Meeting Minutes

University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate

Thursday, January 23, 2014

**Attendance:**

College of Business: Jim Downey (2014), Kaye McKinzie (2015), aa-Don Bradley (2016)

College of Education: Shoudong Feng (2014), Alicia Cotabish (2015), Jud Copeland (2016)

College of Fine Arts and Communication: Lanette Grate (2014), Garry Craig Powell (2015), Christian Carichner (2016)

College of Health and Behavioral Sciences: Melissa Shock (2014), K.C. Poole (2015), Alexandra Marshall (2016)

College of Liberal Arts: Clayton Crockett (2014), Jacob Held (2015), aa-Chris Craun (2016)

College of Natural Science and Mathematics: Charles Watson (2014), Rahul Mehta (2015), Ben Rowley (2016)

At Large Senators: Brian Bolter (2014), Doug Isanhart (2014), Debbie Bratton (2015), aa-Art Lichtenstein (2015), Kim Eskola (2016), Amber Wilson (2016)

Part-Time: Deb Forssman Hill (2014)

1. Call to Order
   1. Motion to amend the agenda to add a report by Diane Newton, VP of Finance and Administration, by Senator Rowley, second by Senator Powell.
2. Comments: President Courtway
   1. President Courtway and Provost Runge are in Helena/West Helena attending an event at the KIPP Academy.
3. Comments: Provost Runge (Report made by Ms. Laura Young, Associate Provost for Finance and Administration).
   1. Enrollment update: Undergraduate is holding steady compared to last year. Graduate enrollment is up compared to last year.
   2. Meeting on admissions standards is coming up. This is important for our enrollment management program.
   3. Supplemental payroll was run Tuesday, January 21, 2014, to catch some of the part-time and adjunct employees who were missed in the initial pay period of the year. Several people from the provost’s office worked together to quickly process the necessary paperwork for the supplemental payroll run, and the affected faculty were notified of the situation. We are looking into options for streamlining this process in the future.
   4. Discussions are ongoing about the housing options over the winter break (mostly concerning international students and winter intercession students).
   5. Ongoing searches are in process for Dean positions (College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Graduate School) and Chief Technology Officer.
4. Minutes: January 14, 2014
   1. Motion to approve as amended by Senator Copeland, second by Senator Crockett.
5. Report: Faculty Issues Regarding Part-time Faculty Appointments, Salary and Benefits; Dr. Graham Gillis, Associate VP for Human Resources and Risk Management.
   1. Question regarding part-time faculty and the alternative social security plan. Since around 1998 this was implemented for cost savings (for 2013, we saved $166,000). It depends on the individual which plan will benefit them, either the traditional social security vs. alternate. Opinions in favor of both plans have been expressed to Graham. UCA has to make the institutional decision for all part-time faculty either traditional or alternate. This decision cannot be made on an individual basis. Discussion by Laura Young, Senator Isanhart, Senator Held, Senator Bolter, Senator Forssman Hill, Senator McKenzie, Senator Poole, Senator Eskola.
   2. What is the definition of part-time employee? Rule of thumb, if you teach 3 classes (or more) in a semester, you are benefits eligible (75% teaching according to Board Policy 526). This can vary by discipline. Benefits eligibility is determined by the individual departments. This also applies to online courses taught for credit.
   3. Concerns have been expressed with the amount paid per class taught by part-time faculty and how it has not increased in a long time. This can be made into a strategic budget item and pursued through SBAC.
6. Report: Financial Questions, by Diane Newton VP of Finance and Administration.
   1. Ms. Newton began by addressing a question about software package where a department thought they were buying something with their funds at the end of the year, however, it was a license issue (because of the date) and it had to be charged to the next year due to accounting principles. These accounting principles are something that cannot be changed.
   2. Is there a place where questions like this can be addressed? Do we have a clearing house where questions can be answered? Yes. Please check with the Controller, Jeremy Bruner. He would be happy to work with you and your department.
   3. What happens to unspent money at the end of the year? It goes back to specific area funds. Some of it can go forward in capital carry over accounts.
   4. Question about the bookstore. Can we tell students that they can get a textbook for cheaper elsewhere? Newton-prices are more reasonable now than in the past. Textbook Brokers is working hard with faculty members so that they can create the right package that is the best for your classes. Our contract states that they are our sole textbook provider, so it would be inappropriate for any of our employees to state that students should go elsewhere to get textbooks. Newton encourages everyone to engage in conversations with Textbook Brokers to accommodate faculty members and students needs.
7. Consideration for Approval of Student Success and Retention Council: Senator Don Bradley, Chair of Committee on Committees—Presented by President Watson in Senator Bradley’s absence
   1. The committee met and did not make a recommendation; they wanted to let the Senate fully discuss this.
   2. Laura Young presented for Provost Runge--understands that faculty would like larger representation on the council, but also needs to ensure that the staff who work with the students on a daily basis are on the council. There is concern that if the committee that gets too large, then it will stagnate. Would like to make the offer that we add an additional faculty member to the committee. Discussion Senator Bolter, Senator Rowley, Dr. Jonathan Glenn, Senator Held. Concern expressed by various senators about the lack of faculty representation on this committee.
