

Faculty Assembly Meeting

April 14, 2015

EAB 253/262

Gwyneth Williams, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order.

Announcements

- A. The deadline to self-nominate for appointed committee positions is, Wednesday, April 15th.
- B. A reminder that graduation is scheduled to be a half hour earlier this year with the school/college ceremonies to follow.
- C. There will be a reception for Sr. Barbara Ann Barbato, Friday, May 1st from 3 – 5 p.m. in the H. Sam Priest Center.

Presentation and Motion to Adopt Extraordinary Merit Pay Proposal

The Faculty Senate continues working on this process to put policies in place governing faculty performance and merit pay raises. The Faculty Assembly voted last April to approve the proposed Performance Pay Policy. This policy designated 75 percent of a planned pay raise to be awarded for Satisfactory Performance and the remaining 25 percent would be distributed to faculty members for extraordinary merit.

The Senate worked on the draft of the extraordinary merit policy starting in summer 2014. This proposal has evolved based on conversations from faculty at the Town Hall and the past two Faculty Assembly meetings. Two policy elements clarified by this process are worth noting. While the department chair and dean determine Satisfactory Pay, a peer review process would determine Extraordinary Pay. A paragraph on discrimination was added, by suggestion of the university's legal counsel, in accordance with Webster University's discrimination policy.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposal as presented to the Faculty Assembly.

The floor was opened for discussion. This discussion covered the impact of university budget conditions on potential merit raises, the necessity of allocating a portion of an annual pay raise to merit versus 100% allocation to satisfactory performance, issues of gender, identity, or racial equity in this proposal, a need to regularly monitor the award allocation of these raises, and concerns regarding the transparency of this process.

Once the discussion period ended, a motion was made and seconded to suspend the rules and vote using a paper ballot to vote on the extraordinary merit proposal. If the proposal passed, it would go into effect as presented to the Assembly. The Provost, Human Resources and the university's legal counsel, already approved it. If not passed, faculty will continue to have 25 percent extraordinary merit allotted in percentages by the department chair/dean.

Outcome of voting as follows:

34 - Ayes

36 – Nays

The Extraordinary Merit Pay proposal failed to be accepted by two votes.

The Assembly members thanked the Senate for all of the work that they did on this proposal.

Thailand Review

Provost Schuster and Joe Stimpfl presented the results of the recent comprehensive review of the Thailand campus (Bangkok and Cha-Am). The review included an assessment of Thailand's campus facilities, financial matters, human resources, accreditation, student academic support, student life, services and safety.

Joe Stimpfl spoke first and explained that the Thailand review will serve as a template for further international campus reviews. Not included in this review were personnel and any criminal inquiries since this task force was not convened as an investigative body. After presenting a list of Task Force members, Joe presented the following issues found in the task force's review of the Thailand campus:

- 1) The facilities need investment and the areas were categorized as long-term and short-term needs. If Cha-Am is to remain a campus, different long and short-term investments will need to be made.
- 2) Student safety is the biggest issue (Clery Act reporting rules). There is a lack of counseling available to students.
- 3) There are issues with dual accreditation standards as Thai accreditation is set up mostly for Thai universities and it is hard to determine WUT compliance or non-compliance.
- 4) More faculty and student resources should be added (writing center, library, and consistent internet connection) to ensure a better learning experience.
- 5) Written procedures for faculty and students (recruitment, vetting, orientation, grievance, evaluation, and termination processes) need to be formally established and maintained. This also includes ensuring that the WUT Faculty Handbook is aligned with the St. Louis University Handbook.
- 6) Communication channels should be established and maintained between the St. Louis campus and WUT.

Following Joe Stimpfl 's presentation, the floor was opened for questions for Provost Schuster and Joe Stimpfl. This discussion covered the following topics: whether this report had been publicly released, what is a reasonable timeframe and associated issues impacting any decisions whether we will stay in our current location, and what is the most important take away from the Thailand review.

Following the discussion period, Provost Schuster addressed the assembly. He expressed his confidence in the task force and the work they accomplished. He thanked the task force for their selfless service beyond their ordinary duties and their countless time and effort in going to Thailand. He assured the assembly that the conclusions resulting from this review would be dealt with accordingly. He stated that student safety and student issues would have first priority. The entire Webster community will be engaged in how to remedy the problems in Thailand.

Provost Schuster stated that Webster University's strategic plan calls for building Webster University as one system and we need to find a seamless way to communicate among the international sites. The University will start rebuilding the respect and trust between the administration and some parts of the community in Thailand. The review identified several issues that arose under the previous university administration that were never solved. Finally, he stated that it is important to adhere to the university's moral and ethical standards when we work with the different laws on international campuses.

In closing, Joe Stimpfl stated that there is more specific data in the Thailand report that is available online in Connections. He also encouraged those who have any questions to contact any individual on the task force.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.