Representative Faculty Senate Meeting
April 11, 2013
Minutes

Representative senators and officers: 43
Ex-Officio: 1
Faculty, administrators and guests: 18

1. Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 1:46pm.

2. Approval of Minutes:
The minutes from the Representative Faculty Meeting for March 22, 2013 were moved, seconded and approved.

3. President’s Report:
Joan Shapiro, Faculty Senate President, announced that the next open senate meeting on May 8th will be a forum on decentralized budgeting. Doug Priest (Indiana University), Tony Wagner (Temple CFO), Terry Halbert and Doug Wager (Faculty Senate representatives on Presidents Task Force on decentralized budgeting) will participate. President Theobald will also be in attendance but will not participate. He is interested in hearing faculty’s thoughts and concerns.

The President also announced the election results for the new Faculty Senate Officers. She first thanked Steve Newman (CLA), Catherine Schifter (COE) and Michael Jackson (STHM) as members of the nominating committee for their excellent work. The election results:

Mark Rahdert   President Elect for Faculty Senate.
Tricia Jones   Vice-President Elect for Faculty Senate.
Paul LaFollette   Secretary-Elect for Faculty Senate.

4. Vice President’s Report:
Mark Rahdert, Vice-President of the Faculty Senate, gave an update on committee elections. There was only one committee that was contested; and there were several uncontested elections for critical university committees.

There are also other committees that need appointed members: Budget Review committee, Research and Creative Awards, EPPC, and Student Awards committee. Please tell your colleagues and encourage self-and other-nominations.

5. Forum on Undergraduate Education:
Facilitator: Karen Turner (SMC)
Presenters: Pamela Barnett, (Associate Vice Provost and Director of the Teaching and Learning Center)
Jill Swavely (COE) (Member of Educational Programs and Policies Committee; Faculty Liaison to GenEd)
Karen Turner introduced the forum, emphasizing that this was an opportunity to hear from critical groups about their priorities for undergraduate education and to engage faculty in these discussions. She also indicated that this is the first of two meetings that will be held on undergraduate education. The next will be Wednesday, May 1st, 1pm-3pm in Walk Auditorium. And if you cannot participate in person, you can participate via WebEx connection. Karen also reminded senators that both sessions can be listened to via TUCapture.

The President and the Provost have encouraged faculty to get more involved in identifying priorities for undergraduate education. Each of the presenters will give a brief report from critical groups and these reports are available on a PowerPoint presentation that will be posted on the faculty senate website. Following the presentations and discussion we will hear comments from Provost Dai.

Pam Barnett gave the initial presentation. She indicated that the report she is giving was the work of input from the Provost’s teaching academy (60 leaders in education, intensive faculty development experience; who take what they learn to help foster teaching excellence.) and others. The suggestions for strengthening undergraduate education are:

1. Focus on student skill development (robust support for units in the Vice Provost’s undergraduate portfolio) and focus on infusing these critical skill sets and GenEd competencies throughout the curriculum.
2. Promote deeper engagement with the community – Philadelphia, regional and global. We need to support efforts like Community-Based Learning, the Philadelphia Experience (PEX), and efforts to support our diverse international student population. One idea is an international student lounge with conversational partners programming.
3. Support and reward effective teaching at Temple through efforts like the Teaching and Learning Center, systematic and sustainable structures for evaluation, and thoughtful innovations for rewarding teaching. Teaching and learning deserve merit and should factor in promotion. We need more recognition for teaching faculty.
4. Set standards for educational quality in the classroom. Caps on student enrollment in foundational courses; quality control as we move online; learning spaces (especially with new buildings)

Jill Swavely gave the second presentation. Her report is based on conversations with the EPPC, the committee that is charged with proposals and programmatic change in undergraduate education (course and program proposals; advising issues, etc.). They spent two meetings discussing priorities and their top priorities are:

1. Increase faculty opportunities to engage with professionalization beyond coursework; guest presenters, professional contacts; integrating projects into courses, make real world projects more common and more available.
2. Maintain engagement with students in the presence of online teacher education. Counteract the potential for distance learning to become distancing.
3. Build assessment into courses and programs to facilitate course innovations. Create spaces for fresh ideas.
4. Increase collaboration between tenure track and non-tenure track faculty to facilitate course development. Give these two levels of faculty more opportunities to collaborate.

