

## Faculty Senate Meeting

12 April 2024

Senators present: Susan Ely, Peter Whiting, Kyle Mara, Ashley Carter, Jessica Mason, Nick Rhew, Rob Dickes, Shannon Pritchard, Todd Schroer, Shane White, Chad Tew (Alternate for Sri Dandotkar), Guoyuan Huang, Marilyn Ostendorf (Alternate for Erin Reynolds)



Additional attendees: Shelly Blunt, Amy Chan Hilton, Aaron Trump, Jeff Sickman, Daniel Bauer, Glen Kissel, Kristalyn Shefvland, Jaclyn Dumond, Austin Siders, Shannon Hoehn, Laurie Wilson, Walter Fisher, Juzar Ahmed, Kyle Tharp, Kenny Purcell, Del Doughty

Held in BEC Boardroom

- Called to order: 2:31 pm
- Minutes from 15 March were accepted as amended.
- Senate Chair Report:
  - At-large elections close today (4/12/24) at 4:30pm.
- Provost Report:
  - Four searches are ongoing with candidates who have been brought on campus including the Dean of Students and the Vice President of Engagement. There will be candidates for the Executive Director of Student Success and for the Director of Public Safety coming to campus as well.
  - Rockin' Registration was on Assessment Day (3/26/24). There were 575 students registered for the event and 428 students attended (about 75% attendance rate). The Provost is gathering feedback from the colleges and another event will be planned for the fall semester.
  - Solarpalooza (4/8/24) went well both with the astronaut on Sunday evening and Monday's events. USI had positive news coverage and all events were received well. The Provost thanked everyone involved.
  - The process for implementing the promotion pathway for instructors continues to be developed. Once the process is finalized it will be brought back to the Senate.
- VP Trump – Senate Bill 202 Update:
  - VP Trump affirmed that the Faculty Senate is an independent body from the administration and exists to represent the view of the faculty. Therefore, Faculty Senate does not represent the institution as a whole and is not precluded from making statements outside of the Board of Trustees or the University Administration.
  - VP Trump reviewed the origin of Indiana Senate Bill 202 and some of the verbiage changes that were made prior to the final version being signed.
  - The bill addresses both obtaining tenure and maintaining tenure. As the institution already completes an annual review process for all faculty, the university is working to use existing the annual review process for the new 5-year review

requirement. VP Trump is suggesting that the academic chairs become integrated into the review and complaint process.

- Provost Blunt will be working with Sarah Will, Kyle Mara and Nick Rhew for the revisions to the Faculty Annual Review (FAR) process prior to the July 1 deadline required by the legislation. Currently, the procedure for the FAR is not in the University Handbook. Faculty Senate will be a part of the development of the language for the handbook.
- There were questions and additional discussion about the “intellectual diversity” elements of the bill. It was noted that there is no guidance about this definition or how it will be interpreted moving forward.
- Faculty Senate will likely meet this summer to discuss the process involving the Faculty Annual Review.
- VP Jeff Sickman – Barnes and Noble First Day Access Archie Bundle:
  - Kyle Mara reminded the Senate that VP Sickman was invited to speak to the Faculty Senate due to two separate charges involving textbook issues. Earlier in the semester the Provost had coordinated with the Deans to collect data about issues experienced with the bookstore, which was then provided to VP Sickman.
  - Jeff Sickman reported that there were 300 backorders in the Fall 2023 and 150 back orders in the Spring 2024 semesters. There were 43 issues documented – 24 submitted from the colleges, 19 reported from the store.
  - VP Sickman requested that the bookstore contact all the Deans, the Provost, and SGA to better understand the issues. Sickman noted that the bookstore staff seemed to be “hoping” books would arrive on time.
  - VP Sickman has required that, effective immediately, the faculty be notified 2 weeks ahead in Spring and Summer semesters and 4 weeks in the Fall semester to choose other materials if an alternate course of action is required due to lack of books.
  - VP Sickman asked the bookstore to conduct employee training to provide better answers to students and faculty with issues.
  - The bookstore will be meeting with specific department chairs that were having extensive issues with materials not being available on time.
  - Provost Blunt will be arranging for point of contact in every college to expedite resolution for issues.
  - VP Sickman has asked the bookstore to form an advisory group to meet at least 3 times a year and include an SGA rep, a Faculty Senate rep, representatives from each college and VP Sickman to address issues that have occurred during the year.
  - The local bookstore will now specify ordering quantities for course materials based on course enrollments instead of relying on the formulas typically used by Barnes and Nobles nationally.
  - VP Sickman is looking to see if there are any contract issues or greater issues with the vendor beyond the USI campus.

