

Faculty Senate Minutes
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2015, 3PM
Board Room, DSU
Full Faculty Senate Meeting

In Attendance: Jana Adamitis, Linda Manning, John Nichols, Harry Grau, Chris Kennedy, Hussam Timani, Bob Winder, Betsy Jelinek, Jessica Thompson, Rachel Holland, Costa Gerousis, Lynn Shollen, Edward Brash, William Donaldson, Linda Waldron

The Faculty Senate meeting was called to order at 3:00. Minutes of the April 17, 2015 were approved (with a motion by Adamitis, seconded by Jelinek), as well as the April 24, 2015 minutes (with a motion by Grau, seconded by Winder) by the 2014-2015 senators present: Adamitis, Manning, Nichols, Grau, Timani, Jelinek, Thompson, Holland, and Brash. August 19, 2015 minutes were approved (motion by Holland, seconded by Donaldson) with 1 abstention (Kennedy). April 28, 2015 minutes were approved with one spelling correction (motion by Manning, seconded by Jelinek) with two abstentions (Kennedy and Donaldson).

President's Report

Diversity Initiatives: The Senate wishes to thank Ben Cowman, Assistant Director for Diversity Initiatives, for his informative report on diversity initiatives at our last meeting, as well as his hard work in this area, and to express our support for the University's efforts to increase diversity awareness on campus.

Textbooks and Campus Mailroom: Bob Midgette, Senior Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Services, invited President Adamitis for a tour of the mailroom facilities in response to faculty and student questions about the rate of delivery of course textbooks. Midgette estimated by when the textbooks arrive in the mailroom, they are made available to students to pick up within a maximum of 1.5 days, typically one day, with next day or priority packages delivered first. Nearly 17,500 packages are delivered each semester by the mailroom. The Senate wishes to acknowledge and commend Bob Midgette and his team for their logistical handling of these necessary packages delivered to students in a timely fashion.

UGRC Request for "Promotion" to Highest Valued Activity: The UGRC will submit a proposal to the Senate to include service on this committee as a Highest Valued activity.

Phi Beta Kappa Report

Senator Jelinek discussed possible considerations for a successful PBK review, based upon meetings with an outside consultant and Provost staff. These include: activity of PBK faculty at CNU, diversity among student body and faculty, faculty salaries, adjunct usage, faculty research support, foreign language curriculum, Honors Program activity, undergraduate research, study abroad opportunities, faculty governance, campus bookstore, library resources, graduate school placement, and the intellectual climate of the campus. Adamitis noted that the Senate has endeavored to address the role of faculty governance by a review of governing structures to enhance faculty and administration cooperation on a range of issues, including those related to PBK. Senators speculated on the degree to which these considerations were modeled on best practices for universities of the past fifty years, but not the upcoming fifty years.

Senators also posed what might be the tangible results of a PBK application and its success; among the possibilities mentioned were: better university national ratings which would affect admission criteria, smaller classes, equitable salary in relation to comparable PBK institutions, academic validation from our peers, and a collective institutional opportunity to reflect upon our mission and goals, such as diversity and the value of a liberal arts education in the global community.

Departmental Liaison Reports:

Adamitis reviewed the concerns brought to Faculty Senate Liaisons, which will be collated and sorted by the Senate Executive Committee for further discussion at a later date. (These are also outlined in the September 18 Senate Agenda.)

Reported by Liaisons but already on the Senate's current agenda: Final exam policy, Annual Review (merit pay calculations), and Lecturer positions. Adamitis noted that the Provost recognizes the value of tenure-stream positions and seeks to increase their number in response to faculty concerns communicated through the Senate last year.

New issues raised from Faculty Senate Liaison outreach:

- Institutional Profile and Six-Year Plan: Faculty would like to understand better how the *US News and World Report* rankings, which seem to rely very heavily on quantitative data, are determined; they also noted that the Six-Year Plan seems to emphasize quantitative benchmarks as well. Faculty expressed concern that over-reliance on quantitative data and the desire to achieve quantitative benchmarks has the potential to move us away from our liberal arts mission and/or cause us to make decisions that do not reflect academic best practices. The Senate will discuss balancing quantitative against qualitative measures with the Provost and his staff.
- Evaluation and Pay Structure. Senators briefly remarked upon the role of grade distribution information. Chairs receive grade point average data for each faculty member in the department every semester that shows the distribution for each course and the combined GPA for all courses taught that semester. Chairs can make these data available to faculty (though not all do so). One Senator noted that independent studies and applied lessons are weighted equally to standard courses in the combined GPA average, which tends to skew the combined GPA toward a higher number. Another Senator noted that one Dean provided these distributions to the college chairs and discussed them as indicators of rigor, though these data are not considered in the evaluation process. The role and value of the dissertation in CAH and CSS was mentioned and this will be an issue the SEC takes up with the Provost and his staff. The reliance upon the Digital Measures template was considered with senators expressing concern over the limits of the template in its representation of faculty work, with other senators noting that the template can be adjusted, and additional senators wondering to what degree it is still useful for administrative data collection. IDEA use in evaluation and the presence of instructor rewards (such as extra credit) for completing the IDEA form were swiftly mentioned and will be taken up by the SEC. The possibility of assigning UE-4 credit for assembling purchasing lists for the library met with a negative consensus, though there was general recognition that such activity is important for the intellectual development of the university.

