

Minutes
UCA Faculty Senate
Thursday, September 25, 2008
Wingo 315, 12:45 p.m.

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

I. Approval of Minutes.

A. Approval of Minutes from September 9, 2008.

Correction: Hardin not Harding on page 7. Senator Mehta moved for approval of minutes with correction with second by Senator Ray. Motion passed approving the minutes with corrections.

II. President's Report.

A. Board of Trustees Meeting, September 22, 2008.

President Boniecki addressed the Board of Trustees. The intent of the meeting was to establish the procedures for the upcoming Presidential Search. During today's faculty senate meeting, President Boniecki distributed a draft of the Presidential Search Process. He reported that during his presentation to the Board he urged them to appoint a search committee chair that was widely respected and trusted by all stakeholders. The Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association were asked to make a recommendation and Jack Gillean was recommended. During this meeting, President Boniecki also made an appeal that search committee membership be constructed so that those 3 groups (FS, SGA, and SS) have a majority vote. Additionally, he recommended that the Board of Trustees appoint an ex-officio (non-voting) Trustee to the search committee. It was thought that this level of participation would be valuable to the search process, expedite the process, and improve communication.

President Boniecki also emphasized to the Board of Trustees that the goal of the search should be quality and not speed. He cautioned them to be deliberate in the search process and not to just fill the position by July 2009.

Additionally, President Boniecki highlighted some language in the draft (see p. 4) that might be re-worded to reflect a more cooperative process rather than a confrontational one.

B. Information Items.

Below are responses to some of the faculty concerns presented by the college representatives during the last Faculty Senate meeting.

1. President Boniecki distributed a copy of President Hardin's buy-out agreement. Rita Fleming has been contacted and is working on the numbers for President Hardin's total compensation package.

2. How many students are graduating with Honors?

Based on previous academic year, T. Kearns was able to provide an unofficial close approximation. For the Fall 2007, Spring 2008, & Summer 2008, 306 (19.6 %) students graduated with honors. President Boniecki distributed a handout with this information.

3. Do upper level administrators get evaluated?

President Boniecki talked to Jack Gillean about this matter. By law they do not have to be evaluated. Mr. Gillean did report that President W. Thompson did evaluate his administrators annually and that President Lu Hardin did not evaluate them formally just in an ad hoc fashion.

4. Honors Discussion Panel.

This has taken awhile because of distractions from the Summer. The panel has been filled and an organizational meeting is set for October 2, 2008. The panel needs to nominate a chair and set date for a public meeting. The public meeting was supposed to have taken place by October 2, 2008 but that deadline needs to be extended.

Senator Parrack moved to suspend rules with second by Schaefer. Motion passed suspending the rules. President Boniecki moved to allow extension to October 30, 2008 with second by Senator Ray. Motion passed allowing extension.

5. Issues related to funding based on Retention Rates

Dean Sally Roden and Arkansas Higher Education Director Jim Purcell have been invited to speak before the faculty senate on October 7, 2008 to address issue of funding based on retention rates.

The task force report on higher education remediation, retention, and graduation is available on the faculty senate web site at <http://www2.uca.edu/org/facultysenate/Documents/task-force-report.pdf>

Please read and come prepared to ask questions of Dean Roden and Director Purcell at our next Faculty Senate meeting on Oct. 7 at 12:45.

C. Charges to University Committees

Faculty Senate will send Faculty concerns to established university committees when appropriate. The following referrals were made:

1. University Safety Committee

Review the need for and practicality of building a sidewalk along the east side of Farris Road between Student Lane and Bruce Street. Addresses concern submitted by College of Education.

2. Parking and Traffic Committee

Review adequacy of faculty parking east of HPER center and problems related to the use of the parking lot for UCA Band practice. After 3 p.m. faculty and staff have to move their cars. Addresses concern submitted by College of Education.

3. Academic Planning and Assessment Committee

Review the pros and cons of implementing an online student evaluation system and submit a recommendation to the Faculty Senate. Propose specific structured questions to guide student comments consistent with the APAC student evaluation

recommendations of 2007. The APAC is chaired by Jonathan Glenn.

Comment: Provost Grahn. Thinks both quality and quantifiable numbers need to be included in tenure/promotion decisions.

Comment: Senator Albritton. Problematic for online course and a potential problem for regular classes; may have poor participation.

