

UCA Faculty Senate Minutes of Thursday, January 27th, 2011 at 1245pm, Wingo Hall 315

Members Present (/a: absent; /aa: absent advised)

- Business Administration: Bartczak, Bradley/a, Moore.
- Education: Albritton/aa, Copeland, Hebert/aa.
- Fine Arts And Communication: Browne, President Burley, Castner Post.
- Health And Behavioral Sciences: Fletcher, Poole, Ray.
- Liberal Arts: Arnold, Parrack, Spivey.
- Natural Sciences And Mathematics: BrattonG, Isom, Rowley.
- At-Large Senators: Acre, BrattonD, Jones, Lichtenstein, WilsonA., WilsonJ.
- Senator For Part-Time Faculty: RungeN.
- Office Of The Provost: Provost Grahn/aa, Associate Provost Glenn.

I. Approval of Minutes from December 7, 2010

MOTION TO APPROVE: Ray, Copeland.

BrattonD: page 2, top should indicate BrattonD rather than "BrattonG." ("Could the retroactive pay be awarded as a lump sum?")

WilsonA: page 5, motion to adjourn should indicate WilsonA rather than "Wilson."

MOTION APPROVED with changes as indicated above.

II. Remarks, President Meadors

-Regarding local news crime reports, sometimes things that happen off campus are reported as happening on campus.

-SPARC committee deliberations are proceeding.

-Representatives of Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting are on campus this week. Noel-Levitz provides enrollment management consulting for higher education.

-Low percentage of Arkansas students who begin college complete college. We need to focus on retention. Why are students leaving UCA prior to degree completion?

-UCA is considered to be one of the top military friendly campuses in the nation.

-We are searching for a Leadership Studies Program Director.

-Global Education Project (GEP); perhaps try for 200 students a year.

-A Chinese business summit will be held on campus during summer 2011.

-Our enrollment is down this semester by approximately 2.5% undergraduate and 3% graduate.

III. Remarks, Provost Lance Grahn

[absent/aa; Associate Provost Glenn present]

IV. President's Report

A. SPARC Priorities

Burley: Executive committee went through the complete list and distilled it down to the list that was distributed with the minutes. Committee declined the Provost's invitation to include estimated costs. Burley is a member of the SPARC committee that will generate the final list, and costs will be added.

B. Budget Request

Burly: Distributed information from Jack Gillean regarding the Faculty Senate budget.

V. University Committee Reports

A. Retention Committee, Philip Spivey

Spivey: Explained the Committee's structure and deliberations. This committee is charged with advising the President. Conducted comparative analysis of UCA strengths and weaknesses. We are centrally located in the state and nationally recognized for programs, such as residential colleges, athletics, and student organizations. UCA has close ties with the local community. Summarized the concerns of the Higher Learning Commission. Increase retention of at risk students, improve admissions to graduate schools. Perhaps administer a biannual student satisfaction survey. Why is our retention rate not higher? Perhaps establish a retention office, seek grants and other funding for a child care center, etc. The Committee invites input from all interested faculty.

Isom: Do we have assurance that this committee is not looking at internal criteria as to how many students must pass a particular class? Perhaps we should look at admission standards. They were often ignored in past years. Students who were admitted under artificially low admission standards several years ago are now moving toward graduation. This may lead to a temporary and artificial drop in retention numbers.

[general comments: Dr. Meadors; RungeN; Rowley; Elaine Corum, University College Faculty and Retention Committee member]

VI. Senate Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

Burley: A schedule of semester meetings with the Provost has been established.

B. Committee on Committees

1. University Safety Committee Changes (distributed with agenda)

MOTION TO APPROVE: WilsonJ, BrattonG.

[comments: Fletcher, WilsonJ, Burley]

MOTION APPROVED

2. Position addition to the University Calendar Committee

WilsonJ: Motion to support the establishment of a Staff Senate position on the University Calendar Committee.

MOTION TO APPROVE: WilsonJ, Rowley.

[comments: BrattonG, Glenn, WilsonJ, Isom, Burley]

MOTION APPROVED

3. Deletion of position on Fringe Benefits Advisory Committee

WilsonJ: Motion to strike the position of Vice President for Academic Services.

MOTION TO APPROVE: WilsonJ, BrattonG.

MOTION APPROVED.

C. Academic Affairs

Castner Post: no report.

D. Faculty Affairs I—Higher Learning Commission Report

Fletcher: See report as distributed by Burley with agenda.

[comments: Burly, Fletcher]

E. Faculty Affairs II

Ray: no report.

VII. Announcements and Concerns

A. Next Meeting: Tuesday, February 8, 2011.

B. Other Announcements and Concerns

Moore: [constituent concern] "I recommend that we abolish the program that pays faculty to exercise and attend classes. We can get a better result by working out a deal with Conway Regional Health and Fitness Center to reduce the membership fees. The Conway Public school system has a deal so that their employees only pay \$75 a month for a family. This is \$25 off the regular price. With a lower price, more of our faculty will join. People who are members of the gym are more likely to exercise. Also, our insurance often covers family members. We can reduce claims by promoting a health life style for our spouses and other family members. Our current system has pay-outs for a whole family but only incentives to make one family member healthy (the employee). In short, we will get a

better result and save on resources. We will not need anyone to administer the current program, and money currently spent to administer the program could be used to satisfy another need."

Spivey: [constituent concern]

"To: UCA Faculty Senate

Re: Concerns regarding the apparent neglect of high-level administrators to follow appropriate procedures and to respect the principles of shared governance to which UCA is explicitly committed. The case immediately at hand regards proposed changes to the World Cultural Traditions area (WCT) of the General Education curriculum that were initiated and developed by the faculty and supported by all relevant constituents before being recommended to the Provost by a unanimous vote of the General Education Council. Despite this recommendation, the Provost and Council of Deans denied the proposed changes under questionable circumstances as outlined below.

