

Faculty Senate Meeting
August 15, 2013

Gwyneth Williams, Faculty Senate President, Presiding

Members Present: John Aleshunas, Ginny Altrogge, Jef Awada, Larry Baden, Glen Bauer, Juraj Bohus, Carla Colletti, Don Conway-Long, Paula Hanssen, Victoria McMullen, Warren Rosenblum, Joe Schuster, J.P. Palmer-Schuyler, Marty Smith, Roy Tamashiro

Approval of Senate Minutes

The June 13th Senate minutes were adopted by unanimous consent.

The July 8th Senate minutes were adopted by unanimous consent.

Announcements

Dr. Stroble and Provost Schuster were both invited to attend the August 29th Faculty Senate meeting to discuss University topics, but are unable to attend this meeting as Dr. Stroble will be in Indonesia at that time to meet the President. Gwyneth is awaiting a date that both Dr. Stroble and Provost Schuster can attend a future Senate meeting. Once a date has been determined, the Senate will send a list of questions to both ahead of time for the President and Provost to address.

The new date for the 2014 Fall Institute is September 26th and 27th. The date was changed due to conflicting with Fall Break.

The cost of refreshments for the September 10th Faculty Social is more than originally expected because the original estimate was incorrect.

The 2013-2014 Salary and Fringe Benefits report included an agreement to conduct a gender equity study of faculty salaries. The Faculty Senate had previously proposed a Gender Equity Task Force. The administration agreed to compose the task force membership in accordance with the Senate's suggestion. President Stroble will give the Task Force its charge; the Senate will need to populate this committee with faculty representatives. The question was asked if there is a timeline for the charge. No, hopefully it will be soon so work can be completed this academic year.

The Administrative Council Retreat is August 19th and Marty Smith will attend in Gwyneth's place as she will be taking her daughter to college. President Stroble asked that everyone attending the retreat bring a set of goals and vision for their body. Gwyneth shared the goals that she and Marty proposed. One word change was suggested on the list of goals.

Fall Institute

Marty Smith reported that the initial call for proposals was sent out and two proposals were received in response. She emailed department chairs asking them to encourage faculty to submit a proposal. Another email with a call for proposals will be sent to the Faculty Assembly on Monday. The text in the email will state clearly that it is a call for proposals as the statement was made that the original call was difficult to decipher as a call for proposals. Junior faculty should be encouraged to submit a proposal.

Dispute Resolution Committee

Gwyneth has been compiling a list of faculty representatives for the Dispute Resolution Committee. One group (five people) will serve a one-year term and one group (five people) will serve a two-year term in order to stagger terms. This group is not evenly divided between schools/colleges/departments as the representatives are to serve as objective judges, not as representatives from a school/college/department.

Once the list has been approved by the Senate, Gwyneth will forward the names to Betsy Schmutz. Once school begins, Betsy Schmutz's office will schedule a one-to-two hour training session for the Dispute Resolution Committee.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the list of names and terms for the Dispute Resolution Committee. All were in favor; motion carried.

University Policy Handbook Changes

Gwyneth presented proposed changes to two Faculty Assembly resolutions that were passed in May 2012 (1 - Department Name Changes and Similar Modifications) and (2 - Schools and Colleges). These resolutions are proposed amendments to the University Handbook, which must be approved by the Provost. A discussion followed on the proposed edits.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the new language for both Department Modifications proposal and the Schools and Colleges proposal for the University Handbook. With the exception of one abstention, all were in favor; no oppositions. Motion carried. Gwyneth will put the paperwork through Provost Schuster's office and the two amendments will enter the University Handbook.

Report on Merit Pay Research – Glen Bauer

Glen Bauer reported the findings of his research of Merit pay. For context, this matter goes back to the Salary and Fringe Benefits Report 2013-2014 that reads:

“The faculty agrees in principle to consider making a formalized pay-for-performance system a greater part of the Webster compensation policy. We support a faculty-Administration collaborative effort to properly implement a stronger pay-for-performance system that rewards outstanding performance, while not eroding purchasing power.”

The Salary and Fringe Benefit agreement was drawn up quickly at the end of the Spring 2013 semester and there was not time to put into place a formalized procedure for merit pay. It was left up to department chairs and deans to decide how merit pay was awarded. Glen Bauer found that some colleges/universities use a system where faculty apply for merit pay and many universities use forms for merit evaluation. Most forms used were divided into three or four sections – element of teaching, research or scholarly activities, service, etc. Another category used was the independent evaluation of the department chair.