Comment: President Boniecki. This issue has been discussed. One way to provide incentive is to withhold grades for one week. APAC will need to discuss this.

III. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

1. Resolution Endorsing the APAC Recommendations for Student Evaluations of Faculty (See attachments 2 and 3).

Senator Mehta moved to endorse the resolutions. Discussion then took place regarding this issue.

Question: Senator Mehta. Would this resolution apply to this year's applicants for Promotion & Tenure?

Answer: President Boniecki. No, because this still needs to go through the Faculty Handbook Committee and it is up to individual departments to follow it.

Question: Senator Castner-Post. See Attachment 3, section A-2: Does this mean that no written comments from students can be included in the promotion and tenure dossiers?

Answer: President Boniecki. This resolution is intended to provide recommendations and guidelines but should not be considered official policy.

Comment: Senator Schaefer. Will the College or department be responsible for implementing these recommendations?

Comment: Senator Seifert. There quite a bit of research that says unstructured comments are not accurate indicators of teaching effectiveness.

Comment: Senator Boniecki. Ultimately APAC will develop structured questions for the students to provide written comments.

Comment: Senator Fletcher. Regarding Recommendation 2 of the APAC report can you offer any information on why the means should be included? Because this is ordinal data it seems that frequency counts might be a better option.

Comment: President Boniecki. I will convey that concern to J. Glenn.

Comment: Provost Grahn. I rely on chairs and deans for contextualized information to support numbers. I will not make any changes this year regarding preparations for these promotion and tenure decisions.

Senator Parrack moved for amendment with second by Senator Seifert.

The approved amendment is as follows:

Whereas the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Handbook Committee recognize that candidates for promotion and tenure bear the responsibility for demonstrating effectiveness in teaching, research, and service and may choose to include any and all comments that buttress their case.

Motion passed to approve the amendment from Senator Parrack.

Senator Mehta moved that we approve the resolution with the amended language with a second by Senator Seifert. Motion passed with a majority vote approving the endorsement with the amended language. One no vote was recorded. No abstentions.

2. Procedures for bringing issues to the Faculty Senate

Comment: President Boniecki. This is a public meeting- Faculty Concerns and Announcements are open. If there is something controversial that you want to bring to me you can but it is not out of procedure to bring up any faculty concerns.

Comment: Senator Seifert. Our scheduled time on the agenda of "Announcements and Concerns" is an appropriate format for

addressing concerns. Often questions can be answered at that time and senators are then able to report back to their constituents very quickly. Robert Rules of Order honors tradition and this is well within parliamentary procedure.

3. Meeting with the President

Topic: Budget. Joe Darling, Tom Courtway, Lance Grahn, Jack Gillean, Paul McClendon, Barbara Anderson, Kurt Boniecki, John Parrack and Kim McCullough were present.

The executive committee has invited President Courtway and Vice President Paul McClendon to come in November to give a presentation to Faculty Senate concerning the budget.

In summary, we discussed the budget and issues related to state funding. Once we know what (how much) UCA is getting from the state discussions can start about how to budget strategically. The Budget Advisory Committee will be more involved.

At the end of Fiscal year '08 the Educational & General account only had a reserve of about 1 million dollars. Legislatives appropriations for the year don't come regularly and we don't have enough in reserves to cover payroll, so we are going to ask for an advance from the State for 85% of what is typically given to us during May and June. The idea is to stabilize our funds for the year. President Courtway will have to call a Board of Trustees meeting and make a request from the state.

Comment: Senator Albritton. This type of funding structure is similar to K-12. They have a 40% pullback.

Comment: Senator Lichtenstein. Is this an accounting procedure or something we should be worried about for the future, or plan to make changes to account for this in the future? Could Budget Advisory Committee address at some point?

Comment: President Boniecki. That question can best be answered by Paul McClendon when he addresses the Faculty Senate and convenes the Budget Advisory Committee. President Courtway is working collaboratively with everyone to get the budget on track.

Comment: Provost Grahn. The situation is not unusual but there was a period where responsible fiscal discipline was not applied, so we need to work towards more fiscal responsibility.

B. Committee on Committees

1. Nominees for Faculty Senate Appointments to University Committees (See Attachment 4)

Parrack moved for approval of slate with second by Senator Ray. Motion passed approving the slate.