5. Advise students to take GenEd courses earlier in their careers. Assume students will be better able to translate skills across courses. We need more collaboration among faculty to make this happen.

Istvan Varkonyi reported from meetings with the General Education Executive Committee and the Area Coordinators of GenEd. There were four suggestions:

1. Support faculty committed to GenEd. There are many faculty assigned to courses who are committed to GenEd. We are now 5 years from the CORE, and GenEd is in the process of a program review. GenEd has been growing and improving. We should maintain this investment in the curriculum.

2. Expand training for faculty and advisors to expand their understanding and support of GenEd.

3. Communicate the relationship between GenEd and the majors. There must be an articulated transference of the GenEd abilities and competencies to upper level coursework.

4. Reduce class size and incorporate more interdisciplinary threads through GenEd and undergraduate coursework. We talk a lot about globalization, but we need to make this more present in our curriculum.

Back to Karen Turner (Facilitator):

Karen Turner (SMC): We really want a holistic approach to learning and to teaching.

Michael Jackson (STHM): Temple’s main campus is a different world after 5. There is a mad rush from dorms Thursday afternoon. Students are looking for social involvement but they have to go off campus. Safety is another concern. People are teaching in buildings with no immediate access to protection or communication after 5pm. Students are really looking for a social tradition.

Paul LaFollette (CST): A common theme across the reports is the need for more collaborative and interdisciplinary work. But, there seems to be a wall preventing this from happening, especially if they cross college boundaries. What can we be doing to help that along?

Joseph Schwartz (CLA): We seem to be dancing around one issue – the overburdened nature of teaching staff in general education. The quality of this strong program is threatened by class size. Many students do not come in with the necessary competencies and GenEd gives them those competences. But lecturers at 4-4 loads is tough. We all know the financial constraints. Temple needs GenEd but we need to make a commitment to it. We need to look at teaching burdens. We have to confront the fact this university is oppressing a lot of faculty and by transit a lot of students. We must have GenEd – it gives the critical competencies.

Eli Goldblatt (CLA): I direct the first year writing program and have been very involved in Community-Based Learning. I support everything Joe says. We have too long supported the
gradation of “who counts” at the university. We have “class structures” within the faculty. I want to make two brief comments: (1) Writing and literacy – the world is changing; this year this class of students has a different approach to reading and writing than previous years of students. Last year 10% of students used e-books. This year that number has increased to 35%. We’re still teaching in a 20th century university. We are already inside a major new era and we need to think about how we connect one on one and in small groups. (2) Connection to the community; the Community Based Learning center was seriously underfunded and will close. After May there is not going to be an office of CBL. This is a major problem.

Alix Howard (CLA): Where did lunch and dinner with the professors go? Can we structure faculty across disciplines together? A little can go a long way. GenEd is one place where faculty across schools and colleges do meet -- where we can talk to students about job relevance skills. This should be encouraged. In terms of the NTT situation, I hope that the incoming administration will understand that NTTs do a lot of service in addition to teaching. Longer contracts would be nice.

Catherine Schifter (COE): GenEd is so important to this university, we are very proud of it. One of the themes is for standards for online. Last year there was an ad hoc committee that Provost Englert put together and I co-chaired with Vicki McGarvey. We came up with a report to look at standards for online teaching. It was presented to several important bodies. National standards suggest that online teaching should be good teaching. This report needs to go somewhere. (Steve Newman, Editor of the Faculty Herald suggested that we can put a report on this in the Herald). And I’d like to pick up on creating community. Can we advocate a game center? Collaborative skills building games, team development etc.?

