

MINUTES/FACULTY SENATE MEETING

August 30, 2012

The Senate met on Thursday, August 30, 2012 at the Alumni House

Ralph Olliges, Faculty Senate President, Presiding

Members Present: John Aleshunas, Jef Awada, Mary Bevel, Juraj Bohus, Carla Colletti, Paula Hanssen, Susan Heady, Scott Jensen, Victoria McMullen, J.P. Palmer-Schuyler, Stephanie Schroeder, Marty Smith, Roy Tamashiro, Gwyneth Williams

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the July 16th Faculty Senate meeting minutes as amended. With the exception of two abstentions, all were in favor; motion carried.

Announcements

The next Faculty Senate meeting is scheduled for September 13th.

Ralph mentioned that Neil George sent a nice thank you letter for the generous donation made by the Faculty Senate on behalf of students to the Library in his name.

Fall Institute

A report was given on the upcoming Fall Institute. The format will be a little different from what has been followed in the past. A possible speaker has been discussed and a decision will be made soon as to whether or not to retain her services.

The Fall Institute Committee discussed invited guests and it is felt that a more open/closed guest list is needed given our vision for how this will work its way into the Keystone Seminars in the future and because of long-term impact. Some feel that the institute should really be a faculty function and that there are other potential forums where non-faculty can be included.

The Fall Institute Committee will meet again on Thursday, September 6th at 1:30 p.m. in the Faculty Senate meeting room in the Alumni House.

Appointed Committees

Publications Board –

Kristen DiFate to replace Quinn Shao for AY 2012-2013

International Studies Committee –

Heather Mitchell to replace Alexander van der Haven for AY 2012-2013

Julian Scaff to replace Lara Teeter for AY 2012-2013

Susan Seymour to replace Don Corrigan for Fall 2012 only

A motion was made and seconded to accept all appointees. All were in favor; motion carried.

It was reported that the International Studies Committee met last week and appointed Chris Parr as Co-Chair.

Faculty Assembly Agenda

A brief discussion took place regarding the Faculty Assembly agenda for September 11th.

Public Safety Procedures

Ralph received an email from a faculty member stating that his undergraduate class had been disrupted by a distraught student. There was confusion as to what procedure to follow in cases such as this. After the Virginia Tech shooting, there were many different pamphlets, etc. sent out on this issue from Public Safety. It was suggested to ask Public Safety to redistribute the pamphlets.

Dr. Gunderson, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer present, joined the Senate. He has oversight of Public Safety. At the 40 something sites that we lease domestically, we have security built into our contract. Some of the security contracts contain language that is for the building only while others include the parking lot. Every building has some level of security. Faculty at all sites need to know what procedures to take. He suggested that a mandatory course for faculty could be offered. The suggestion was made to use online technology for this in order to track faculty who participate and allow faculty to take part when their schedule allows. Some of the material that the University uses is copyrighted and there may be contractual obligations that limit usage of that material so offering something online may not be an option.

Webster Finances Presentation

Dr. Greg Gunderson provided the Senate with an overview of Webster University's financial picture. Dr. Gunderson explained that 91 percent of our revenue is tuition and fees. The rest is parking, student housing, etc. A little of our revenue comes from interest from the Endowment. After we pass the census date, we will have more information on enrollment trends.

The following enrollment trends were shared:

- UG – flat in FY 13 (fewer freshman but more transfers and better retention), Ghana coming on line in FY14, goal remains 5% growth
- Grad Military – slightly below budget which reflects strong growth over FY 12
- Grad Metro – flat and below FY 13 budget, new enrollment down as well
- Online Education – strong growth in excess of budget
- International – down in Europe, good in Asia

There is concern over enrollment for Grad Metro. More are graduating than enrolling for the first time.

Multiple sources have stated that 2010 had the largest high school graduating class. Do you know how much smaller the pool is? Is that affecting enrollment also? By 2020, half of all high school graduates will live in Texas, Florida, and California. Those three states are seeing a demographic shift as well as seeing more Hispanic high school graduates. The change in the kind of market of students could be impacting Webster.

The question was asked as to what the 5 percent Ghana growth is based on. It was stated that a large number of African families send their high school students to Ghana because it is very stable and safe. These students will typically have to leave Africa to attend college. It is thought that it is viable to enroll 400 students.

It was stated that half of enrollment took place three weeks before classes started and that makes it difficult to predict enrollment.

Our financial statements (not approved by auditors) show us at \$15 million operating margin at the end of the year. Since Dr. Stroble came to Webster, she has invested in faculty and facilities. Instead of saving money for a rainy day, we have invested back into programs. When you have a \$20 million operating

margin, you have some play room. When the operating margin is cut to \$15 million, you lose that play room.

Discounting trends – FY 2009 – 2013 – we have grown but are reaching a tipping point. Growth and discounting are not going to generate the next round of growth.

Fixed costs - \$4 million was added to the base for the year for fixed costs. We are no longer operating to have large surpluses.

A question was asked about donations made to a specific school and whether or not that helps to offset fixed costs. It was answered that yes it does help to offset fixed costs.