Comment: Senator Parrack: The Committee on Committees has nearly completed assignment of filling slots. After that we will start to review committee structures.

C. Academic Affairs

Senator Albritton reported that the major Issue of 10% of university funding tied to retention rates is being addressed. She reported that the Arkansas task-force subcommittee report lays out a six year plan to increase the state's graduation rates. The goal is to increase Arkansas citizens with bachelor's degrees to 22.3% by 2015. This report will be a driving force for legislative actions in the future, of which 10% of university funding tied to retention rates is one piece of the picture.

Concerns observed by this committee include: 1) More information about proposed funding issue is needed to make informed decisions for what the position statement should contain; 2) Pressures on universities could result in grade inflation issues to keep students; 3)Threat to maintaining rigor in courses and a risk to meeting quality standards of programs.

Senator Albritton reported that a colleague of hers observed that this appears to be an administrative solution to a cultural problem. And, that we should ask "Is the goal to educate people or to graduate them?"

D. Faculty Affairs I

Senator Powers: We have met one time and started a draft; hope to have a resolution by next meeting.

E. Faculty Affairs II

Senator Isom distributed the following report:

The Faculty Affairs II committee met on Thursday, September 18th, 2008, to discuss the issue of allowing faculty members to apply for tenure or promotion prior to their fulfillment of the probationary period as specified in the current Faculty Handbook (November 2007 version; see below for relevant passages and Handbook committee recommendation on this issue.)

Faculty Affairs II Committee Response:

After the Faculty Handbook committee offered its recommendation regarding the issue of early tenure / promotion, a request was made from a faculty member for further consideration by faculty senate concerning the following specific points:

(a) Are UCA's time-of-service requirements for tenure and promotion consistent with those used at peer institutions?

(b) Is the requirement for the faculty member to receive "a written offer of appointment with tenure from another regionally accredited college or university or such other accredited institutions as may be approved by the provost"¹ before consideration for early tenure reasonable, or is it unreasonable to require faculty members requesting early tenure/promotion to apply for a position elsewhere²?

After much careful deliberation and discussion, the Faculty Affairs II committee supports and reaffirms the response offered by the Faculty Handbook committee on the issue of early tenure/promotion and does not recommend any further action by the faculty senate on this issue at this time.

The committee would, however, like to offer the following in support of its position.

i) Because we considered the question of practices at peer institutions an important one, a survey³ of the time-of-service requirements of peer institutions⁴ in Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri and Tennessee was compiled. This survey revealed no consistent pattern with respect to early tenure and promotion practices among our peer institutions. *Therefore, we conclude that the requirements outlined in the UCA Faculty Handbook are not unreasonable or arbitrary by comparison.*

ii) The committee believes that the second question for consideration concerning the exception allowing for early tenure if an offer of appointment is made by another qualifying institution (b above) is a fundamentally a question of where the governance of tenure/promotion issues should be centered at heart. In other words, should the decision of when to apply for tenure/promotion lie with the individual faculty member upon whom the burden of proof rests, or should it lie with the faculty as a whole, relying on the wisdom of the collective body?

At the request of the committee, Senator Schaefer was asked to investigate the AAUP stance on this issue. Senator Schaefer subsequently reported that AAUP guidelines suggest that decisions concerning time of service rest with the collective will of the faculty: AAUP's *Policy Documents & Reports* stipulates that a faculty member's probationary period be no longer than seven years (ninth ed., p. 4), but does not specify a minimum period. However, this publication also states that "the faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, [and] *faculty status* [emphasis added]" (p. 221). The statement on p. 24 of the UCA Faculty Handbook that the probationary period shall be six years (quoted below) constitutes the faculty's collective assumption of responsibility regarding faculty status, in that the Faculty Handbook has the formal approval of the Faculty Senate as the representative body of the faculty.

There was also consensus among the committee members that (a) the required probationary period provides a needed consistency that helps to normalize the evaluation process across the university. Also, because faculty members only have one opportunity to apply for tenure, the required probationary period helps insure (b) that the applicant has been allowed sufficient time to accrue the necessary experience to proceed and (c) that the evaluating bodies have a sufficient time period over which to evaluate the applicant fairly.

Therefore, we conclude that the requirements outlined in the UCA Faculty Handbook correctly reflect the collective will and wisdom of the faculty and that the Faculty Handbook is the appropriate authority for decisions concerning time of service.