   3. Senator Crockett presented a constituent concern: “*Senators, I am profoundly dismayed by the proposal to re-formulate the Retention Committee. First, I would note that it is not really a university committee because all of the committee members sit ex-officio. There is no role for the Senate going forward and no role for the faculty in general. Faculty membership is, in fact, an obvious case of tokenism and is meaningless. This version of retention seems to suggest that the majority of retention issues relate to every aspect of the student experience EXCEPT the classroom. I find that to be a troubling assumption. Finally, I also take exception to and find be professionally offensive the assertion that the Provost will chair the committee due to "the gravity of its decision-making and the importance and viability of proposed courses of action." This seems to suggest that faculty are incapable of "grasping the big picture" or accomplishing anything important. I would respectfully ask you to consider tabling or defeating it.”*
   4. Senator Powell presented a constituent concern: *“I see that the proposed Student Success and Retention Council, which replaces the existing Retention Committee, is entirely made up of administrators and staff (and one student) except for the President and VP of the Faculty Senate. I would like to know why it is a good idea to have so few faculty on a retention committee. Sounds to me like faculty are not seen as an important part of that effort. Two faculty reps on this Council wouldn't be much of a voice. And that's my concern--why are faculty not the majority on a Council that would be one of the University's Committees? Do faculty and administration feel that the current Retention Committee is failing? If so, is there another way to solve that problem rather than turning over the committee to administrators and staff? If this committee needs to become a Council and the Provost needs to chair it in order to " emphasize the gravity of its decision-making and the importance and viability of proposed courses of action," than is this the best way to do that--by getting rid of faculty representation? I notice that half of the people on this Council report to the Provost or one of the Associate Provosts and these people are not in tenure-track positions. What is the rationale behind eliminating faculty representation from each college? In fact, this proposal calls into question the whole idea of University Committees and how they are structured. According to the Faculty Handbook, "In addition to the university administrative structure, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, the Student Government Association, and other university councils and committees play a significant role in the governance and management of the activities of the institution," (73). A Council with only 15% faculty representation hardly seems one that is "in addition to the administrative structure"--it is an administrative structure. Is that what our committees should be? We do have three committees that do not have, or do not have much of, a faculty presence--the Council of Vice Presidents (which makes me wonder why this is a University Committee), the Radiation Safety Committee, which is dictated by the Arkansas Department of Health and not subject to say by the Senate, and the Safety Committee. I am not in favor of a University Committee of this importance that has so little faculty representation. I think this is a statement about the importance of faculty input on the issue of retention and student success, and we should have primary input on these issues. Thank you for your consideration”*
   5. Response by Laura Young—The spirit of this is not to remove faculty. It is to have people on the committee who can administratively solve the problems that students encounter. It is difficult to try and balance that with a large group. The provost wants to compromise on this. Can we come to some sort of middle ground? There is no specific attempt to cut out faculty from this process.
   6. Senator McKenzie and Senator Held expressed that there is little diversity on the current recommendation and that perhaps the chair of University College (which contains a lot of our minorities) to be included.
   7. Dr. Jonathan Glenn—Retention committee members remarked that faculty members had a fairly low attendance in previous meetings. This participation rate was considered in the drafting of this proposal. There were several areas crucial to retention that were not represented on the original committee. We are attempting to keep the committee size manageable, while providing reasonably broad representation. Let’s work together to reach a good committee structure/makeup.
   8. Motion to table this issue, send it back to committee on committees, and have them bring this back when they have a recommendation by Senator Bolter, second by Senator Copeland.
      1. Passed unanimously.
8. Consideration of Proposed Senate Projects: Senator Amber Wilson, Secretary, Faculty Senate
   1. Faculty Senate $25,000 in Coca-Cola money (a one-time pool of money to be spent in this fiscal year). Senator Wilson cited the need to use this money in a way that had the opportunity to benefit the most possible and proposed several information access/database options. These included a site-wide license for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (a one-time contract/payment for several years of access); purchase of JSTOR Arts and Sciences X, XI, and XII databases; Five or ten year backlog of Web of Science database; and New York Times Historical Content. See handout for details. Senator Rowley proposed funding three additional faculty summer stipends through the University Research Council (at $4,000 each).
   2. Senator Wilson noted that the bylaws did not include any instructions for their amendment, and according to Section 57 of *Robert’s Rules of Order*, they should. So, it was proposed that language would be added to end of the document to allow for amendment, which will be voted on at the next regularly scheduled faculty senate meeting (2/3 majority required to pass, according to *Robert’s Rules*). Also, to create more competition and, hopefully, encourage greater senate election participation among the general faculty, it was proposed to switch the order of occurrence for the annual At-Large and College Senator elections. Previously, the At-Large elections ran first (with numerous competitors) and the College elections followed (with many candidates running un-opposed). It was proposed that College elections now be run on the first Friday of March and At-Large elections run on the first Friday of April. This will be voted on at the next regularly scheduled faculty senate meeting (2/3 majority required to pass, according to *Robert’s Rules*).

