Representative Faculty Senate Meeting  
March 16, 2012  
Minutes

Attendance:

Representative Senators and Officers: 50  
Ex officio: 1  
Faculty, Administrators and Guests: 17  
Total Attendance: 68

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:47 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 21, 2012 Representative Faculty Senate meeting were approved.

3. President’s Report

President LaFollette reported that shortly before Spring Break, members of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee (FSSC) and the Budget Review Committee met with various University administrators and Deans on the University budget and state appropriations issues. LaFollette noted that the Provost has sent an announcement to all faculty regarding on-line administration of Student Feedback Forms (SFFs), the President has released a draft faculty workload policy, and the Provost has released a memorandum detailing further developments emanating from the White Paper on reorganization. To maximize opportunity for discussion, after a brief report from the Vice President, the bulk of the meeting will be devoted to exchange with Provost Englert regarding these developments. Since the SFF matter has been previously discussed at some length, LaFollette recommended that exchange with the Provost concentrate on the workload and reorganization issues.

4. Vice President’s Report

Vice President Shapiro began by stressing the need, especially during times of transition and rapid change, for faculty members to have a meaningful voice in setting the direction of the University. Temple’s recent history has involved faculty ceding many matters to the University administration, probably because of increasing demands for teaching and scholarship. The effect has been to create a void that has been filled by administrators. To reverse this trend, we need to work, among other things, on repopulating and reactivating Faculty Senate committees. To do this effectively, Representative Senators need to identify and personally contact individuals in their schools and colleges whose talents and interests make them well suited to serve on particular University committees. We also need to approach less experienced colleagues and convince them of the personal and institutional value of University service. An updated list of committee vacancies has been distributed with the agenda. It has also been sent out by email. Shapiro urged Representative Senators to place the list on their faculty listserves, and to do whatever they can personally to encourage volunteers. For elected committees, there is a tight timeline, since statements of interest and CV’s or biographical statements must be submitted by March 20 in order to be in time for placement on the ballot. Faculty should bear in mind that participation on these committees both supports the University’s mission and contributes to achieving its strategic plan.
Shapiro asked Karen Turner (SCT), chair of the Nominating Committee, to report on officer elections. Turner reported that the Nominating Committee’s slate of officer nominations [Joan Shapiro (COE) – for President; Mark Rahdert (Law) – for Vice President; Tricia Jones (COE) – for Secretary] was previously distributed. No other nominations were submitted by the deadline set for officer nominations, so the Nominating Committee’s nominees will be the candidates that appear on the ballot.

5. Provost’s Report

Budget and Appropriations

Provost Richard Englert began his report with an update on the University budget and state appropriations. The Governor has proposed a 30% reduction in appropriations, which amounts to a $42 million cut. This is on top of a projected gap of $38 million between revenues and expenditures, producing an overall revenue gap, if the Governor’s recommendation is adopted, of approximately $80 million. Filling that gap will require striking a balance between tuition increases and reductions in expenditures. The University is actively pressing the state legislature to restore some of the proposed cuts in funding. University representatives have met with House and Senate appropriation committees, and the sessions were essentially sympathetic to the needs of higher education. In his testimony, Englert stressed several items recommended by the FSSC, including 1) that Temple has a high number of first-generation college students, 2) that the University has been a model for cost containment among institutions of higher education, and 3) that our principal concern in asking for support is not for ourselves but for our students. Englert reported that appropriations committee members, while sympathetic to higher education, made it clear they think it is important that faculty members “share the pain” of budget cuts; he assured them that is the case.

Englert observed that the budget process is a long one, and he urged faculty members to continue to use TALON and any personal contacts they may have to urge legislative support for higher education funding. Englert also noted that the Governor has formed a commission on post-secondary education. It will look not only at higher education, but at other forms of post-secondary training. The commission report is expected sometime this spring.

Englert will be meeting with Deans of each school and college to discuss specific implications of the budget cuts for each academic unit.

Faculty Workload

The President has circulated a proposed statement on faculty workload. The document has been distributed to all faculty members. It is also available on the website of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. A link has been created to receive faculty comments, which can be either signed or anonymous. Responses are due by April 8.

SFFs

Englert has accepted the recommendation of the SFF Committee to move to university-wide on-line administration of SFF forms. However, he has decided to delay implementation until Summer 2012. Having the first administration occur during the summer will allow the university to work out any bugs in the process before the fall semester. Englert thanked the Committee for its excellent work.
White Paper on Reorganization

Englert has distributed a “progress report” on matters discussed in the White Paper to all faculty members and professional librarians. The Provost has also sent three documents detailing specific proposals to faculty and administrators at Boyer, COE, SCT, and Tyler. The document sent to Boyer and Tyler concerns the creation of a new Center for Fine and Performing Arts. The document sent to COE concerns a proposal to change COE’s designation from “college” to “school,” and to merge all Education departments into a single unit. The document sent to SCT concerns moving the Departments of Theater and Film and Media Arts into the Center for Fine and Performing Arts, and to create a new School of Communications to house the remaining SCT departments. There is a feedback link (http://www.temple.edu/provost/feedback.html) that has been created on the Provost’s website for faculty responses to these proposals.

