

UCA Faculty Senate Minutes of Tuesday, March 9, 2010, 12:45 P.M., Wingo Hall 315

Members Present

- Business Administration: Bartczak, Bradley, Moore.
- Education: (Albritton - Absent), Copeland, Hebert.
- Fine Arts And Communication: Burley, Castner Post, Rospert.
- Health And Behavioral Sciences: Fletcher, (McCullough - Absent Advised), Poole.
- Liberal Arts: Parrack, Spivey, Castro.
- Natural Sciences And Mathematics: Bratton G, Isom, Seifert.
- At-Large Senators: (Acre - Absent Advised), Bratton D, Jones, Lichtenstein, Ray, Schaefer.
- Senator For Part-Time Faculty: Runge N.
- Office Of The Provost: (Provost Grahn - Absent Advised), Young L.

I. Approval of Minutes from February 25, 2010 (attached pdf: senminutes022510)

MOTION to Approve, Copeland, 2nd Hebert.

Copeland: Will the Senate be considering the question of paying nine month faculty over 12 months?

President Parrack: We will hear more about this in future.

Motion APPROVED, unanimous.

II. President's Report

A. Handbook Minutes from February 16, 2010 (attached pdf: handbookminutes021610)

Copeland: How is Faculty Handbook Committee chosen?

President Parrack: By elections.

Fletcher: [question about] "clinical" faculty rank?

Schaefer: We will address this in future.

President Parrack: The Student Health Clinic is having a problem with people scheduling appointments and then not keeping them. They have proposed a \$10 co-pay regardless of whether or not the patient keeps the appointment.

Isom: Are people allowed to cancel appointments beforehand?

President Parrack: Yes, it is a simple, online procedure.

President Parrack: [item from Provost Grahn] How would the Senate feel about UCA inviting the Hendrix College international programs official to serve on the UCA search committee for the new position of UCA Associate Provost for International Engagement?

Bratton G: Is there any precedent for including non-UCA people on UCA search committees?

Isom: Why are we creating another new position, especially in a time when faculty are not receiving any salary increases?

Young L: The answer to that question should probably come directly from Provost Grahn.

Bratton D: What will happen to the person who is currently in charge of International Programs?

[discussion ensued]

Bratton G: Why hasn't there been any communication [from the Provost] with the Faculty Senate about the creation of this position?

[discussion ensued]

Isom: What will the salary be for the new position?

President Parrack: Do not know.

III. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee

President Parrack: The instructor evaluation issue still remains unresolved.

MOTION to suspend the rules to remove this issue from the table and re--consider, Runge N, 2nd Isom.

APPROVED by 2/3 vote (15 yes, seven no).

Fletcher: Speaks against the motion.

Isom: Agrees with Fletcher, not comfortable with the resolution as stated.

Seifert: Speaks for the resolution, will help change the culture at UCA so that instructor evaluations are valued.

Burley: Speaks for resolution, worth trying.

Runge N: Perhaps offer an incentive for students who do the online evaluations.

Bradley: Speaks against the resolution, bad marketing tool, may engender negative comments. Also, these instructor evaluations by students were never intended to be used as a means of evaluating faculty.

Young: The Provost feels that this type of feedback should be part of faculty evaluations.

Hebert: Speaks against the resolution.

Castro: What happened to the incentives that were discussed earlier in this process?

Young: There were news releases and iPod giveaways.

Bartczak: Perhaps there could have been more publicity, more marketing of the online evaluations.

Fletcher: Calls the question. [Senate concurs to "calling the question"]

MOTION FAILS (six yes; twelve no) [i.e., resolution on online instructor evaluations]

B. Committee on Committees

Burley: No report.

C. Academic Affairs

Schaefer: No report.

D. Faculty Affairs I

Bratton G: No report.

E. Faculty Affairs II

Ray: No report.

IV. Higher Learning Commission Question and Answer

MOTION to suspend the rules for Higher Learning Commission team visitors, Bratton G, 2nd Ray. APPROVED unanimous.

[1:05pm Higher Learning Commission team representatives arrive.]

[2:03pm Higher Learning Commission team representatives depart.]

V. Announcements and Concerns

A. Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 13, 2010 at 12:45 pm

(Faculty Senate meetings typically take place on the second Tuesday and fourth Thursday of each month during the academic year, except during vacation periods and finals week.)

B. Other Announcements and concerns

Seifert: Perhaps another lecturer rank, Lecturer 3, should be added at UCA. Advancement to this rank could require some scholarship of teaching activity.

Bradley: It's time for us to look at different ways to evaluate faculty. Our younger faculty, especially, need concrete ways to be evaluated.

Bratton D: Instead of a Lecturer 3, perhaps allow someone with 30 credits toward second master's degree to be an assistant professor.

[discussion ensued] [This is already in the Faculty Handbook.]

[continued discussion]

Runge N: [constituent concern] "One UCA faculty member told me recently that she was paid \$2500 by Hendrix College for teaching an equivalent course there six years ago. This person also mentioned that when we try to officially compare salaries of UCA's part-time faculty we are often gathering data about salaries from two year colleges e.g. Pulaski Tech & UACCM and as they are not UCA's peer institutions thereby we should be comparing our educational standards and faculty salaries with institutions on UCA's Panda website."

