

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FSEC) MEETING SEPTEMBER 2, 2009

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)
Sue Bennett (in for Randy
Jasmine) (SB)
Georgine Bills (GB)
Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)

Dianne Hirning (DH)
Costel Ionita (CI)
Chizu Jaret (CJ)
Jack Lounsbury (JL)
Munir Mahmud (MM)

Tom McNeilis (TM)
Shane Prine (SP)
Ed Reber (ER)
Dennis Wignall (DW)

AGENDA:

- (1) Approval of previous minutes – *Motion to approve: ER; seconded, GB; approved.*
- (2) Faculty Association & related Senate procedures (GB & DW) – *DW perceives that faculty is underrepresented in the Senate – some departments are not involved at all, so a faculty-inclusive group from which Senators would come (1 per dept.), a Faculty Association, may be necessary. Many faculty don't pay Senate dues and don't do anything with the Senate; paying members are a small percentage of overall faculty body. An Association would be a way to get more minds into the pot & spread governance out over whole faculty. This would not create a competitive arena between an Association and the Senate – the Senate merely represents Association's concerns, etc. to the administration; the two would not be in opposition. MM inquired whether or not the Association would elect Senate representatives; DW responded that if all faculty are in the Association, and all pay dues, then they have the additional responsibility of becoming part of the Senate if they want to; the Senate would form, have internal elections about the Executive Committee (in departments with only one person in them, that person would be a de facto Senator). ER voiced uncertainty what, according to the Constitution, the Senate Executive Committee is supposed to represent. MM noted that under this plan, the Executive Committee would be unmanageably large; ER suggested maybe representatives would come from every department, not every program. DW specified that we cannot have an Executive Committee consisting of members of every department – instead, it would be a subset of the Faculty Senate, which would have one member from every department; the Executive Committee would have 10-12 members, voted in by the Senate, with no more than 2 from a division to retain a sense of equality. GB discussed the system at Weber State, which is similar: Weber has 7 colleges, each has departments within departments. Their Senate has ~70 faculty based on a head count of faculty; the Executive Committee has 8-12 people elected by the college at large, not the Senate, so that there is one representative from each college, but no overlaps (other Executive Committee members include the Provost and other people). Also at Weber, the Gen Ed Committee is a Faculty Senate Committee that approves curriculum changes, unlike DSC.*

CI inquired about what power the Faculty Senate actually has – whether or not the administration has any mandate to take anything the Senate says into account in making decisions; a perceived lack of any effectiveness may be why faculty are reluctant to join. DH noted that there has been a progressive change in accommodation of Senate concerns in DSC administrations over the last 5 years, but it is going to take time to change our position with the administration, though the steps we are taking are in the right direction. DW noted that part of the problem is weak enrollment in the Senate – we have dues-payers that don't do anything, and people that do a lot but don't pay dues. JL inquired if the roster was public, and whether or not a roster could be used to approach non-members in individual departments. DW opined that we must make it palatable for new faculty to be in the Association (if not be actual Senators); it's not clear that they know much about the Senate at all. GB stated that the Senate should pass/not pass proposals that, from there, go on to administration for review, and anything of substance has to be approved by the Board of Trustees – no one has ultimate influence, but part of the reason why diffidence about participation is because there is no clear structure to this process. CI again inquired about whether there is any written rules that the administration must accommodate faculty concerns; PA stated that Donna has always been interested in what the faculty says. ER noted that in his 30 years here, the faculty has always had some impact, although some administrations were less accommodating than others; Faculty Senate president is in on administrative meetings, so we have a strong voice on Academic Council and other things that are important to faculty. SB wondered how an administration could ignore anything if a huge number of faculty approve it? ER responded that if we made a counterproposal to anything from administration, we would be heard.

DW noted that much of this is a timing issue: right now, decisions about hiring are being made, but faculty doesn't have much representation there. This suggests we don't have a sense of equity with the administration and that such balance needs to be there because it causes people to work together better, and administrative decisions are made knowing that they have a strong faculty backing. DH suggested looking into how faculty is organized at other colleges of our size and see which structure would work best for us; DW moved to appoint DH and CI to head up a committee to research the efficacy of a Faculty Association via such comparisons & report back in a couple of weeks; GB seconded; motion approved.