(iii) In our support of the Faculty Handbook committee statement, we would like to include that, in addition to the statements concerning time of

service and adequate evidence in support of teaching and service goals, we believe that a shorter period of service does not allow adequate time for a comprehensive appraisal of scholarly activity goals as well. One of the major goals in scholarly activity is promotion of the field in which the faculty member has expertise, and this goal is supported and external validation of the activity is received by several methods, including grants and publication. However, another major goal of scholarly activity is educating students, and establishing a record in this regard requires evidence of sustained involvement and activity. *Therefore, we suggest that a shorter period of service does not allow adequate time for appraisal of scholarly activity with respect to establishing a record of student involvement.*

- Notes:

1) *The Faculty Handbook states in Chapter 3, XII, A, (p. 24):*

"A tenure-track faculty member may request an early tenure recommendation if he or she has received a written offer of appointment with tenure from another regionally accredited college or university or such other accredited institutions as may be approved by the provost."

2) *Faculty Senate Minutes from April 24, 2008:*

"Must faculty desiring early tenure/promotion seek employment at other institutions before their worth is acknowledged here at UCA? In other words, does the current policy work for us to retain our best faculty?"

3) Table of compiled results included at the end of this report. Note should be made that assignments in each category depended on the subjective interpretation of the relevant Faculty Handbook passages from each institution. Moreover, the assignments divided and evaluated by the following, without the application of strict criteria. A faculty member in CNSM compiled information from Arkansas, Alabama, and Oklahoma institutions and Senator Isom compiled Louisiana and Missouri institutions.

4) List of peer institutions obtained from Senator Seifert:
http://www.uca.edu/panda/uca_peers.html

IV. Announcements and Concerns.

A. Faculty concerns and announcements

1. Senator Castro presented the following concern

Fringe Benefits is being asked to vote on \$5 per month fee for dental to cover the expense of returning retirement benefits to the group of faculty who retired last year, but will not need the benefits for several more years. I wanted to be sure the Senate agreed that this was unacceptable.

Comment: Senator Parrack. This issue was discussed in July with Rita Fleming and the Executive Committee. At that time we made it clear that the administration should do everything it could to find the money. This appears to be a case of passing the buck to pay for lack of leadership. A couple of recommendations for areas to find funding for the benefits include the Oxford American, the Health UCA program (that was cut) and the President's Contingency Fund.

2. Handbook changes

Date discrepancy: Page 20 VIII A. Says deadline for applying for tenure/promotion is Sept. 1. Page 24 X says applications for tenure should be made by Oct. 15.

Page 24 is the only place where it says that you must apply in your 6th year...shouldn't it say this on page 20 when it is talking about the application process? (Unless you keep reading to the Terms of Tenure portion it is never laid out when one needs to apply.)

What happens if you apply for an extension and are denied? By that point you have missed the deadline to apply for tenure.

Informally people have been urged to withdraw their application (at the dept. level or by their dean), esp. in the case of promotion. Is this acceptable under the Handbook and if so, is there any procedure for what should happen next?

3. Graduate Council

Concern about plan by Graduate Council to create a rubric/criteria to be approved for graduate faculty status. Some want it in Handbook that departments have the ultimate say about who is able to teach graduate classes. Others want to revisit the portion of

the council's charge that says they are to approve graduate faculty status. Undergraduate Council and General Education Council do not approve who may teach those classes, so why does Graduate Council have the power to make this decision.

4. Senator Mehta presented the following comment from a faculty member

"I think the big issues I support are budget oversight and reassignment of more funds to academic areas if possible. IT also requires increased funding and increased effectiveness. I also think it is critical to have faculty who have a strong voice in the search for the new president."

Comment: President Boniecki. Let the faculty member know that Executive Committee is working hard to make these things happen. We do have a resolution for faculty development.

5. Announcements by Provost Grahn

- a. Cyber security issue-Staff in President's office no longer has access/ability to advise, schedule, or change grades.
- b. President Courtway has officially approved the concurrent enrollment guidelines approved by the Faculty Senate and Council of Deans as university policy.

B. Next Meeting: October 7, 2008.

V. Adjournment.

Senator Lance motioned to adjourn meeting at 2:25 p.m. with second by Senator Ray. Motion passed approving adjournment.