Runge N: [constituent concern] "I think the best way to get evaluations from the students is to schedule computer lab time for all classes at the end of the semester. In my plant biology course last semester I marched all the students in my class to the computer lab in LSC and all students filled out the evaluations. No hassle, no fuss, high response rate. Individual instructors can give incentives such as bonus points or delayed assignment dates if they complete the course evaluation. In this case, the instructor needs to know who has completed the evaluation (without seeing the actual evaluations until final grades are submitted). Having it pop up as a banner message to students when it is time- many said that they did not know about it until it was too late... I have heard of no better incentive than Dr. "X's" great idea - those students who fill out evaluations for all their courses get to register earlier. An alternative could be they get to see their grades earlier. I realize this means seniors in their last semester would not have an incentive - but perhaps instructors in those classes could assign extra points - or schedule the computer rooms for one of the last days of class and ask the graduating students to fill the forms out. Or the "check out" meeting we have with the seniors could be scheduled in the computer room. I don't have a problem with the online course evaluations-but I think the only way you'll get decent involvement is by rigging it so that their grades are not finalized until they complete an evaluation. That was the benefit of the in-class type...they were already there, so we had high percentages of completion. There's just no incentive for them to do the online versions now. So, if there's no carrot, I say we go with the stick instead. Thanks!"

Runge N: [constituent concern] "As you know I've decided not to continue teaching as an instructor at UCA, and I wanted to let you know that a big part of the reason for that is the pay. My perspective is that the pay level for part-time instructors here is so low that I have come to view teaching at UCA as a charitable hobby--one that's simply too expensive to continue. Here's my basis for comparison: At the University of Colorado, I was paid \$5,000 per course section per semester, plus more if enrollment exceeded a certain level. And that was 8 years ago. I was also eligible for benefits every semester that I taught. UCA's rate, by comparison, does not even cover the cost of child care for working parents, in my experience. Hope things will change soon!"

Schaefer: [constituent concern] "I am writing about two matters of concern, both assessment-related. First is the new online version of course evaluations. Last semester the new system was implemented with little advance notice to the students. Not so much as an Echo article prepared the ground. When I announced the change in my classes, most students seemed unaware of the transition. More ominous was the student comment, "You mean we're going to have to do this on our own time?" And there lies the crux of the problem. None of us expected a high response rate, especially that first semester, but the turnout (in English at least) was so low as to be statistically insignificant. I seem to have been at the high end of the scale with a 38% response rate. Unless methods are found to improve this rate (to 70% or higher, perhaps), student evaluations will lose relevance in promotion and tenure decisions. I know that my department takes them seriously. And I believe that their loss cannot be repaired by further dependence on peer review. The point is not simply whether faculty are impressed with one another, but whether the students find their instruction by the person in question to be effective. There is a fine art to interpreting student evaluations, but with practice personnel committees learn to identify basic strengths and weaknesses in a candidate. If we cannot bring the online response rates up significantly, and soon, I believe that the faculty will have to push hard for a return to the old system. Imagine the lawsuits that may result if candidates are turned down for tenure because of poor evaluations from a quarter or so of their students.

Second, only after reading an article in the Democrat-Gazette some weeks back was I aware that UCA gives students whose ACT scores necessitate remediation a second chance to place out of these classes. I asked several colleagues actively involved in campus affairs if they were aware of this practice; they said they were not. Has the Faculty Senate signed off on this policy? Are the students in question given the ACT again, or some other instrument? Is this instrument nationally normed, or homegrown? How are the two calibrated for equivalence? Is there some significance in the fact that many retested students do place out of the remedial reading and English classes, but not the math class?"

Copeland: [constituent concerns]

"1. Update on the 12-month payroll option for faculty.

2. The opening of the new business building included an entire faculty parking lot marked "reserved 24/7" complete with signs and bright painted curbs. For the rest of us, faculty parking is only reserved until 4:30 each day when all parking becomes open parking. For those of us who teach at night, if we don't get to campus before our parking becomes open parking (which for Mashburn means convenient parking for everyone going to the HPER after 4:30), then we have to search for parking. Why does the business building need 24/7 reserved faculty parking when their lot doesn't serve students in the same capacity that our lot does (i.e. HPER center)? Who made this decision? Was it approved through the parking committee? With the number of evening classes that Mashburn offers, we have a large number of faculty on campus in the evening. Can we get the same privilege as the business building? I'm not generally one to complain about parking, but I will voice my concern for equity. What's given to one building should be given to the others.

3. Could the number of mass e-mails be limited each day? So many of the announcements could easily be condensed into a single "daily announcement" e-mail that goes out each morning. A

process could be created so that announcements are submitted to a single person who is responsible for compiling them and sending out the daily update. Frequently, students tell me that they don't check their UCA e-mail because all they ever get is junk. With our messages to individual students getting drowned out by mass e-mails that may only apply to a small segment of our UCA population, I think it is an issue worth considering. A student showed me his UCA e-mail inbox recently that he had not checked in 5 or 6 days. There were 30 or 40 unread messages, all from mass e-mails and buried deep on the 2nd or 3rd page was an e-mail that I had sent him. I feel that our e-mail system is being abused. Thanks.”

VI. Adjournment.

MOTION to Adjourn, Ray, 2nd Hebert.

APPROVED. Adjournment at 2:30pm.