

Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
Jan.23, 2003

1. In attendance: John Brower, chair; Grant Mitman, Skip Todd, Rick Appleman, Dave Carter, Andrea Stierle, Doug Cameron, Danette Melvin, Mary MacLaughlin. Absent: John Metesh.

2. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM. Minutes of the last meeting were approved as read.

3. Committee reports:

Budget committee: John Brower distributed as an information item, the raw prioritized list of budget requests discussed at the Budget committee meeting of Monday, Jan. 20, 2003. The requests far exceed the actual amount of money expected to be available. The priorities will be grouped according to commonalities such as security, instruction, professional development, etc. in order of priority, and further prioritized within each group.

4. Old/Continuing business:

a. Satisfaction survey: Based on results of his "survey of a survey," Dave Carter has defined areas of interest for the survey, and will e-mail a draft a sample questionnaire to the senate for comment before the next meeting.

b. New evaluation system: Chancellor Gilmore has not yet responded to the Senate's formal appeal submitted last December to defer implementation of the new evaluation system. A response was requested by January 15th. The senate will renew its request that there be a response or meeting as soon as possible. (Chancellor Gilmore subsequently asked to meet with the senate. A meeting on Jan. 30th has been set. jcb). Meanwhile, the senate voted 8:1 to have the chair correspond with senate counterparts at the other university system campuses to obtain an overview of their evaluation procedures and administration.

It was noted by several senate members that those who had gone through the new system had not yet received the results of the fall semester evaluations from their department heads, and that the Registrar's office would not release the results directly to the professors. Thus, the fall semester results were useless in modifying spring semester courses to address any concerns revealed. Only in those departments that opted for the old system were the professors able to obtain results in time to be used. Faculty up for tenure/promotion are supposed to have their portfolios ready for presentation on Feb. 1st, but still do not have evaluations from last semester.

Concern was also expressed about comment summaries being by their very nature a subjective interpretation by the summarizer, who may have no qualifications to do so, or be rushed to finish the job, all of which could rebound to harm the professor. Since the summaries are prepared through the administration, they may have the status of being public documents, whereas under the old system, the comments were private between the professor and students.

c. Bookstore policy: Problems may still remain with accountability for book orders, in that a professor's book orders for any given semester are based on pre-enrollment statistics plus experience; over-ordering may result, which is better than under-ordering that would leave

some students without textbooks. But over-ordering could result in a professor or his/her department being liable for un-bought books. In addition, a professor may require students to buy lab and class notes, but they end-up sharing or not buying what was printed, leaving the notes on the bookstore shelf, with the department having to pay. Department heads may have the dilemma of department funds being obligated by professors who do not have budgetary accountability, but are none-the-less responsible for making materials available to their students.

5. New business:

a. Hiring and promotion: With reference to questions and challenges of the faculty searches and hiring procedures via anonymous letters and current faculty individuals, a request was received from Chancellor Gilmore (Dec. 24th) that the senate appoint a committee to review the paperwork related to those searches and hires to determine if proper procedures had been followed. The senate feels that it is far beyond its capability and purpose to launch a detailed re-construction of all paperwork related to the new hires and promotions being questioned. Rather, it voted unanimously to ask the personnel director to provide (a) copies of the job ads, (b) lists of search committee members, and (c) the number of applicants (names are confidential) and finalists for the positions. It will then determine if procedures proscribed by the faculty handbook have been followed for new hires and promotions.

b. New meeting dates: The senate will continue to meet every other Thursday at 8:00 AM in the Mountain Con room, SUB, except as affected by spring break. Dates for spring semester are: Jan. 23, Feb. 6, Feb. 20, Mar.6, Mar. 27, April 10, April 24, and May 1st or 8th, to be determined. The dates will be forwarded to President Dennison in order for him to schedule visits to the senate.

c. Quorums, attendance and voting:

The issue of votes at faculty assemblies was raised. Campus business is commonly conducted without a true quorum, as an expediency to deal with the fact of poor attendance. This results in issues being decided by a simple majority of those persons present, usually far fewer than a legitimate quorum of all faculty, and often a very small group. The view was expressed that apathy might be reduced if faculty knew that matters of importance could not be resolved unless they participated in the assemblies enough to form a true quorum. The definition of a quorum is complicated by the merger of north and south campus faculties. A given issue might affect only north campus faculty, but might be un-resolvable even if a north campus majority were present, if an overall quorum did not exist due to absence of south campus faculty. Similarly, north campus faculty need not vote on matters of concern to south campus only. Thus, it might be necessary to define a relevant quorum for votes on any given issue, further complicating matters, but nevertheless honoring the requirement of a quorum.

Related to attendance at faculty and other meetings, it was suggested that it would be improved if they could be held at a given time when no classes were permitted. In the past, no classes were allowed to be scheduled at noon. This issue will be revisited.

Submitted by John Brower, Senate Chair