Do we want to come up with a university wide policy for merit pay? If so, what should be included?

A discussion then followed regarding merit pay and ideas of how it should be awarded. The statement was made that when dealing with a 1 percent raise pool, it is absurd to even focus on merit because the amounts of the raises are so small. Another suggestion was that merit raises should perhaps be a fixed sum of money, since all who are “meritorious” should receive the same amount, regardless of base pay. Another senator said this is an opportunity to look at merit in a very creative way. It was pointed out that the Salary & Fringe Benefit committee will need to be involved with this process.

It was agreed to have a few Senators volunteer to read the research materials, rough out a proposal, and bring it back to the Senate. A meeting will also need to be scheduled with SFB very soon for their input. The Senators that volunteered to read the research materials are: Ginny Altrogge, Glen Bauer, Don Conway-Long, J.P. Palmer-Schuyler, and Roy Tamashiro. This group’s report on merit pay will be discussed at the August 29th Faculty Senate meeting.

Vienna Senate Proposal

The faculty at Webster University Vienna have proposed the creation of a faculty senate. Their proposal and their timeline for implementation were read this summer by John Aleshunas, Glen Bauer, Carla Colletti, Marty Smith, and Gwyneth Williams. These senators gave preliminary feedback to Christian Newman (Vienna faculty member) for him to share with his faculty in Vienna. They would like to get their Senate functioning as soon as possible. The Senate was

given the Vienna proposal, the timeline for implementation, and the feedback, and asked if senators had additional comments/feedback for Gwyneth to forward to Christian.

The comment was made that this is setting up the structure for faculty governance and not dealing with the many issues taking place in Vienna. It seems like having this structure in place at least gives a more organized voice to the full-time faculty in Vienna. This seems like a reasonable start for the Vienna campus and covers all bases.

The question was asked if there was anything in the Vienna Proposal that protects people who are elected. Who would agree to serve and be the voice of faculty in Vienna, if that voice is not protected? Vienna will be asked to add an additional statement to the proposal that clarifies that there is protected free speech within their senate meetings. It was also stated that there is some employment protection under Austrian law.

Issues for Departments/Department Chairpersons

According to the University Handbook, departments are supposed to have by-laws under which they operate for conducting reviews of faculty for status and promotion. Furthermore, by-laws should name the length of term of department chairs (typically three or four years). Some departments are using by-laws and some are not. Also, departments are supposed to conduct reviews of department chairpersons during the last year of a chair's term. The University Handbook lists very specific guidelines for completing the chair evaluation process as well as provisions for recalling a department chairperson. Apparently, some departments have not been regularly reviewing their chairs. According to the Handbook, both departmental by-laws and chair reviews are supposed to be on file in the Faculty Senate office. The Senate requested a message be sent to all department chairpersons requesting that they send a copy of their by-laws and procedures for reviewing department chairpersons to the Senate office. This issue will also be discussed at a future Council of Chairs meeting.

The question was asked if there is any language in the University Handbook regarding procedures for the evaluation of Deans. There used to be, but it now reads Procedures for Administrators and has been removed. It is unknown when this was removed from the Handbook.

Committee Replacements

GCP Committee – Dian Davitt (Nursing Department) was appointed by unanimous consent to replace Herman Krueger for the Fall 2013 semester. Someone else will be appointed for the Spring 2014 semester. Then this seat will need to be filled by election (in spring 2014) for a one year term for AY 2014-15.

Salary & Fringe Benefits Committee – Mike Hulsizer (Behavioral & Social Sciences Department) was appointed by unanimous consent to replace Jeffrey Carter for the AY 2013-14. (Though Jeff Carter is on leave only in the Fall 2013 semester, for reasons of continuity, Mike will hold the seat for the entire AY. Jeff will resume the seat for its second year AY 2014-15.)

Curriculum Committee – Ryan Gregg (Department of Art) was appointed by unanimous consent to replace Jeffrey Carter for the Fall 2013 semester.

August 29th Senate Meeting

The International Studies Committee, which has been in charge of the B.A. for International Studies, wants to move the B.A. into the International Language and Cultures Department. Several parts of the University Handbook will need to be changed for this to occur. Representatives will attend the August 29th Senate meeting to further discuss this topic.

Miscellaneous

It has been announced that the academic policy limiting adjuncts to teach three classes per semester is now being enforced more rigorously.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.