The Senate is asked to inquire and, if necessary, formally investigate actions on behalf of the Provost, Associate Provost, and/or College Deans relating to the afore-mentioned proposal. Because of the fact that many of these actions took place in closed meetings, it is difficult to substantiate with adequate evidence that the actions listed below took place exactly as described. Nevertheless, they have been reported by several trustworthy sources who are in positions to know about their veracity. Based on these reports, it is appropriate, in the least, for the Senate to request an accounting about what took place in the meetings referenced below. It is also appropriate, if the reports outlined here are correct, for corrective actions to be taken.

Reported Actions by the Provost, Associate Provost, and Council of Deans:

(A) The afore-mentioned proposal was supported by the CLA Curriculum Committee, the CLA Dept Chairs, and the CLA Dean.

(B) The Provost and the Deans were provided copies of the proposed changes by the GenEd council and explicitly invited to communicate any comments, questions, or concerns they may have had. Nine months passed between the time they were invited to comment and the final vote was taken by the GenEd council to recommend the changes. Neither the Provost, Associate Provost, nor the Deans chose to reply, other than the CLA Dean who was asked specifically to offer written comments before the GenEd council moved to recommend the changes.

(C) The proposal (first distributed for feedback in March, 2010), and the recommendation to implement the proposed changes (sent to the Provost in December, 2010) were approved by unanimous votes by the GenEd Council (including student representatives, who spoke out in favor of the proposal during discussion as giving them more options to take full advantage of their college experience by studying subjects beyond those studied in primary and secondary school). The recommendation to increase such options was given by both team members of the 2007 HLC report on the General Education Program at UCA.

(D) The GenEd Director was not invited to present the proposal to the Dean's Council. The CLA Dean was told by the Provost's Office that the Associate Provost would present it.

(E) The Associate Provost presented the proposal to the Council of Deans perhaps under the dubious assumption that he is an ex officio member of the GenEd Council (despite the fact that he never attends meetings of the council and did not participate in discussions regarding the proposal under consideration).

1. His being an ex officio member of the Council is not in accordance with the Faculty Handbook, which states that The Associate Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies is an ex officio member. That position no longer exists and the handbook has not been revised in response to this fact. The Provost's office does not have the authority to fill the position ad hoc.

(F) Reasons given for rejecting the proposal appear to have been ill-informed and irrelevant, motivated by considerations other than those in the proposal – considerations that had not been shared with the various faculty committees in the year and half during which they worked on the proposal. The utter irrelevance of the arguments given to justify rejection of the proposal suggest a hidden agenda (i.e., a desire to rid the GenEd of the WCT requirement altogether or simply reduce the number of hours in the GenEd Program). But no such proposal has been shared with the appropriate faculty bodies.

Larger Issues at Stake:

1. Quality of Education/Response to student demand
2. Shared Governance and Issues of Transparency
3. Integrity of the Strategic Plan
4. Maintenance of Accreditation
5. Appropriate Response to the Higher Learning Commission's Report
6. Appropriate Response to GenEd External Review
7. Faculty, Staff, and Student Morale

Possible Action Items:

1. The GenEd Council should be called upon to take immediate action.
 - A. The GenEd Director should be urged to call an emergency meeting of the council to address this issue.
 - B. The Provost, Associate Provost, and Council of Deans should be asked to clarify their actions and intent.
 - C. The Provost, Associate Provost, and Council of Deans should be reminded of the need to follow appropriate procedures and of the willingness of the GenEd council to work with them when they disagree with its recommendations.
2. The Faculty Senate should inquire into the veracity of the allegations made above and conduct a formal investigation of possible breeches of protocol, if necessary.

3. The Faculty Senate might reasonably find it appropriate to call for a reprimand of the Provost due to his failure to operate within the bounds of established procedures and his disregard for the principles of shared governance.

4. Issue formal complaints to UCA's President, the Board of Trustees, and the AAUP."
[end of report submitted by Spivey]

Isom: [constituent concern] "Several faculty members contacted me with concerns regarding potential changes in our General Education requirements for graduation. Concerns regarding two different aspects of this issue were voiced.

First, concerns were raised about diminishing the quality, distinctiveness and scope of the education provided to our students with such a weakening of our general education program.

Second, concerns were raised regarding the process by which consideration/discussion of this issue has begun and the way in which it will be conducted and finally decided. Specifically, the General Education Council should be one of the primary bodies considering and voicing support/concerns for such changes. Respect and consideration of this council composed of elected representatives should be preserved in an effort to ensure transparency and shared governance.

Third, concerns were raised regarding the impact of these potential changes on course demand and therefore on the relevant departmental faculty currently responsible for teaching those classes. Fear was expressed that certain programs may be targeted for reduction or removal through manipulation of the General Education requirements. This fear is likely exacerbated by the lack of transparency and concerns regarding process described in the above paragraph."

Burley: Senator Rowley has been appointed to the Vice President for Enrollment search committee.

Burley: comments on work of Faculty Handbook Committee (see email from Parrack to Faculty Senate)

Burley: Dr. Glenn is working on a review of Board of Trustee policies.

Burley: Academic Affairs Committee is working on the instructor evaluation issue.

Burley: The University College Task Force is in progress.

Burley: A resolution regarding the status of Resident Masters is forthcoming.

VIII. Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Ray, Browne.

MOTION APPROVED.

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 P.M.