

Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Tuesday, April 15, 2014
Meeting Minutes

Present: Mark Rahdert (Pres.), Tricia Jones (Vice Pres.), Paul LaFollette (Secy.), Mark Anderson (Law), Li Bai (Engr), Cheri Carter (SSW), Michael Jackson (STHM), Michael Jacobs (Pharm), Chip Jungreis (TUSM), Stephanie Knopp (Tyl), Jim Korsh (CST), Steve Newman (Fac. Herald), Michael Sachs (CHP), Catherine Schifter (Educ), Jeffrey Solow (BCMD), Karen M. Turner (SMC), Cheryl Mack (Coord.)

Absent: Joan Shapiro (Past-Pres.), Kenneth Boberick (DENT), Deborah Howe (SED), Forrest Huffman (FSBM), Matthew Miller (TFMA), Robert Reinstein (Law-On Leave) Joseph Schwartz (CLA)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:06 PM.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the April 8, 2014 meeting were approved as distributed.

President's Report – Mark Rahdert

President Radhert reported that he met with President Theobald to discuss some of Theobald's proposals to the Board of Trustees. Theobald announced that at upcoming Board meetings, the President of the Faculty Senate and the President of Temple Student Government will have the opportunity to make short presentations on matters of interest to them.

Paul LaFollette will be replacing Steve Newman as Editor of the Faculty Herald.

Rahdert is in continuing dialogue with the Provost's office about the diversity data we have been promised.

Rahdert and Vice President Jones met with Sharon Boyle and Zeb Kendrick to discuss some of TUGSA's concerns. The meeting was felt by all of those present to be productive. Subsequently, TUGSA has complained to Rahdert that the meeting was held.

Q: Does TUGSA now have a contract?

A: Yes, it was in effect at the time of the above mentioned meeting.

Discussion of Conflict Resolution

The *ad hoc* committee investigating best practices for use of ombuds in academic communities made a preliminary presentation of its findings and current thinking. After some discussion, President Rahdert requested that this committee prepare a white paper which should include proposed actions, and bring this document back to the FSSC for action.

Guest – Provost Dai

Provost Dai began by discussing the Fly in Four program. He indicated that we need to work to decrease barriers to four year graduation:

- Work with deans to create a sufficient number of sections of critical courses.
- Work with faculty to get as many courses as possible on the matrix.
- Remove pre-requisite barriers to four year graduation.

Addressing the final point, he made the following proposal:

1. All 1000 and 2000 level courses must be accepted as fulfilling pre-requisite requirements if they are passed with a grade of C- or higher.
2. 3000-3999 level courses may require at most a C to fulfill pre-requisite requirements.

This engendered considerable discussion in which the following questions were asked and points were made:

- In some cases, external governing or accrediting agencies may impose higher standards. For instance, in Pennsylvania, those pursuing teaching certification must have a B average to attain junior standing.
- Should every student have the right to choose their major when resources are limited?
- Different students can take the same course for different reasons. Passing a course may not be the same thing as being prepared for subsequent courses.
- We need to make sure that our course and program descriptions give students accurate information about what they will need to accomplish to succeed in them.
- It is important to let students know early on if their probability of success in a given major is small.
- Our articulation agreements make it impossible for us to treat some disciplines differently from others in assigning transfer credit.
- There is clear evidence of grade inflation at Temple in the recent past.
- There is a difference between fixing grade inflation and fixing roadblocks to Fly in Four.
- Grades in themselves are largely meaningless because different teachers use different standards. It is important that every student (not just Fly in Four students) meet with a qualified academic advisor regularly.

The Provost then announced the good news that our research ranking has risen from 132 to someplace in the top 100. He suggested that as we become more “ivy league like,” we will be able to serve better students and increase our four year graduation rate.

Seven years ago our USN&WR was not in the top 160. Now we are 121.

A short discussion developed about whether NTT’s and adjuncts feel pressured to give higher grades than they want because they fear that low grades produce low SFF scores, and low SFF scores may lead to non-renewal of contracts.

The Provost commented that we can never build a perfect system, but we can always make a system better.

One member of the committee suggested that it would be interesting to look at SFF data about expected and actual grades in courses taught by various types of faculty.

Q: What can we do to increase the diversity in our TT hiring?

A: We can immediately take steps to increase recruitment of underrepresented minorities. With respect to gender, we need to look at ways to accommodate our faculty members needs for dealing with family matters.

Comment: We also need to look at retention of faculty.

The Provost observed that it is much easier for top schools to increase their diversity, because they are where candidates want to go.

Comment: We need to attend to quality of faculty life. Perhaps we need once again to provide day care and possibly an on campus elementary school.

Vice President's Report – Tricia Jones

Jones reports that Steven Gross (COE) and David Pryluck (TUSM) are interested in serving on EPPC. Catherine Schifter moved that both be appointed. The motion carried.

The FSSC also agreed to allow Michael Jackson and Jeff Solow each to serve an additional three year term as requested by their colleges.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 PM

Paul S. LaFollette, Jr.
Secretary