SP inquired how the faculty organized at DSC originally: did the faculty organize on its own, or did the administration get the faculty to organize? DW noted that when the faculty was smaller, few were involved with administration (except RTP and a few others), but there is a tradition that when administration has authority, it self-perceives no in-roads & has an expectation of duty to make responsibilities. ER specified that this was not a legacy from DSC's community college days in which decisions were top-down; we have had a couple of presidents that did that, but most have been good about running ideas across faculty. DH suggested marketing the Senate/Association, and that we should shelve doing so until we know which model we want to pursue...but in the meantime, each member should talk within their department about people coming to Senate meetings and to fill out the HR form to have their dues taken out automatically. ER noted that there have been times when Pam has made available lists of who is and is not a member. PA added that in those talks, representatives should point out what it means to be a Senate member and why their dues & participation are important. Many present agreed that the Faculty Senate president should address new faculty about this at the Orientation Week meetings. MM inquired about whether or not it would be possible to have dues be compulsory; DW stated that "compulsory" tends to create resistance. JL

suggested that they be mandatory and that there would need to be an extra “opt-out” step faculty would have to go through to get out of paying dues. CI wondered about whether or not anyone “opting out” would lose their voice in any Senate decisions; JH pointed out that it would resemble the current US voting system in which anyone not registered doesn’t get to vote and does lose their voice. DH opined that faculty view paying the dues as only for the lunches – a “cheap eat” once a month, but the Senate doesn’t offer anything else, so perhaps the dues thing needs to be restructured to say “this is what dues are for (not lunch): _____.” GB noted that at Weber State, participation in the Senate was entirely voluntary; the only social event was a “tailgate party” at the beginning of the semester. If we implement that model with a Faculty Association, then the Association would get the dues & lunches for social advantages as well as political, but the Senate drawn from that Association would not get those perks. DW suggested the possibility of having a large luncheon at the beginning of the semester, with dues money being used for a keynote speaker from off-campus, so that the faculty gets a direct benefit from the dues. At this point, most people had to leave to get to class, so further discussion was tabled.

- (3) Dues increase (DW) – covered tangentially in (2), above
- (4) Video tapes Exec Committee meetings (DW) – was this to tape full Senate meetings? All present voiced concern that Executive Committee meetings should be closed.
- (5) Shift meetings to Thursdays, every two weeks (12-1 PM), Jennings Conference Room (DW) – this was agreed on; DW will send out reminders before next meeting (**next meeting on Sept. 17**; meetings thereafter to be on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of each month; full Senate meetings to be on the 4th Thursday of the month). To get to the Jennings Conference Room, go in the north entrance of the Jennings Building; the conference room is straight down the hall on the **XXX**.
- (6) Act quickly on proposal (and second) from last Spring that any proposed revisions policy (from Martha, Pam, etc.) would go to a committee appointed by the Senate leadership for consideration; later, recommendations would go to convened Senate for consideration (ER) – this would take policy development out of proverbial back rooms and ensure that all faculty are represented in constructing and approving new policies and policy revisions. DW noted that we may have to emend our Constitution to do this; GB noted that there are Northwest Accreditation requirements for Senate participation in these kinds of things...! DH seconded this; approved.
- (7) Same as (5).
- (8) Do brief evaluation of the implementation of the Retention, Tenure, and Rank policy – have Division RTP chairs and College RTP committee, at a minimum, share observations...too often we do not seek to evaluate effects of our new policies (DW) – DW noted that divisions, departments, and the college all need to be on the same page about RTP, and that various things need to be standardized across departments, perhaps via a once per semester joint meeting...? **XXX** seconded; approved.
- (9) Faculty input on Orientation Week (DW) – DW made the survey at SurveyMonkey for which a link was sent around (paid for by Senate dues) from an ad hoc committee.

(10) Other issues

Job Advertisements – DH noted that faculty needs more involvement in the wording of job requirements and policy put in place so that HR cannot touch that wording; faculty needs to be more proactive on this.

Hiring Committees – ER reminded us of discussion we had in April about HR's desire for a standing committee of 8 people to be tapped for service as "outside" people on hiring committees; we discussed that chairs of departments would be the officers on the HR committee so people unrelated to a particular field would not have to be involved. GB noted that we had discussed that faculty would get committee credit for doing this. DH noted that the point of contention was that HR wanted to appoint people, like they do for other committees, taking this issue out of departmental/faculty control and putting it under HR control. MM noted that we don't want a hiring committee populated by more people from outside hiring department than within it. PA & ER noted that department chairs are always on hiring committees, but are not trained by HR in correct practices. DW concluded that something in writing needs to be made & put in front of the whole Senate; RJ is working on this but no document has yet been made available.