

Minutes
UCA Faculty Senate
Thursday, April 23, 2009
Wingo 315, 12:45 p.m.

President Boniecki called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. Present were Boniecki, Parrack, Seifert, Albritton, Ray, Jones, Castner-Post, Lichtenstein, McCullough, Johnson, Schaefer, Rospert, Powers, Castro, Wiedmaier, Moore, Bell, Runge, Lance, Isom, Fletcher, and Provost Grahn. Advised Absences: Acre, Mehta and Hebert. Absent: Holden.

I. Approval of Minutes from April 14, 2009. (see Agenda Attachment 1)

Senator Ray moved to approve minutes with second by Senator Lance. Motion passed unanimously approving the minutes with no corrections.

II. Budget Update from President Courtway.

President Tom Courtway and Bunny Adcock presented a budget update for the current fiscal year. President Courtway reported that to date we have not drawn on our line of credit although we may have to before the end of the fiscal year. President Courtway is hopeful that if the state has a revenue surplus that UCA might get a percentage of those funds. There will only be a 2% raise in tuition for the upcoming year. Additionally, the administration is doing all they can to keep costs down in an attempt to build much needed reserves for the university.

Question-Senator Fletcher: Do you anticipate any additional cuts?

Response- President Courtway: Not at this time, but we still have 60 days to go. We will do what's best for UCA. We are going to be better off than we thought.

Question- Senator Isom: We appreciate how you have lead and moved this university forward. Are there any protections placed on those potential revenues?

Response- President Courtway: No restrictions at this time. I think the next president will be very prudent with how the money is handled. We are trying to do all we can to avoid any layoffs in the future. Faculty input on budget matters this year has been important and critical to our success. The BOT hasn't seen this budget yet. We'll know by next Friday what the official state forecast will be for next year.

III. President's Report.

A. Faculty Handbook Committee:

1. Minutes (see Agenda Attachment 2).
2. Resolution: Tenure and Promotion of Honors College Faculty (see Agenda Attachment 3)

Senator Johnson moved to bring the tabled resolution off the table with second by Senators Castro and Lance. Motion passed unanimously bringing the tabled resolution off the table.

Senator Parrack moved to approve the resolution with amendments. Senator Ray seconded. Motion passed unanimously approving the resolution with amendments.

IV. Committee Reports.

A. Executive Committee:

1. Resolution: Recommendation Regarding Concurrent Enrollment (see Attachment 4)

Senator Isom moved to approve resolution with second by Senator Bell.

Comment- Provost Grahn: New legislation has been passed governing the financing of Concurrent Enrollment. Any discount that universities provide on tuition for concurrent credit must be designated as scholarship spending. Also, concurrent enrollment students can be counted in the formula for state funding.

Motion passed approving the resolution.

B. Committee on Committees: No report.

C. Academic Affairs: Resolution: The Distance Education/Extended Learning Advisory Committee (see Agenda Attachment 5)

Senator Albritton moved to approve resolution with second by Senator Seifert.

Senator Albritton made the following statement on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee:

Academic Affairs addressed the following Faculty Senate charge to "Conduct a review of the charge and membership of the Distance Education/Extended Learning Advisory Committee and provide a recommendation to the Faculty Senate."

The resolution before you is a result of this committee's effort after reviewing the membership and charges of the DEELAC to bring recommendations to the Faculty Senate to expand the DEELAC's role in distance learning. Academic Affairs found that the current charge of the advisory committee under-utilized the talents, knowledge, and expertise of the current committee members. This committee should be charged to truly advocate and serve faculty more comprehensively than to just assure forms are properly filed for stipends. The resolution is not perfect and needs to be subjected to the debate of the senate. To table the resolution will kill the conversations that have started and this dialog needs to continue. I believe this is the most important aspect of this process.

We should take the comments from UCA stakeholders into consideration in this debate.

In response to concerns shared with committee members: We fully concur that online learning is important to all colleges across the campus. This is the main reason the committee made the recommendations that we have. The task force is a great idea. This is something that should have been done before now at UCA. But, because it hasn't, this would be an opportune time for the university to begin this research. We believe that one of the benefits of placing the resolution on the agenda now is to begin opening up distance learning to this dialogue. We should begin to research and debate what quality in our distance learning should look like at UCA.

This resolution attempted to address improving the purpose of the advisory committee. We believe that this committee could and should be an integral part of such a task force endeavor. Expanding the charge as proposed elevates the capacity of an advisory group to focus on quality issues in distance learning and in supporting faculty.

In response to another concern: We are open to the debate about the concept of required training for faculty redesigning courses for online delivery. However, as observed, faculty in many colleges do, in fact, recognize that it has often been (excerpt from the email) "...extremely difficult to obtain the resources faculty have needed to implement [online courses]. We have had to identify the best practices ourselves and have fought to obtain the resources needed by faculty and students to be successful." Perhaps this is our opportunity to examine the availability of resources and to improve these processes where faculty and students do not have to fight to obtain what is needed to teach and learn in a distance learning environment.

