Faculty Senate Steering Committee  
Tuesday, February 28, 2012  
Minutes

Present: Joan Shapiro (V. Pres.), Mark C. Rahdert (Secy), Karen Turner (Past President), Nora Alter (SCT), Mark Anderson (Law), Joan Delalic (Engr.) [teleconferenced], Forrest Huffman (FSBM), Michael Jackson (STHM), Michael Jacobs (Phar), Charles Jungreis (Med.), Stephanie Knopp (Tyler), Jim Korsh (CST), Joseph Schwartz (CLA), Jeffrey Solow (BCMD), David Waldstreicher (Fac. Herald)

Absent: Paul S. LaFollette (Pres.), Adam Davey (CHPSW), Jeffrey Draine (SSW), Deborah Howe (SED), Tricia S. Jones (Educ.), Laurie MacPhail (Dent.), Cheryl Mack (Coord.)

1. Call to Order

Vice President Shapiro called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 14, 2012 meeting were approved.

3. Vice President’s Report

Vice President Shapiro explained the President LaFollette is absent due to an all-day Presidential Search Committee meeting.

Although the agenda anticipated a discussion of travel policy, that will be delayed until the first FSSC meeting after Spring Break.

Shapiro reminded FSSC members that the Faculty Senate election will occur from March 26 to April 2. Candidates need to submit their statements and curricula vitae by Friday March 2.

Shapiro distributed a current list of committee vacancies. There was a question concerning whether faculty from Tyler are eligible for election to the Tenure and Promotion Advisory Committee, as Tyler currently has only one faculty member serving on the Committee. Shapiro will investigate and make any appropriate adjustment to the list. There was also a question about when new members begin to serve. The consensus was that individuals elected to faculty committees in the spring begin their service at the commencement of the following fall term.

Shapiro noted that the Bargaining Units Liaison Committee is in need of members from appropriate units, especially from professional schools. It was reported that a request for a new member from the Law School has been relayed to the law faculty bargaining unit’s executive committee. Shapiro noted that representatives from the Medical and Dental schools are also needed. There was some discussion about what work the committee does. In the past it has dealt with tenure and promotion issues, personnel issues, and other matters that are the subject of TAUP bargaining but also affect faculty in non-TAUP units.
There was some discussion about service on the FSSC and whether there is a limit on consecutive years of FSSC service. Shapiro believes there is an upper limit, but she will need to check the constitution and bylaws to determine exactly what it is.

On behalf of the FSSC and Senate, Shapiro thanked David Waldstreicher for his outstanding service as Faculty Herald editor. She reported that the Herald is still looking for candidates to fill that position. She asked Waldstreicher to comment on the qualifications for the editor’s position. The editor needs to be a good and quick writer, to have sufficient Temple experience to understand major issues, to have strong connections with and commitment to faculty governance, and to have the ability to think beyond his/her own school or college. It also helps if the individual is committed to breaking down traditional communications barriers at the University. The editor needs to be able to attend FSSC and Faculty Senate meetings. The editor receives a modest stipend and course relief, although the latter must be approved by the editor’s Dean. S/he should have tenure.

Shapiro reviewed the status of nonvoting faculty advisory members serving on Board of Trustees committees. Some vacancies exist. Academic Affairs appears to be covered, and Michael Jackson agreed to continue serving on Athletics. Shapiro will ask Rafael Porrata-Doria, chair of the Senate Budget Review Committee, to serve on Budget and Finance. As to Development, Mark Rahdert indicated that he is willing to serve, but only if he is invited to attend a meeting. Apparently the Board takes the view that development discussions are too sensitive to involve faculty. As to the Facilities Committee, Michael Jackson stated that nearly all business is conducted in executive session, with faculty members excluded. Karen Turner reported that faculty participation is welcome on Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. There is apparently a new Board committee on Community Relations, and it would make sense to have a faculty advisory member for that committee. It was agreed that faculty members should be assigned only to committees they are actually welcome to attend. Where that is not the case the committee should be removed from the list of those to which faculty advisory members are appointed. Shapiro will investigate further which Board committees should continue to have faculty advisory members.