1. Progress Report on Standing Committee Actions:
   1. Senator Poole—Committee has been working on investigation of issues faced by part-time faculty members.
   2. Senator Craun--Was unable to attend the meeting, but his committee has been working and will present a report at the next meeting.
2. Faculty Concerns
   1. Alexandra Marshall presented a constituent concern—“*I am writing this regarding a colleague who teaches as an adjunct for our college. An error was made in the Payroll Dept., they freely admit that it was their error, and he is did not get paid Jan. 15, 2014. His PAF was misplaced. When contact was made with the Payroll Dept. our Department Chair was told that the only possible solution to this was to go through the cumbersome, slow, process of obtaining funds from the Foundation and then repaying it from the Jan. 30 paycheck. The problem is not that Payroll made an error, we are all human, mistakes happen. The problem is there is seemingly no mechanism in the Payroll Dept. to deal with this situation, no emergency fund, no ability to write a check to the effected employee. The only remedy Payroll seems to have is a rather cavalier "He'll get all of it on the 30th" response and a suggestion to check with the Foundation. This is absolutely unacceptable! Why can there not be an emergency fund for dealing with this type of situation? It just seems to be common sense.”*
   2. Alexandra Marshall presented a constituent concern — “*Dear All - I reviewed the proposed advisor tool and have serious concern about one item 2A "My advisor is available for consultation and appointments". I have had conversations with too many advisees complaining because their advisor isn't available - they go something like this...*

*S: Ms/Dr XX is never available to meet with me.*

*Me: Did you make an appointment with her?*

*S: I have come by lots of time and she is never there (or free).*

*M: But, have you made an appointment - she has a sign up list on her door (appointment book, sent you an email for electronic appt etc)?*