Senator Albritton presented the following statement on behalf of a College of Education Faculty member:

The COE Technology Committee also engaged in efforts to identify best practices. I would like to contribute the following to this conversation:

In the 2008-2009 academic year, the College of Education's Technology Committee distributed a perceptual survey entitled The College of Education Technology Needs Survey to gather information for planning purposes. There was a 54% return rate. Results worth noting here are

- *Nearly 50% of respondents disagreed that students in distance learning courses learn as much as in face-to-face courses.*
- *36% of respondents disagreed that online courses have the same rigor as face-to-face courses.*
- *Barriers to teaching online courses:*
 - *planning time* 19.40%
 - *technical skills* 10.45%
 - *training* 13.43%
 - *online interactions* 8.96%
 - *course quality* 2.99%
 - *support with tech difficulties* 17.91%
 - *managing teaching time* 4.47%
 - *managing feedback time* 7.46%

The COE Tech Committee researched rubrics for online learning to address best teaching and learning practices in an online learning environment. The rubric that the committee selected was the Blackboard Greenhouse Exemplary Online Project Rubric

From the comments shared in response to the Academic Affairs resolution and the initial work conducted in colleges across campus, there is evidence that UCA should begin to earnestly research and maintain a continuous conversation about where we currently are with our efforts to deliver distance learning and where we wish to go in the future to continue to meet the needs of students and faculty.

Senator Albritton made the following statement regarding her own personal opinions regarding this resolution:

I would also like to take this opportunity to state for the record that the training I received through the Faculty Technology Associate was the most beneficial experience I have had while at UCA. I use the knowledge and skills I gained on a daily basis. Ed Powers and John Passe-Smith go above and beyond to prepare faculty to use WebCT and now Blackboard. I was especially pleased to see that a level 2 training is planned in May for faculty who have moved beyond the novice stage. This is certainly a step in the direction in which we should go. IDC's continuous opportunities, such as Lunch and Learn sessions, have also been beneficial. This is why I believe it makes sense to relocate this committee under the auspices of IDC.

Comment- Senator Castner-Post: We need to put decision regarding academic quality back into hands of academicians.

Question- Senator Lance: Is this committee the best mechanism for assuring high quality and rigor? Are there some institutions that do it better?

Comment- Senator Castner-Post: We hoped that this would be the beginning of the conversation rather than the end.

Comment- Senator Parrack: This resolution validates the work we have done and allows for continued review.

Comment- President Boniecki: The College of Health and Behavioral Sciences did have concerns regarding this resolution. Some in that college feel that there should be a greater period of time where all faculty who really understand all of the issues surrounding online learning, perhaps as a task force, would have the opportunity to examine the issue and provide recommendations.

Question- Senator Fletcher: In the interim, would DEELAC remain in suspension until these details could be worked out?

Comment- Provost Grahn: We will do it according to the rules or not at all.

Question- Senator Ray: What's happening right now with the online courses?

Response- Provost Grahn: This has nothing to do with the offering of online courses, scheduling, or degree programs.

Comment- Senator Weidmaier: The DEELAC only handed out stipends and made sure the forms were correct.

Question- Senator Ray: So as long as the committee is suspended no stipends?

Response- Provost Grahn: We are working on that issue.

Comment- Senator Fletcher: The IDC focuses on traditional classroom teaching.

Comment- Senator Powers: Good teaching is good teaching. You have to know how to deliver good teaching. A lot of resistance seems to be coming from administrators. This seems very faculty friendly to me.

Comment- Senator Castro: This at least put it's some place- a clearing house- a place to ask questions.

Comment- Senator Seifert: The approval of this resolution will continue to support this discussion.

The motion passed approving the Resolution regarding the Distance Education/Extended Learning Advisory Committee with 2 votes against and 1 abstention.

D. Faculty Affairs I: No report.

E. Faculty Affairs II:

1. Report on the Miss UCA Pageant (see Agenda Attachment 6):

UCA doesn't give any money except for the scholarships to the winner (that recipient has to meet academic requirements).

Question- Senator Parrack: Did your discussion with Mr. Gillian take into account whether or not we could take away the scholarship?

Comment- Senator Isom: No. All the key documents regarding this issue are posted on the Faculty Senate Webpage.

Question – Senator Rospert: Can we remove the name and the scholarship?

Comment – President Boniecki: No senate business can be transferred to the new year. You will need to bring this back up after the new Senate convenes.

IV. Announcements and Concerns.

A. Faculty Concerns and announcements.

Senator Johnson: AAUP recently released reports are interesting. Everyone should take the opportunity to review them.

Senator Runge: Thank you for your support. Kurt, thank you. Is the parking tag issue taken care of? Additionally, the BAC needs to continually address the social security issue.

President Boniecki: I will contact Chief James again about the parking tags. The social security issue has been forwarded to the Fringe Benefits Committee. You have been a passionate advocate- you should contact Mike Casey (the chair).

A plaque was presented to President Boniecki "In recognition of courageous and steadfast service as president of the Faculty Senate."

B. Next Meeting: May 5, 2009 at 11:00 a.m.

V. Adjournment: Senator Bell moved to adjourn meeting with second by Senator Isom. Motion passed approving adjournment at 2:25 p.m.