Faculty Senate Steering Committee  
Tuesday, February 14, 2012  
Minutes

Present: Paul S. LaFollette (Pres.), Joan Shapiro (V. Pres.), Mark C. Rahdert (Secy), Karen Turner (Past President), Nora Alter (SCT), Mark Anderson (Law), Deborah Howe (SED)[teleconferenced], Forrest Huffman (FSBM), Michael Jackson (STHM), Michael Jacobs (Phar), Tricia S. Jones (Educ.), Charles Jungreis (Med.), Stephanie Knopp (Tyler), Jim Korsh (CST), Laurie MacPhail (Dent.), Joseph Schwartz (CLA), David Waldstreicher (Fac. Herald), Cheryl Mack (Coord.)

Absent: Adam Davey (CHPSW), Joan Delalic (Engr.), Jeffrey Draine (SSW), Jeffrey Solow (BCMD)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:04 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 7, 2012 FSSC meeting were approved.

3. President’s Report

President LaFollette reported that since the last meeting he has met with Provost Richard Englert on more than one occasion. The Provost is aware of the resolution regarding reorganization that was adopted at last week’s Special Faculty Senate meeting. He is preparing a response to it that will include some data on potential cost savings that could be realized from reorganization.

LaFollette also reported on a meeting attended by the Provost, Senior Vice Provost Peter Jones, and members of the Student Feedback Form (SFF) committee. LaFollette reported to them the negative faculty response he has been receiving concerning the proposed move to university-wide on-line administration of SFFs this semester. LaFollette expressed to those present his view that there will be a lot of faculty resistance to this change. He and the committee members engaged in a long discussion/debate concerning the reasons. They also discussed several alternatives to full implementation of on-line administration, none of which the committee members accepted. The end result is that the committee remains committed to its proposal in all respects and has submitted that proposal to the Provost. The matter is now in the Provost’s hands.

A discussion followed, in which FSSC members reiterated many of the concerns over on-line administration of SFFs that have been voiced in meetings over this issue since the SFF committee issued its white paper last fall. Comments focused on the dangers associated with low response rates, especially when SFF results are used in making decisions on promotion and tenure, contract renewal, and merit. Others registered
concerns about on-line release of results to students, noting the inconsistency between the University’s resistance to on-line disclosure of other data and its eagerness to release SFF results in that fashion. Others noted empirical gaps and apparent inconsistencies in the information the SFF committee has used to support its proposals. There was general consensus that further discussion and potential action by the Faculty Senate may be required, among other reasons to dispel any impression of general faculty approval for the on-line “experiment” as it has been formulated.

Resuming his report, President LaFollette noted that there was a meeting involving the Provost, Vice President and CFO Anthony Wagner, Associate Vice President Kenneth Kaiser, Vice Provost and Dean Robert Stroker, Faculty Senate officers, Budget Review Committee Chair Rafael Porrata-Doria (Law), and Professor Philip Yannella. (CLA). Since LaFollette was unable to attend, he asked Vice President Shapiro and Secretary Mark Rahdert to report on the meeting. They reported that the meeting focused on several items: the proposed appropriation cuts from Harrisburg, which include cuts to both capital and operating budgets; the Moody’s financial report on the University, which identifies several fiscal challenges; the University’s build-up of financial reserves over the last several years, how those reserves are generated, and how they are or may be used; the relationship between the operating budget of the University and that of the hospital; the funding of the “20/20” construction program; and related issues. The meeting was informative and constructive, although several faculty members in attendance came away with lingering questions and concerns.

One important point was that Vice President Wagner clearly stated funds are not being shifted from the University budget to the hospital budget to make up for hospital budget shortfalls. Instead the hospital has been drawing down its own cash reserves, though there is obviously a limit to its ability to continue doing so. There are hopes that the recent merger with Fox Chase will help bring about a more financially stable patient mix.

Vice President Shapiro reported that she has located an on-line source for fairly detailed university budget information. She will distribute the url for the site, which can be found by going to www.temple.edu/budget.

President LaFollette reported that the Provost has given the workload task force’s report to the President. When she gives permission, the Provost will give a copy of the report to the FSSC and schedule a meeting to discuss it. LaFollette also reported that the Provost intends to present concrete recommendations based on the White Paper directly after spring break.

4. Vice President’s Report

Vice President Shapiro reminded FSSC members to continue soliciting volunteers, especially for elected Faculty Senate committees. Additionally, there may be a need to find a new chair for the Personnel Committee.
Shapiro asked Karen Turner to report on the Nomination Committee’s work. The notice regarding the Faculty Senate election is set to go out. Turner raised a question regarding the terminology of the new election bylaws, which state that candidates are to be solicited and voted on by “email ballot.” Members agreed that the term is somewhat ambiguous, but that the intent was to have a process of nomination by email, followed by election through an electronic ballot. There was general consensus that once this term’s election is completed, some clarifying bylaw amendments regarding the election procedure may be in order.

There was some discussion to the effect that the published version of the bylaws does not include all the changes that have been made since September 2009. Because of website reconstruction, it is not possible to make changes now. Coordinator Cheryl Mack will work with the Provost’s office to secure the technical assistance needed to complete the website reconstruction, so that the bylaws and other documents posted on the Faculty Senate website can be updated.

5. Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda

President LaFollette asked for input on the agenda for the February 21, 2012 Representative Senate meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that the following items should be placed on the agenda:

• The FSSC’s motion concerning guiding principles for Collegial Assembly bylaws will be presented for discussion and potential adoption.

• The issue of on-line SFFs will be slated for further discussion. The nature of the discussion may depend on the Provost’s action, if any, in response to SFF committee report. Peter Jones will be invited to attend, but not to give a further presentation.

• If there is time, Professor Porrata-Doria, chair of the Budget Review Committee, will be asked to give a presentation on the University budget and related financial issues. Professor Yannella will also be asked to participate if he wishes.

6. Old Business

David Waldstreicher reminded FSSC members that the Faculty Herald editorial board is looking for a new Faculty Herald editor.

There was a question about the status of the travel policy. The “focus group” formed by the Controller has been working on a new travel procedure, and its report is due out soon. Once the report is out, we can seek an opportunity to give feedback on it.

Karen Turner reported that a meeting occurred between SCT faculty and the Provost regarding reorganization. Among other matters discussed, faculty at SCT argued that even if a new school or college of the arts is formed, the remaining departments of SCT
should continue to operate as a separate school of communications. In the 21st century, demand for study in that field is likely to remain strong.

7. New Business

One FSSC member reported on a growing phenomenon where students incur substantial debt to attend Temple, make it to their final semester, then get dismissed for poor scholarship because they will not be able to meet the minimum required GPA for graduation. The FSSC and/or Senate need to look into this situation.

Another FSSC member reported that the University has a program for veterans under development. Associate Director for Admissions Laura Reddick is in charge. There was a suggestion that she be invited to meet with the FSSC regarding this program.

President LaFollette noted that there will be no FSSC meeting next week due to the Representative Senate meeting.

8. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Rahdert
Secretary