*S: No, but I have been back by and she is never free.*

*M: Go back and make an appointment. You can count on her being free at that time.*

*Nursing faculty have a little office time due to their clinical hours and carry a high number of advisees. They use a variety of ways to get students to make appointments - but too many students want to just drop by and will rate the advisor low if she isn't free at that moment. I am sure this situation is the same for numerous faculty across campus.*

*Otherwise - the tool looks good and an improvement over the old one. I appreciate the work of the committee who developed it. Thanks!”*

* 1. Senator Shock—Coca Cola makes many products, why can’t we have some options that are healthy and nutritious?
  2. Senator Copeland—Faculty Affairs one and two have the same charge. Should we look at making their charges more specific?
  3. Senator McKinzie presented a constituent concern — “*Last spring the Faculty Senate, voted to change the structure of the UCA Core Council. It was later pushed to be implemented after we begin transition to the UCA Core to avoid confusion and retain knowledge of the council. It was my understanding that this meant Fall 2013 or at the latest January 2014. When are we going to implement the structure the Faculty Senate approved?”*
  4. Senator McKinzie presented a constituent concern — “*I was reading through the proposal for the Student Success Council that is on the agenda. I am concerned that the Provost's Office is recommending the removal of faculty representatives on this committee. For example, I know that there has already been one report with suggestions regarding retention that was prepared by the Provost's Office and submitted to the BoT without review by the department chairs or faculty. It included a suggestion/recommendation that students not be allowed to enroll in HIST 1310 or 1320 without a certain minimum score on the ACT. This suggestion had not been seen by the department chair before the report was part of the agenda for the BoT. One of the Assoc. Provosts didn't even understand that this was the equivalent of recommending changes in a prerequisite for a course which should come through academic department channels. I'm concerned that this group may come up with recommendations/requirements for things like First Year Seminar without consulting faculty (particularly faculty who teach these courses). I'm sure that there will be lots of other recommendations that will impact academics and departments. I'm concerned that we are removing faculty voice from this committee. I'm also concerned because retention is a large part of the new "funding formula" and I think we need to include faculty on this committee so that it isn't just a groups of administrators primarily from the Provost's office. This is also part of a more disturbing overall trend. Council of Deans now has more non-Dean members than deans. Several other committees are adding Associate Provost's as chairs or permanent members. We are seeing a pattern that appears to be reducing faculty voice in many areas across campus right now.”*
  5. Senator Carichner presented a constituent concern —“*It seems every semester more and more faculty parking spaces are being blocked off. I seemed to notice more red block-offs near the stadium. I discuss this with some other faculty members and they seemed to notice the same thing. If they do block off some more spaces, then maybe they could take away that trailer in the parking lot behind State. Also, the response to this topic with faculty was, why not have designated hours for this. Does it have to be 24 hours*?”
  6. Senator Carichner presented a constituent concern--“*Grave concern for the move to centralized scheduling as it relates to the SFA building. This semester alone there are over 150 events scheduled in the recital hall in just 107 days of the spring semester. This is weekends and evenings only, and does not include the typical class schedule of 8am to 5pm straight. While certain Rooms may be exempt from centralized scheduling, having our overcrowded building opened up to the rest of campus proves problematic to scheduling extra rehearsals as deemed necessary based on repertoire and student needs in our academic program. We think the concept of centralized scheduling has merit but not if it will prohibit our program from serving the needs of our students in our specialized, aging building that contains hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of irreplaceable instruments.”*

1. Announcements
   1. Senator Eskola—We are looking at reviving and restructuring the Health and Wellness committee, please send comments/suggestions to her if you have any thoughts for the vision of this committee.
   2. Next meeting will be Tuesday, February 11, 2014 at 12:45 in Wingo 315.
2. Adjournment
   1. Motion to adjourn by Senator Rowley, second Senator Wilson.