- Jeff Sickman noted that there needed to be a new policy for how students can be taken care of when books aren't available, addressing both student access to materials on a timely basis and the financial aid implications.
- For Summer 2024, VP Sickman recommend that if there is a digital copy of course materials available, for faculty to use the digital content vendor (Vital Source) to ensure students have first day access.
- It was also noted that the bookstore will make copies or PDFs for materials that were not available, so the faculty do not have to do that themselves. The faculty can directly contact the bookstore manager with what materials are required in the initial weeks of the class and the bookstore will provide the necessary materials.
- Summer 1 emails will go to students Monday (4/15/24) to ensure they are aware of their textbooks needs for the summer. Faculty emails will go out Monday (4/15/24) to verify the necessary textbook adoptions.
- It was also noted that all faculty are allowed to go into the bookstore and check that the required course materials are physically there.
- At this time, 71% fall adoptions are complete.
- VP Sickman also noted that there is a specific procedure to follow based on the contract with Barnes and Noble and USI must follow the procedure to ensure Barnes and Noble has the chance to remediate the issue within the contractual timeframe. For all issues, documented evidence will be required (such as emails with the bookstore).
- There were no additional questions. VP Sickman was thanked for the update and new procedures.
- Jacyn Dumond - College Achievement Program Updates:
  - Ms. Dumond informed the senate that there have been a series of changes at the state level causing a request to allow sophomores (GPA of 2.7 or higher with a teacher recommendation) take CAP courses.
  - The main impact on USI from Indiana Senate Enrolled Act 8 (<https://iga.in.gov/pdf-documents/123/2024/senate/bills/SB0008/SB0008.07.ENRH.pdf>) is that high schools must offer the established Indiana College Core by a given year (there is a range of 2024-2027 dependent on the high school), which is 30 hours of general education credit from 6 competency areas. There are 2 high schools that coordinate with USI for the College Core certificate.
  - This legislation means that more students will need access to CAP courses, which is why there is a proposal to allow sophomores to take USI CAP courses. Current policy states that only high school juniors and seniors can enroll in CAP courses. The Council of Chairs has already met and agreed with this course of action.
  - Discussion occurred.
  - The request to the Faculty Senate is that the Faculty Senate would support high school sophomores with a minimum 2.7 GPA and instructor/counselor recommendation be allowed to take CAP courses.

- A motion was made and seconded with the request to change the minimum GPA to 3.0 instead of 2.7. Discussion was held. A vote was held. There were 7 who were in favor and 6 opposed. The motion passed with the change for the 3.0 GPA requirement for high school sophomores, in addition to the teacher/counselor recommendation.
- Shannon Hoehn – Blackboard Learn Ultra Rollout:
  - VP Austin Siders introduced the team working on the transition to Blackboard Ultra.
  - Shannon Hoehn (Project Manager for Blackboard Ultra) gave a presentation about the transition to Blackboard Learn Ultra.
  - The Ultra team presented a proposal for an advisory committee to support the rollout for Blackboard Ultra. The Provost requested that the advisory committee include faculty.
  - The current timeline proposed includes the migration to Blackboard Ultra beginning Fall 2024. During the Spring 2025 and Summer 2025 semesters, the IT department would continue to offer training classes and drop-in sessions and have super-users trained, as well as transitioning the Online Course Development Program (OCDP) to Ultra. The current timeline proposes a campus-wide launch of Blackboard Ultra in Fall 2025.
  - All faculty will have a development shell in Ultra beginning May 2024 to learn the system. Faculty who would like to teach using Ultra in Fall 2024 can request that of the Provost.
  - The Power Point that was presented will be made available to Faculty Senate.
  - The Provost encouraged the senate to provide feedback to the project team with any concerns about the timeline for the transition to Ultra.
- Senate Charge 2024\_03\_Core Curriculum
  - This charge looks at the courses that are being regularly offered but not regularly taught. It was noted that courses are being falsely advertised in DegreeWorks and on the Core Curriculum website as an available course to complete a degree program, even though the course is not regularly taught.
  - The request is to change the policy from “offered” to “taught”, so that courses must be taught recently to remain in the Core Curriculum. The Core 39 committee notifies departments about courses that have not been taught within the required timeframe There is a process for departments to offer the course within a year prior to being removed from the Core Curriculum, if the department desires to keep the course in the Core.
  - A motion was made to accept the policy as written. It was seconded. Discussion was held. It was pointed out that transfer courses can be brought in from other institutions even if we no longer have this course in our Core Curriculum. A vote was held and unanimously approved.
- Senate Charge 2024\_04\_ Student Affairs Committee

- This charge addresses the need to specify that student appointed committee members on the Student Affairs Committee cannot be a nominee for any of the awards managed by the group.
  - A motion was made to approve the charge as written. It was seconded and approved unanimously.
- The next meeting will take place on April 26, 2024.
- Meeting adjourned with no additional business to consider: 4:35 pm