Kimmika Williams-Witherspoon (TFMA): Are we training students to be global citizens? They need to learn to deal with “the other” in very interesting ways now. The GenEd race curriculum is very important to this. Often our students are coming from environments where they do not have to attend to the other. We need to look at classes, evaluations, and assessments. The true payoff with Race curriculum is often after a student graduates and uses those insights and skills in the community and the world.

Karen Turner: We have an aging population as teachers. We really need to give better professional development.

Jim Korsh (CST): I’m here as a representative of aging faculty. Advising needs more support. Peter Jones is doing a great job of taking care of at-risk students. But all students need to see an advisor every semester.

Peter Jones (Senior Vice Provost for Undergraduate Affairs): Tremendous things are happening. Temple undergraduate research forum and creative works symposium will be next Thursday. Some have already presented at Harrisburg and some are presenting at national and international conferences. If you want to see what great mentoring looks like – go to the symposium.

Karen Turner: This excellent conversation will continue on Wednesday May 1 in Walk auditorium. Our goal is to come out of meeting that day with list of priorities to present to the
Provost and President. Please encourage your colleagues to attend and/or to listen to sessions on TU Capture.

Paul LaFollette (CST): I have a motion that I want to make. Since this motion is coming from the floor, it can’t be voted on today. But, if it is seconded, it can be voted on in the May meeting.

**Motion:**

> We have undergone many changes since last we had a university wide discussion of the place that undergraduate education holds within Temple. The discussion at today’s Senate meeting suggests a need for further conversation about these matters throughout the Temple community.

> Accordingly, the Senate would like to invite our colleagues in the Administration to begin an ongoing dialog to consider how we can encourage and support excellence in our undergraduate programs.

> To this end, we propose the formation of a joint Faculty/Administration advisory council for the ongoing purpose of evolving Temple’s philosophy and exploring best practices for our undergraduate mission.

> We would propose that this council consist of representatives of the faculty, the provost’s office, the Deans, the office of General Education, and from other key academic support units.

> We hope that the Administration will be willing to participate in such an undertaking.

There were several “seconds” on this motion.

**6. Provost Dai (Dialogue with Dai):**

This is a solemn issue we are talking about. He said he would have seconded this motion himself.

This is a great opportunity to hear your views of the GenEd program. And it is a critical year, given the program review. Initially GenEd seemed to be a mandate from the President’s Office. Then he sensed a lot of questions from faculty and deans. In general we have done an excellent job and this is a time to continue and explore what can we do to make it much more effective and valuable to students. He has heard we should extend education beyond the classroom. Many themes and ideas have been generated: lunch, game center, teaching load, diversity, classroom size, role of NTTS, more interdisciplinary collaboration, more faculty participation in advising, online education, need for tech support, value of community engagement in GenEd, needs for better assessment and evaluation, real world value of GenEd.

Provost Dai then presented his own perspective. He has a unique experience because he did not attend an US UG institution. His US HEI experience is only at the graduate school level. GenEd is based on liberal arts education. This is similar to goals of Confucian education philosophy: 1) citizenship, 2) continual learning, ability to enjoy life (scholars are artists and musicians), and 3) professional foundation for employment. If we accept these as our goals we should consider the following.
Black box: we have to look at outcomes we want to seek. We need to look at what are the inputs and preparation of students. Our GenEd is perfect for Asian students – for students who emphasize a focused, disciplinary concentration in their high school education. But when we consider the typical American high school graduate, they are far from specialized. They have already received the kind of general, skills based instruction that we see in GenEd. Our Temple future graduates are competing with the entire world for jobs. Are we preparing them for their jobs? What is the Temple education? How different is it from other HEIs? His guess is we are probably very similar.

Provost Dai indicated that he see the big question is “What should be the content of GenEd? Do we have the student having sufficient exposure to other areas? What kinds of new skills should be incorporated?

7. Call to Adjourn:
It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 3:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia S. Jones,
Faculty Senate Secretary