

Faculty Senate Minutes
Friday, October 31, 2014
UC206

Meeting called to order: 2:00

Present: Joanne Artz, Cindy DeLoney-Marino, Rex Strange, Tony Maria, Jason Fertig, Rob Millard-Mendez, Marilyn Ostendorf, Ron Rochon, Shelly Blunt, Matthew Hanka, Julie Evey, Jessica Garcés Jensen, Jennifer Williams, Ethel Elkins

- 1. Approval of minutes from October 17, 2014:** Rex made the motion; Matt seconded. Approved with corrections to the list of attendees. Four abstentions.
- 2. Report from Jason Fertig:**
 - Jason met with the Student Affairs Committee in regards to the Early Alert. They are soliciting student feedback and will report on student perceptions.
 - Jason met with Economic Benefits. They are working on calculations regarding the charge suggesting that a new line is needed to make up for a faculty member who accepts a part-time administrative position.
- 3. Report from Ron Rochon:**
 - Implications of the Affordable Care Act with respect to part-time USI employees is currently being studied.
 - At a meeting of provosts in Indianapolis, a number of issues were discussed, including transferability of Core 40 credits for high school students, credits for students with various types of military training or experiences, adoption of e-transcripts for high school students across the state, and an online SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement) agreement to equalize distance education fees across the state.
 - In response to Zane Mitchell's suggestion that the Assessment Committee participate in the program review process (e.g. each member of the Assessment Committee could join the program review team for a program under review) – Dr. Rochon is supportive, but the committee would have to be expanded.
- 4. Old Business: Administrative Senate's recommendation regarding Parental Leave Policy**
 - Administrative Senate is seeking our support for a recommendation to add a Parental Leave Policy to the existing FMLA policy. The old Faculty Senate charge regarding adoption (paid leave) is a different issue – Jason is awaiting feedback from MT Hallock Morris regarding this charge's status. Cindy made a motion that Faculty Senate support the Administrative Senate's recommendation. Rex seconded, unanimous approval.
- 5. Old Business: Charge "to focus on the appropriate level of faculty governance, the relationship between administration and faculty...."**
 - Jason met with the issuer of this charge, and explained that the desired outcome is to begin a discussion on the role of faculty in academic policy making. Jason suggested a survey to investigate faculty perception of faculty governance.

- Cindy pointed out that nothing in the Faculty Handbook indicates that the Early Alert mandate broke any rules. However, she thinks that the issuer of the charge wants us to explore how faculty governance can be strengthened.
- Jennifer explained that, based on communications with colleagues, the Early Alert mandate stirred up a pre-existing sentiment - there is a perception that the faculty voice has been diminished, that Faculty Senate works on charges, but without effect.
- Cindy suggested that faculty workloads might be a part of this as well. Teaching loads are high; scholarship expectations are high; layers of assessment have been added; Early Alert was the straw that broke the camel's back.
- Jason indicated that we need to show faculty that our voice matters. How do we do this? A survey of faculty perception? If faculty are overworked, perhaps that can be captured by the survey, as well.
- Jennifer pointed out that the charge uses the word "eroded," so a survey should focus on how things have changed.
- Tony mentioned that the survey should solicit ideas for how the partnership between faculty and administration can be improved.
- Cindy added that another goal of the survey should be to build interest in Faculty Senate.
- Matt agreed that if we craft a survey that is designed in a way that empowers faculty, it will bolster perception of Faculty Senate. Matt made a motion to draft a survey, in response to this charge, that addresses faculty perception of faculty governance. Jennifer seconded.
- Rex expressed reservations that the survey would not provide useful information.
- Jennifer pointed out that if we simply dismiss this charge, it will make the underlying problem even worse.
- Jason stated that we should take advantage of an opportunity to raise the stature of faculty governance.
- Senate voted to move forward with Matt's motion to work on a survey. One opposed, and two abstained.
- Rex made a motion to send the charge back for more detail – there were portions of the charge submittal form left blank. Marilyn seconded, arguing it is not clear to her that this charge relates to the bigger picture of faculty governance. Only one vote in favor of sending the charge back to the issuer.
- Jennifer mentioned that including a history of successful senate actions would help to keep the survey positive.
- Ron commented that if we are surveying faculty to find out if they are overworked, we'll clearly find that to be the case. We are operating on a very lean budget.
- Jennifer agreed that some of this is about teaching in hard times. We need to do what we can to improve the partnership between faculty and administration.

6. Closing Comments:

- Jason suggested that we could meet informally next Friday, Nov. 7, at 2:00 to discuss the proposed survey. He will send us details by email.
- Rex made a motion to close. Jennifer seconded, and unanimous approval.

Meeting was adjourned: 3:50.

Respectfully submitted by: T. Maria