A question was also asked about contributions made to Endowment – contributions made to Endowment are part of Endowment regardless of whether or not it is designated for a specific school, etc. The Endowment is currently \$83 million.

Everyone plays a role. Studies have shown that if students have a personal relationship with faculty and connect with them, this assists retention. There have been many budget meetings, focus groups and a series of public meetings to share the above financial information.

The following questions were asked of Dr. Gunderson:

Q: Statement was made that because of the past, some faculty are concerned when they hear the word retention. Will there be pressure to lower academic standards?

A: A lowered academic standard is fiscally a bad thing. Parents are not going to send their children to a place that encourages low academic standards. With the military, we set our standards very high there and we need to pursue more targeted programs like that.

Q: Retention – We are missing out on recruiting positive people that will stay and graduate. If we recruit at a particular high school and do well there, can we prospect other high schools of the same caliber for recruiting?

A: If we prospect early enough, we can identify honor students or those students who may need help and promise them success. South Carolina and Orlando both have strong graduate programs and we need to pull those students in. If we recruit the best and brightest, others will follow.

Dr. Julian Schuster

Dr. Julian Schuster joined the Senate to follow up after convocation to clarify a few things with regard to the working groups. The working groups are in place to align our activities with the mission, vision, and values of the institution. A part of the formation of the working groups is a reaction to stimuli as rapid growth in the county is now coming to an end. There will be adjustments on the part of everyone. There are numerous instances in which we look at how Webster does business and what we do for students. Part of the charge is to learn what are competitors are doing, what Webster is doing right, what Webster is not doing so great, etc. For an institution this size, it is embarrassing that we came up short in enrollment. Some think it is a lack of engagement, lack of career services, lack of advising, etc. Everyone needs to come together to discuss the problems and work together to find solutions.

There has been apprehension concerning organizational restructuring. Webster needs to look at how we can align our internal operations to best serve students.

Concerning shared governance it needs to be determined what we want to do, how we want to do it, and what shared governance is. The objective is to focus on looking forward instead of looking back. Our destination is in the future and the future belongs to all of us.

The senior leaders of Webster University hope that everyone will take an active role in the working groups' process.

A question was asked as to who will pick the members of the working groups? Dr. Schuster replied that people are volunteering to certain groups, with 150 volunteers as of today, and he and Dr. Stroble will try to honor those requests. Some groups will be more popular than others and the goal is to see that everyone's talents are put to use on the right committee. We are working together for a common good and the ultimate goal is to achieve results.

A Senator stated that there is the belief that shared governance is alive and well at Webster and that there is already a structure in place and it seems to work. Dr. Schuster stated that some of the structure works and some does not. He mentioned that the University Handbook is grossly outdated and that bringing everyone together to create something to withstand the test of time needs to be accomplished.

Dr. Schuster had to leave to attend another meeting and thanked everyone for being given the opportunity to speak today. The Senate thanked him for his time. Dr. Gunderson also left the meeting.

Electronic Elections

Marty Smith gave a summary on what has taken place regarding electronic elections. Information Technology gave a demonstration on two different voting systems this summer that they felt would meet the Senate's voting needs. One was free (BallotBin), but included ads. The other (BallotBox) is .88 cents per voter with unlimited elections for one year. There is a minimum fee of \$250.

Marty Smith and Cynthia Pirkle were given access as administrators to both voting systems and had a chance to play around with both systems. BallotBin was very cluttered and did not even look like a ballot. Also, for every election with BallotBin, each person would receive a new ID to use. It was decided that BallotBin would not meet our needs.

A few sample ballots were created and an attempt was made to mimic the paper ballots that are sent out for elections. Five Senators were sent the test ballot and we received positive feedback on the ballot and interface. With our unique elections, we can set a minimum/maximum number of choices for faculty to vote on. If a person selects too many nominees, it will flag it as invalid. When a user has finished voting, they will be allowed to preview their ballot and can go back and change any response before submission. Once you have cast your ballot, users receive an email that informs you that your ballot has been cast. As long as the election is still open, a user can go back and discard their ballot and receive another email with a link for a new ballot.

Once a user sets up an account, that will be their password/ID for the year. We will be able to see how many people were sent emails and how many set up their account. Once an election begins, administrators can view the percentage of voters, statistics, etc. Voters can be removed/added at anytime and we can run an unlimited number of elections for the year. After an election closes, it takes a quorum of administrators to unlock the ballot and view the results. BallotBox will also allow us to export all elections digitally to save for the future.

A presentation of BallotBox will be given at the September 11th Faculty Assembly. The first test will be the Fall Institute Evaluation that will be sent out.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the purchase of BallotBox for electronic elections. All were in favor; motion carried.

Miscellaneous

Concerning working groups, it was suggested to address this issue at the Faculty Assembly to help ease some fears. It is felt that it is the Senate's job to report what has been stated to us. Dr. Schuster will be contacted and asked for a recommendation for someone from Academic Affairs to be present at the Faculty Assembly in his absence to address any questions that may come up. If no one from Academic Affairs can attend, we can report on the information that Dr. Schuster shared with the Senate today.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.