

# FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Sept. 6, 2012

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*In attendance:*

*Jen Ciaccio (JC)*

*AmiJo Comeford (AC)*

*Robert Carlson (RCa)*

*Rob Cowan (RCo)*

*Ross Decker (RD)*

*John Goldhardt (JG)*

*Jerry Harris (secretary)*

*Lish Harris (LH)*

*Dianne Hirning (DH)*

*Scott Lindsey (SL)*

*Del Parsons (DP)*

*Matt Smith-Lahrman (MSL)*

*Betty Stokes (BS)*

*Russ Ross (RR)*

AC: Let's get started—I think we have a quorum here now. Welcome to our first FSEC meeting of semester! What I'd like to do is have everyone introduce themselves so the new members will know who they're meeting with during the semester. (Introductions all around.) Robert Carlson, the President-Elect, has class and will be a bit late to these meetings. I hope you had a chance to look over the agenda—no preparation was required to come to this meeting. A quick update: Martha said she'd have a draft of the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy for us, but I don't have that yet. Once I do, we'll start a conversation on that draft. We've met with her a couple of times; she'll send it to us before it goes to anyone else for us to comment on. Then she'll revise it, etc. before it goes to the faculty.

DH: Wasn't someone here supposed to liaise with her on that?

AC: Yes, we'll cover that under "Subcommittees" later. I wanted to update you on some things from the Dean's Council meeting—Robert and I attend those, and I'll program five minutes into these FSEC meetings to go over what we learn there that is specifically relevant to faculty concerns. The Deans met a couple of weeks ago, and one of the areas that we want to be aware of involves a discussion of student interns with the STARFISH program that David Roos introduced us to during our week of meetings. It's a program used at UVU where you have student interns used in the early alert system. The idea is that they'll apply for a grant to institute some initiatives, and this was one of them. The interns would be paid, one representing each school division, 10–15 hours/week. They would just be peers communicating with students. One of the questions I posed as a faculty representative is the degree to which students would be incapable of seeing comments professors make about other students in the system (about students not doing well, etc.)—there's an option there for that now. David said they'd look into that.

DH: Would that be a FERPA violation?

AC: I asked that; they suggested that people that work in the system have limited access to some kinds of information. I'm concerned that they have access to professors' comments more than student information, especially if interns rotate at rapid rate (e.g., six this semester, six next, etc.). David will make sure that's a capability of the system.

JG: They may need to have them sign confidentiality agreements, too.

RC: You can FERPA train them, too.

AC: So that's on the faculty end; if there are other issues you have with that, let me know. The other area of concern that came up was a reiteration that overload authorization has to come from the Academic Vice-President, not from the deans.

MSL: The department chairs have to go straight to Donna?

AC: That was the implication, yes. Also, the presentation of a campus-wide assessment pilot study—her office will randomly select departments and work them up for GE and other outcomes. Don't be surprised if they come to your department for that. It will entail faculty reading and grading artifacts, and then those get passed up the chain. The last item was also from the assessment office: archiving of material. As people come and go, there will be something in place so that information can be transferred. An archiving program will be up and running shortly for self-assessments, etc., and presumably deans will transmit that information to their departments.

RC: That was supposed to be done by Sept. 1!

AC: This will make it easier for those of us involved with assessment. If you have any comments later, let me know. Curriculum Committee update: they approved the History degree and a Social Science composite degree. There was a discussion about including the B.S. degree as well as B.A., given the limitations we have for language classes. They did decide to do both a B.S. and a B.A. in History. That was done quickly, and RC and I indicated our concern with having it go without a “true” approval process just to get it on the Board of Regents’ docket for November. The Vice-President indicated that once it’s on their calendar, it can still be pulled back for revisions, but it needed to get on the calendar.

JG: They also put stuff in there about Education that we never saw.

RC: There was a tremendous amount of last-minute work.

AC: I think that that’s part of the issue here. I think people want the degree to go forward, but it didn’t go through the same process as previous proposals. And it was done simultaneously in both Academic Council and the Curriculum Committee.

RC: We don’t know all the details, but it’s a core program needed for university status, so the President probably decided over the summer that it would happen, and it then had to be done on a short timeline.

AC: I guess that’s what they were counting on, it coming back for further work while it was on the calendar.

RC: It was a burden on Professor Lewis just to get last minute revisions done!

RR: Do we coordinate those meeting schedules? It seems that a lot of these issues come up suddenly; they’re not well sequenced.

AC: On the Curriculum Committee web site, they have their schedule posted. But this didn’t follow that—it was just “do it this weekend” kind of thing. But the dates have been posted. I’ll send a link around for that.

RR: And after all that panic, it will sit for two months.

AC: Yes, but the Board of Regents’ deadline was Aug. 23 for their November meeting.

RC: Heh...they couldn’t jump past *that* deadline; just ours.