- **Staffing and Scheduling:** Some faculty expressed concern about the use of faculty workload ratios to determine allocations for future positions. Faculty workload ratios measure the number of students taught in each department against the number of faculty in each department; departments with higher student-to-faculty ratios will receive priority for new positions. The primary problem here is that important decisions regarding position allocations are being made based on only one metric, but it is also imperative that we consider academic best practices by discipline, contributions to the Core and HONR, and in general contributions to the University mission when deciding how best to allocate positions. The Faculty Senate has proposed department-level strategic planning that will address this problem effectively. Such planning will also address the problem of “top-down” scheduling, i.e., the imposition of quantitative benchmarks that cause chairs to revise the schedule and/or scramble to find adjuncts at the last minute. Long-term proactive strategic planning will enable us to meet quantitative goals in ways that allow for the preservation of academic best practices.
- **Curriculum:** Faculty have reported concerns and questions about the scope of Civic and Democratic Engagement.
- **Phi Beta Kappa: Bookstore Initiative and Semester Long Study Abroad.** Senators expressed concern about case-by-case transfer process for courses studied abroad and the ability to determine equivalent courses at home or abroad for credit.
- **Administrative Support and Paper Trails:** The Faculty Senate will address the Provost and his staff on these questions, among them the notification of VISA renewal.
- **CHECS:** For some time now faculty have expressed concerns about a perceived lack of communications between CHECS and faculty reporting problems. The SEC will contact Melissa Scott and invite her to a Senate meeting for discussion.

New Business

Faculty Development Grant

Senator Thompson discussed revisions to the Faculty Development Grant forms for 2015-2016, the major change being providing more justification on the part of the applicant for funding and its possible correlation with the applicant’s current and past grant history or other possible funding streams. Senators queried if rank played a role in grant awards; Thompson replied that, given a review of past applications and awards, rank has played a role in who applies (such as, new faculty beginning a research career, although established faculty also apply to initiate new research ventures), but it has not played a role in determinations of awards. Discussion turned to final grant report and the outcomes of the grant. Adamitis moved, Kennedy seconded, and the revised Faculty Development Grant forms were passed. These are now available on the faculty senate website. <http://cnu.edu/facultyresources/development/>

Unfinished Business

Annual Review

Adamitis posited that the Annual Review guidelines and formula should be voted on the Council of University Chairs before sending it to the Faculty Senate for discussion and vote, after which it will proceed to the Provost’s Office.

Five Year Strategic Plans

Adamitis noted that the Senate initiative for departments to develop five year strategic plans is a proactive effort from the ground up to articulate department needs and resource allocation based upon academic best practices that take into account quantitative measures. In so doing, Adamitis continued, departmental chairs, in collaboration with their deans, will be empowered to articulate the status of affairs that national ranking measures (such as *US News and World Report*) might leave unrecognized or under-articulated.

Departmental Eval 4s

The Senate has charged departments with translating the University Eval 4s into disciplinary language and best practices for inclusion in Departmental Eval 4s. Senators discussed that clarification with regard to “classroom skills” could be made more departmental or disciplinary specific, as well as scope and qualitative measure of scholarly endeavors. (Grau departs at 5:30pm)

Lecturer Rank Stream Proposal

Adamitis reviewed the Senate’s discussion of the Lecturer Rank Stream proposal from last year and invited any further comment. Senators queried the relationship between the multi-year contract and the practice of staggering the awarding of such contracts. General consensus seemed to be that merit of a candidate for the contract superseded any possible institutional need to stagger contracts. Timani asked if this applied to only current faculty, or could faculty be grandfathered in. Adamitis posited that grandfathering could potentially occur. Adamitis moved an amendment striking language about staggering. Kennedy seconded. Motion passed with Shollen abstaining.

Other Business

Adamitis noted that the Senate is aware that it does not currently have representation of lecturers, who constitute 32% of the faculty, though it did have such representation in 2014-15, and did expect to have such representation after new Senators were voted in May 2015. However, it is a topic that the Senate will return to, asking for feedback on ways to ensure such representation, even according to college designation.

Adamitis moved to adjourn, seconded by Kennedy. Passed unanimously. Senate adjourned at 6:15pm.