

USI Faculty Senate Minutes

31 March 2017

Senators present: Nick LaRowe, Brandon Field, Brett Long, Charlotte Connerton, Sang Woo Heo, Chuck Conaway, Wes Durham, Sheri Keenan, Jason Fertig, Rex Strange, Peter Whiting, Dinko Bačić

Visitors present: Riley Guerzini (The Shield), Amy Chan Hilton (CETL), Peter Cashel Cordo and Melody Lee (Economic Benefits), Jeanne McAlister and Stephanie Diekmann (OPRA), Shelly Blunt and Ron Rochon (Provost's Office).

- Called to order: 2:30pm
- Minutes from last meeting approved unanimously with one abstention; Nick will send Brandon the list of attendees from last time.
- President's Council Meeting, Peter:
 - Talked about the strategic plan; from a media consultant, President Bennett has realized that most people weren't aware of the Strategic plan, so she used this meeting to describe it.
- Senate Chair's Report:
 - Budget presentation:
 - Asked for: (1) pay increase: 3%, (2) 100% tuition waiver instead of 75%, (3) \$500 more in travel expenses available to faculty.
 - Initial budget from the state legislature looks discouraging. There is money for the Sheriff's Department office on campus and Phase II of the PAC construction.
- Old Business:
 - Faculty Senate call for nominations. Nick will send out the committee and senate vacancies.
 - Ad-Hoc committee on Student Evaluation of Teaching:
 - Members: Karen Parker and Roxanne Beckham (NHP), Rich Bennett and Tori Colson (Pott), Sherri Keenan and Bartell Berg (LA), Carl Saxby and Jason Fertig (RCoB), Jeanne McAlister (OPRA), and Amy Chan-Hilton (CETL).
 - Focus testing will be done once the draft is developed, so student input on the committee is not needed.
 - Ask the committee to have a meeting before the semester is over, to pick a chair and set a timeline and make a plan.
 - Nick will refine the original charge to hand that off to the committee after conferring with Chad, because Chad was the originator of the charge but is absent today.
- Provost's Office report, Shelly:
 - Concluded the budget hearings today.
 - On Wednesday, Deneese Jones from Trinity Univ. visited to talk about mentoring relationships between faculty. Spoke to chairs and directors as well as pre-tenured faculty.

- The portfolio guidelines are still with our legal adviser, and they keep saying that they'll get it back soon. Meanwhile, nothing.
- USI Factbook discussion:
 - Charge was presented last meeting regarding having Economic Benefits and Faculty and Academic Affairs Subcommittees work with OPRA to expand the data being reported in the USI Factbook.
 - Rationale for charge: Factbook being under revision gave us the idea that we could add information that some of the two standing committees of faculty senate use each year could be included. Information should be included in the Factbook that would increase transparency, and as long as the issues that might become apparent are addressed, this would be a great recruitment tool for faculty.
 - Stephanie: The suggestion to include administrative positions is a great one. Jeanne tried to pull some of the other data, and it got a little more complicated. HR gives OPRA access to some of the faculty data, but not all (e.g. salary data doesn't get released by HR). Also, there are retirees that come back as adjuncts, so some of the data would need to be cleaned. Right now, CAP instructors are not counted as faculty in the Factbook. If we include administrators, the support staff would have to be included. Among some of the complications is that the personnel reports are based on the calendar year, but the faculty data that they use is a freeze that represents October 15th.
 - Will have to bring HR into the conversation.
 - The Factbook has two audiences: an internal and an external. Concern was expressed about the impressions that the external audience will get from the data.
 - Comments from the discussion were added to the original charge. Motion made to send the charge to Faculty Affairs and Economic Benefits with comments. Motion passed with one objection.
- Rex introduced the charge about allowing students to see the total eclipse.
 - In discussion, it seemed unlikely that the calendar would be changed for the eclipse.
 - However, if we asked faculty to provide an excused absence to students who will be absent, in the same nature that the announcements come from athletics, choir, or any other extra-curricular activities. Rex and Sherri will make a new charge and present it next week.
- Adjourned.