DP: We got our Art degree rammed through, and now there are problems with it, but we have to live with them for three years.

AC: And that’s why we have the normal review system, to recognize and address problems beforehand. But these two programs *will* happen. Next: we need to create subcommittees for the Faculty Senate. We want to get that solidified and that all here are comfortable with this. RC will talk more about this.

RC: As of now, we need to form two subcommittees immediately because we want the faculty’s role in school governance to be streamlined and consistently effective. We’ll help with two subcommittees: a standing Policy Subcommittee that coordinates with administration as new policies are considered and developed, so that nothing comes as a surprise, and we’ll always have time to address issues. We can introduce our own concerns about policies, too, for development. When a draft policy is about to be presented, this subcommittee will highlight issues of probable concern. When a policy is sent out by e-mail, as it’s been done in the past, it’s ineffective to get responses on something that may be critical. Most people don’t know where to start, and only near a deadline would a groundswell of concern happen.

BS: In our department, we’d like *summaries* of these draft policies highlighting what’s important to us.

RC: And that’s what this subcommittee would prepare. They may miss some, but if we have the subcommittee, with diverse viewpoints, it won’t happen often, and they can address issues that they might miss later, too. With this, we avoid stepping on peoples’ toes with something they thought was going through. The first policy will be Faculty Rights and Responsibilities—Martha’s anticipating a 75+ page draft. This is a new policy that will have major changes over the current policy. For example, the current Faculty Development policy is probably illegal and totally inadequate. I don’t know how we’ll populate this subcommittees; maybe start with volunteers. They’ll meet once a month and report back to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Outside of reporting, there will be lots of soliciting of feedback, coordinating comments, etc. The second subcommittee is a Ballot Committee to formalize the election process—make it run smoothly and gather information. Right now, various elections require voters to have various statuses (tenure, etc.)—we need data to ensure various things, such as gender equality, etc., happen on voting. This subcommittee will gather these data and systematize creating and distributing ballots. If this happens early enough, then we’ll have better distribution and participation on future issues and committees. We’ll have input on who populates which committees. After the fact, it’s hard to change.

DP: Is a one-year appointment for a committee long enough? It takes a while to get into things; would two years be better?

AC: We had this discussion a couple years ago here, and we determined that two years was too long for some. (Multi-person, simultaneous conversation here about appointments on the Executive Committee vs. other committees.)

RC: We got thrown into the deep end and got caught up quickly here in the Executive Committee. But this streamlining process will help a lot.

AC: With a subcommittee working on this all year, then by the end of the semester, all committees will be populated, and we tell Human Resources who's on what committees. Then individuals can say "I've been elected to X committee, but I've got Q, Y, and Z going this semester and no time for the committee"; in such cases, we can then have another election for a replacement. Putting some committees together because of restrictions of who can serve (e.g., requiring tenure to serve) creates problems—in some cases, for example, there might be only five eligible women, but some would be on other committees that create conflicts of interest.

RC: And then some could become department chairs, which exempts them from participating in some committees, etc.

AC: If anyone is interested in serving on these subcommittees, please let me know!

JC: I'll do the Ballot Subcommittee.

MSL: So these are subcommittees that would be populated from people campus-wide, or just from in here?

AC: I see having a couple faculty at large, but having many from the Executive Committee so that they can report back to us. For example, Varlo Davenport is no longer on the Executive Committee, but is on the Policy Subcommittee. I think we can have elections in here. For the Policy Subcommittee, it would be useful to have more faculty interested.

RC: We found that all communication coming through us lets us be a faculty-voice body, so we do want that committee to report to us; we don't want to make unilateral decisions, but we *do* want to present a unified voice so we always get the feedback, and everyone knows what the faculty want to have happen.

AC: The Ballot Subcommittee would meet with Pam (Montrallo) and Human Resources on who has to populate X committees. Also, there might be issues with rotation—for example, those up for post-tenure review next year can't be on the Post-Tenure Review Committee this year. We need to know who's done with reviews and who needs replacing on a committee, etc. Basically, the subcommittee will liaise with Human Resources.

RC: It'd be nice to standardize the ballots, too.

RR: I can do the technology side of that.

MSL: Is administration being conditioned that the Faculty Senate is the conduit for a lot of these policies?

AC: Yes, we made that very clear this summer. We learned that there were some things being communicated to administration on faculty issues that were very different than what *we'd* been saying...

SL: So they will receive unsolicited feedback, and that can be communicated back to us that they need to work through X committee...?

AC: We'll have monthly meetings with the Vice-President and President, so we can learn of those. We just want things to come through the faculty leadership.

RC: We don't want to prevent individual faculty from contacting administration on personal issues; we just don't want administration to think that those individuals are representing the faculty as a whole.

DH: I'll work on the Ballot Subcommittee, too.

RC: We might meet once a month, but for two hours or more. As a policy is prepared, we need a summary of its issues.