4. Graduate Council

Jim Korsh reported on a concerning set of developments that occurred recently in the Graduate Council. At a meeting it was disclosed that there was a report circulating regarding the assignment and distribution of graduate teaching assistants. The Council asked for an opportunity to see the report. They were initially told that the report could not be disclosed, but then at a later meeting it was distributed while other matters were being discussed, and then collected at the end of the meeting. There was no opportunity to discuss it. At its most recent meeting, the Council took the position that the report should be distributed to all faculty. The matter is now before the Provost.

Those who were able to look at the report during the meeting have reported that it contemplates sharp cuts in teaching assistants, with access to TAs tied closely to external funding. The effect for humanities and arts instruction could be devastating.
Several FSSC members registered disapproval of the growing practice of selectively disclosing information to some faculty members, but prohibiting them from reporting about it to others. It allows the University to maintain that faculty consultation is occurring, while at the same time keeping most faculty members ignorant of what is going on until new policies are in place or plans are so far along that they cannot be reversed.

5. Provost Report

Provost Richard Englert gave the FSSC updates on three ongoing matters: state appropriations, the President’s task force on workloads, and reorganization.

Appropriations

A panel of presidents from state-related universities met with the House appropriations committee last week and will be meeting this week with the Senate appropriations committee. Along with President Hart, Temple will be sending the Provost, Senior Vice President for Government, Community and Public Affairs Kenneth Lawrence, Vice President and CFO Anthony Wagner, and Medical School Dean Larry Kaiser. Senior Vice Provost Ken Blank may also attend, as will student leaders and staff from Lawrence’s office. Several FSSC members offered suggestions about matters that should be raised, including Temple’s positive performance in terms of dropout and graduation rates, our numbers of first-generation college graduates, the numbers of Temple degree holders who live and work in Pennsylvania, the relative cost-effectiveness of appropriations for Temple relative to PHEAA scholarships for private institutions, and the aggregate contributions of all state-related institutions to an educated citizenry in the Commonwealth. Members also commented on the importance and value of including faculty members in efforts to persuade the Legislature to invest in Temple.

Workload

Englert reported that the President’s task force on faculty workload has submitted its report to the Provost. He has shared its contents with Deans. He will relay the report to the President, and when she gives her approval for wider distribution he will share it with the FSSC. That will not occur, at the earliest, until after Spring Break. Englert stated that the report will discuss a variety of topics, such as workload differences between research and teaching faculty, between tenure track and NTT faculty, and the like. He also emphasized that specific decisions about workload will have to be made school by school and discipline by discipline. He also noted that the report will in some cases call for curricular “streamlining” to achieve greater workload efficiency. When asked what he meant by that, he gave the example of situations where there are multiple courses on essentially the same subject, each with a low student enrollment. He also gave the example of programs that have experienced historically declining enrollments.

There was some discussion of whether any purpose is served in having the FSSC review the report before it is distributed to faculty generally. FSSC members registered the view that an opportunity to preview the report would be useful only if there is some meaningful prospect that FSSC comments or suggestions could result in adjustments to the report’s content. If that
content is already basically fixed (as it seems to be), then the report should probably be distributed widely to all faculty members as soon as possible.

White Paper.

Englert reported that a set of proposals generated from the White Paper on restructuring will be ready for distribution soon after Spring Break.

Graduate Council

Englert was asked about a report on teaching assistant assignments that was mentioned in the Graduate Council but has not been shared with faculty. It was pointed out that faculty should have input on decisions being made. Englert will discuss the matter with Ken Blank.

North Central Neighborhood Improvement District

The Provost was asked about information in the Philadelphia Inquirer regarding the creation of a North Central Neighborhood Improvement District, and Temple’s commitment of funds to the project. He indicated that he was unaware of this development and will inquire about it with Ken Lawrence.

On-line SFFs

Englert was asked if he had made a decision about on-line administration of SFFs. He reported that he has met with the SFF committee and agrees with their proposal, but for reasons of “fairness” to faculty members who for various reasons relied on the likelihood of paper administration, the move to on-line administration will not occur this semester. Englert wants it to begin with the summer session, which will allow us to iron out any difficulties before the fall semester.

Old Business
None.

New Business
None.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mark C. Rahdert
Secretary