Faculty Excellence Committee would draft a letter about this to administration, and the issue gets pushed from there. If the faculty member continues to not address deficiency, *then* administration's own policy kicks in. The predominant membership of the review committee should be members of that person's content area plus some outside people, so it's a department- or division-level decision and review. I wouldn't be qualified to review a nursing faculty, for example. That's kind of where this is all going. This way, faculty help their own address deficiencies. Even if administration has to step in, they have their own steps to follow; it's not immediate dismissal. At the end of six years from the point of getting tenure, the faculty member's portfolio is reviewed for demonstration of maintaining his/her education, licensing, etc. It's all about support, not punishment, and creating language for that has been difficult. As chair of the Faculty Excellence Committee, I'm making a draft of this that that committee will comment on before the FSEC sees it.

PA: Do we have a target end date?

DW: I don't think that way, but maybe I should. It may depend on how the Faculty Excellence committee deals with it. There will probably lots of revision of language and ideas. But if anyone wants a copy, I'll send it to you. I also have a philosophical statement that is four pages long compiling other schools' post-tenure review procedures, why they have them, and why they're worded the way they are. Those are important. That's where we are on this issue at the moment.

RR: Is this a one-time process?

DW: Every three years, and every sixth year the faculty member's portfolio is reviewed. Both reviews look to see if a person is staying up to date. But it's a non-punitive policy: the whole motivating factor is to encourage and help faculty.

JC: But it is punitive at the end if the letter is written!

DW: Well, yes...we have to have this policy as stipulated by the Board of Regents.

JC: I get the purpose, but you can't say it's not punitive.

DW: Well, that will be a wording change we'll have to fix.

JG: Administrators and politicians are still grumbling about all this, too.

DW: Another issue: because of our growth, faculty are experiencing overloads, and we're not paid a professional wages for those...just adjunct pay. This also applies to summer classes. In my opinion, we're professionals and should be compensated as such. The compensation can be formulated using the faculty member's salary and regular teaching load.

PA: Can we hold off on this? This issue is coming up elsewhere in our policy revisions.

DW: I'm just planting the seed, but that's the formula other colleges use.

MM: Doesn't it depend on enrollment, too?

DW: Not really; that's already determined by policy. If we don't deal with this issue, though, we let administration hammer us.

PA: Thanks for your work on that; we'll await the drafts! The other issue I wanted to bring up is Reading Days: some faculty and students want some between the last day of class and finals. We need to find out how each department feels about this and about the logistics of plugging in more days into the schedule. In my department, it was pointed out that the days in each semester aren't exact: they don't always end on the same day of the week, and in Spring, inserting days could bump graduation to a Saturday. We need to look at this from all angles. In my experience, these days become party days, not study days.

MS: I've not seen a school that doesn't have a week of reading days (many others agree).

PA: So we need to figure out how and when to implement this.

RC: Quick comment: it's usually a policy that's violated grossly by faculty at other institutions. It should be a week, and policy says there are to be no athletic competitions, etc. It's a way of facilitating students to enable them to study.

JG: And it's a part of the four-year culture...

VD: If we added a week, does that increase the lengths of our contracts?

RC: It's not an additional week; it is part of the existing week.

VD: So syllabi get compressed...

MM: Are we talking about one day or one week?

RC: We definitely need a day!

PA: Math and Science classes are affected the most. Some schools have only three reading days.

JC: The amount of time may depend on whether the institution is a university, a liberal arts college, etc.

PA: We're running short on time, so we may have to table this issue. I also wanted to see what your thoughts were about Peter Seldin's thoughts on the e-portfolio. Please think about that and we'll talk about it next time. I was wishing that you (MM) could have been with us when FSEC met with him.

MM: My feeling is that he was just selling his business here and that he was focusing on teaching portfolios, not more comprehensive portfolios like we have. I don't think that that will help us in any way?

MS: Are they bringing him back for that workshop?

PA: Not that I know of. But let's talk to our departments about that.

VD: What exactly are you asking us to discuss...?

PA: What are the sentiments within your respective departments about his presentation.

MS: Should we explicitly ask if they want to bring him back for the workshop?

PA: Sure. I think he had great ideas and was pushing his program, but that doesn't mean there isn't valuable info in there.

VD: He did have some valid ideas.

JC: Such as having too much focus on student evaluations...!

DW: At this point, we're invested in the e-portfolios, so administration is definitely going to go forward with it. You can't do a bunch of subjective stuff with the e-portfolio, and that's the shortcoming.

JC: But what was the push for it?

DH: Accreditation.

PA: And space: administration doesn't store the portfolios. Before we leave: the policies that we will be reviewing and changing this year are: workload and faculty compensation, and revisions of our Constitution and by-laws. We meet again 9/15 in this room, unless I e-mail you otherwise.