Questions and Comments

The remainder of the meeting was occupied with faculty questions and comments on the various matters presented in the Provost’s report.

• The Provost was asked whether comments submitted to his office will be available for inspection by others. He responded that they will not, because the aim is to permit individuals wishing to submit anonymous responses to do so. He will, however, give further consideration to whether the comments should be made available to others.

• Speakers commented that faculty members’ expressed concerns and reservations about restructuring do not seem to have been reflected in the report, which makes it feel as though decisions on restructuring were already “on the track” so that it was impossible to change course. Englert responded that in fact his proposals take into account various faculty ideas and concerns.

• Englert was asked about his choice of name for the center, particularly the use of the term “Fine Arts,” which is inconsistent with the broad range of creative activities in contemporary schools of art. Englert replied that he was not wedded to any particular name for the Center.

• Members commented that the arts programs involved in the restructuring are spread throughout the university, and that the present experience of having one Dean for both Tyler and Boyer has made his leadership at Boyer less effective. Englert responded that he has been satisfied with the experience of having a single Dean heading both Boyer and Tyler.

• Englert was asked about the process for selection of Directors for the various schools to be included in the Center for the Arts. He responded that his present thinking is that the Directors will be appointed by the Dean, not chosen by the faculty. They might be appointed from within the University rather than as a product of an external search. Englert stated that the Center will not be so large that it will prevent the Dean from being able to know and interact with the faculty of the various Schools.

• He was asked about implications of the Center for funding opportunities. Englert expressed the conviction that merger of arts programs into a single center will enhance opportunities to attract external funding. He indicated that he has met with staff from Institutional Advancement and they are very excited about the prospects for development that a new Center of the Arts would create.

• Englert was asked about the statement near the end of the Report calling for streamlining faculty governance. Did he have any specific changes in mind? Englert replied that he did not have a
specific set of proposals, but rather wanted a careful evaluation of the best use of faculty time and energy. Noting that faculty time spent on governance is not being spent on other matters, he raised the possibility that we might have fewer FSSC members, a more streamlined committee structure. Similar attention to streamlining governance ought to be occurring within schools and colleges. The report formally asks the FSSC to look into these issues.

• One member suggested that a way to streamline governance would be to have fewer faculty “town meetings.” Another noted that faculty time devoted to governance is over and above the time we all give to teaching, research and scholarship.

• It was observed that the creation of a new administrative superstructure for the arts will probably lead to a proliferation of administrative positions, given Temple’s past practices, and that this will eat into any potential savings from reorganization.

• It was also observed that people tend to support particular arts programs, not the arts in general. Englert responded that the information he has received from Institutional Advancement suggests that the opposite is true.

• Englert was asked how tenure decisions and processes will be handled during the reorganization, especially for faculty who are currently in the tenure pipeline. Englert responded that these are among the most important issues that will have to be addressed, and he agreed that it is important to safeguard the legitimate expectations of current tenure-track faculty.

• It was observed that NTT faculty have not been participants in discussions, regarding either workload issues or SFFs, and that their views need to be incorporated into the process. Several faculty members noted that some of the workload guidelines applicable to NTTs seem inconsistent with the actual reality of what NTTs actually do at Temple. Englert replied that the proposed guidelines substantially track the TAUP contract, and that Deans will continue to have discretion over faculty workload matters. Regarding workload, some faculty observed that it would be helpful to faculty to know the range of issues that were considered by the task force. Englert responded that it was up to the task force to decide what information to share about its deliberations.

• Englert was asked why specific proposals regarding reorganization had been sent only to particular schools and colleges. Englert replied that he has no objection to other faculty seeing those documents. He sent them to the faculties he thought were most directly interested.

• Asked for particulars about cost savings from reorganization, Englert replied that the issue is covered in the specific proposals that went out to particular schools and colleges.

• It was noted that some of the changes contemplated by the proposed reorganizations may require bargaining with TAUP. Englert replied that this might be the case, but we are still a “long way” from reaching any such issues.

• Some faculty members expressed concern that the statement in the Provost’s report regarding service could be read to downgrade the importance of faculty service to the University. Englert responded that we should all affirm the value of shared governance, but that is not inconsistent with a desire to do things better. We need to be more efficient and strategic. Englert stressed that in his view nothing in any of the documents should be interpreted to say that faculty do not work hard, or that they should be working harder. The question is rather how best to direct faculty energies and how to get the most benefit from them. He also noted that the workload guidelines have been posted for comment, and that individual faculty members may comment on them up to April 13.
6. Old Business

Frank Friedman (CST) reminded the Senate that the Faculty Herald review board is still looking for a new editor.

7. New Business

None.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Rahdert
Secretary