DH: But we won't write the policy?

RC: No, Martha does that. Now we've got it so that she's amenable to our feedback, and with this subcommittee, she'll have that feedback.

MSL: It's an intensive committee—is administration going to recognize this as a legitimate committee? And will they recognize the workload? Can I get off another committee to get on this one?

AC: That's a legitimate concern. Administration does not have such a great view of the faculty body as being involved if it doesn't give a say—we're trying to build up the reputation that we're involved and that we care about the policies that concern us and are willing to work on them.

RC: And a wider range of interest—they were concerned that they'd get lots of complaints from just a few people. The portal issue was an eye-opener for them that faculty have broader concerns.

AC: It's important that we have something that says "We'll work on this"; otherwise, they'll just keep doing things the way that they have been doing them.

MSL: So as we move forward, Martha will send drafts to us first; we send it to this new subcommittee, who will talk about it, highlight issues, and give it back to FSEC...?

AC: As a report, yes.

RC: We've already met with her to establish the basic guidelines. It works very well, but that part is done. Less-intense versions will happen with later policies.

MSL: I'll be on this subcommittee. Can we also suggest new policies?

AC: Absolutely. We'll see how that works. But the subcommittee chair will meet with Martha once a month to communicate our concerns to her and see if they are being addressed. Then the subcommittee reports back to us the basic bullet points of what the subcommittee learned. We have kind of a sense of making this much more streamlined.

MSL: Martha's OK with this?

AC: She loves this.

MSL: And higher up?

AC: I don't think it matters to them—we're working directly with the policy people, and it's already set that Martha's stuff comes to us first. We just need an internal process to keep things organized.

SL: This will prolong things...

RC: No, it gets us involved *earlier*! Now it is "What the next major policy you'll be working on?", and we get involved from the start.

DH: Martha actually has a queue of policies to work on, and other than ones that get dumped on everyone at the last minute, she knows what comes up when. We just haven't known that before.

SL: Who sets the queue?

AC: Administration. But with this subcommittee, and regular communication with Martha, we can jump on issues early.

SL: Can Martha share the queue? For us to share with our faculty?

AC: I think so. Last semester, I sent around a list of issues that were to come up over the summer, but at least we were on board to meet with Martha over the summer on some of them. But this subcommittee can't be just three people—it needs to be 5–6 people, so big policies can be divvied up between subcommittee members to work through. Not all of every policy will be problematic.

RC: Varlo has already established a good rapport with Martha, too, over the summer.

JH: I'll be on that subcommittee.

RC: So that's good representation from this body.

AC: Varlo will probably continue to chair it; now we need more people from different areas.

BS: I'll be on it.

SL: In Business, we're all already busy with lots of things, but I'll ask our faculty at our next meeting.

AC: Are we on board with these two subcommittees?

MSL: Do we need to ask faculty as a whole if they're OK with these? I may want to know what my constituents want.

AC: OK, we'll vote on it at our next meeting—please poll your respective faculties about these.

RC: And find some volunteers in your departments!

SL: It would be helpful to get a one-page flowchart of how you envision that this will work.

AC: I can do that. Lish has another issue to discuss in the few minutes remaining.

LH: In our pre-semester meeting, issues came up about the Curriculum Committee needing syllabi for proposed new courses. That can be really difficult—for example, the History faculty were really bogged down creating them for courses that none of them would be teaching but that they were proposing for *future hires* to teach. For example, what's the point in coming up with a textbook for a class that won't be taught for years? And if none of the faculty making the syllabus are going to teach the class, how can they effectively propose course objectives? So providing a syllabus is a problem in many cases. Some of the syllabi I submitted got sent back as "inappropriate." The other concern is: why is the Curriculum Committee is telling me what needs to be in my syllabi? I can see their point in creating classes that future hires will teach...but I looked into the policies, and as far as I can tell, there's nothing anywhere that states that a syllabus has to be provided for a course proposal to go through. But Martha won't put it on the docket for the committee unless she has a syllabus. Plus, the course change form doesn't have a place to upload a syllabus. I had it happen where the night before a proposal was to come up in the committee, I was told to provide four syllabi or else it wouldn't get seen by the committee!

RC: Why is Martha the conduit for that?

AC: She heads the Technical Review Subcommittee on that. She reviews everything—the numbers of credits, statewide comparisons, etc.—that's what that subcommittee does. Can I bring this up to the Curriculum Committee next time?

(Many yeses.)

LH: Personally, I don't have a problem jumping through hoops, but I can see the consternation in dealing with this, especially when it comes back the night before...!

MSL: And syllabi for classes a year from now...?

DP: I really wonder—was this what was in mind when this was appointed?

AC: Good question, and I've had many, too, as chair of the GE Committee.

RC: There's a similar one-person conduit for the on-line programs thing... (Meeting ran a little overtime, and many people had to leave to teach at this point.)