

Minutes for Notre Dame Faculty Senate Meeting
December 2, 2014
Rm. 140 DeBartolo

Attendees: Gail Bederman, Karen Burnaskas, Xavier Creary, David Galvin, John Gaski, David Gasperetti, Nasir Ghiaseddin, Michael Hemler, Michael Kirsch, Donald Kommers, BJ Lee, Hai Lin, Linda Major, Adam martin, Paul McDowell, Paul McGinn, Hildegund Muller, Walter Nicgorski, Sylwia Ptasinska, Jeanne Romero-Severson, Christopher Shields, John Stamper, Marsha Stevenson, Joe Urbany, Sandra Vera-Munoz, Meng Wang, Kyle Watson, Richard Williams

Excused: Mark Caprio, Christopher Chowrimootoo, Matthew Devine, Alexandra Guisinger, John Polhamus, Joshua Shrout

Absent: Matthew Capdevielle, John Duffy, Liangyan Ge, George Howard, Sophie White

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introductions
3. Minutes of November 4, 2014 meeting were approved, as corrected
4. Chair's remarks (Paul McGinn)

The Chair asked John Gaski to summarize his experience on parking committee last spring.

John said current construction-restricted B1 is very different than the design the committee was shown last spring. John was impressed with the creative ideas the broadly-represented committee proposed. John had made suggestions regarding a temporary lot on the lawn near DPAC, but it hasn't been accepted yet. Parking isn't necessarily worse than other major universities. John suggested to them that we shouldn't be afraid of garages - parking garages might look better than lots. Senate members should send any comments to John.

No news regarding the Academic Council

The Chair received an updated draft of the background check policy.

The student affairs committee might want to consider a policy on civility & comportment in the classroom to submit to Student Affairs.

5. Faculty Experience Survey - Dan Myers & Katherine Spiess

They've met with various groups around campus; there will be more local meetings in the spring; comments can be submitted to one of them, or anonymously on the Provost's website.

Almost 75% of the faculty answered the survey; lots of free comments and responses were received.

Rich Williams was on the committee. Katherine Spiess presented summary slides to the Senate that highlighted key issues. A full report is available on the Provost's website. The committee did not see its primary role as making recommendations, although it included some in the report.

Background

All schools in the survey consortium are private universities, but Notre Dame was the only Catholic school and the only non-urban school.

Because the comparison schools didn't have all of our faculty categories, only instructional faculty are included in comparisons

Caveat: small sample sizes for minority faculty limits the ability to draw conclusions; also, most disaffected faculty tended not to disclose demographic info (this didn't significantly impact gender data, but it may have affected race data)

Overview of Results

Good news - overall high satisfaction

Bad news - there was not a single category where female faculty were more satisfied than male faculty

The female vs male dissatisfaction was not based on resource concerns. The committee could not identify any specific reason that drove the relative dissatisfaction.

Katherine was asked to identify the peer institutions in the survey, but she replied that under the agreement we are not allowed to name specific schools. However, Paul mentioned that SMU has a list of the schools on its website. (<http://smu.edu/Provost/IR/Resources/PeerUniversities>)

Satisfaction by Division

The Law School was the only division where female satisfaction exceeded male satisfaction

Comparison by Race/Ethnicity

Because of the relatively small sample sizes for various races and ethnicities, the committee aggregated all non-white faculty responses. Race & ethnicities were small, committees were aggregated and all non-white

Based on the small sample size and need to aggregate, the committee couldn't make clear conclusions, but there didn't seem to be significant differences from the results for white faculty.

Qualitative comments

Resource & support factors were largely positive. Some negative comments were identified.

Catholic character (Including gender comparisons)

The main difference involved "climate" and "diversity of opinion" - significantly fewer females had positive responses on these items (even male faculty agreement was relatively low - the lowest ranked individual items by males of any items on the survey)

Recommendations

The administration wants to address concerns regarding opportunities for female faculty being the same as those for male faculty, and for minority faculty opportunities to be the same as those for non-minority faculty.

The survey also identified concerns about leadership-faculty relations.

They are trying to gather input regarding areas of improvement, and then would like to come back in a few years to see how things are going.

Dan Myers opened the floor for questions/comments

Question: what accounted for dissatisfaction among female faculty?

Katherine: some salary/benefits issues, but mainly climate & opportunity-related issues

Question: how can we hire more female faculty, given the environmental issues

Katherine: we don't claim to have all answers, but at least some of the climate/opportunity concerns might be addressed if the numbers increase

Sandra Vera-Munoz agreed that it needs to be two pronged approach - hiring more female faculty will itself help improve the climate, given strength in numbers

Katherine noted that the top work-related stress factor was inter-office politics:

Question: Asked for clarification regarding the Catholic character responses

Katherine: issues of Catholic character show up in both what are the most positive aspects and what are the most negative aspects, and also regarding areas for improvement

Dan Myers: concerns were expressed (mainly in the open-ended comments) regarding discrimination for both being too Catholic or not Catholic enough

Q: Is the committee getting any great recommendations from group meetings

Dan: we've gotten a number of recommendations so far (including from the web site), but deans want to hold off on concrete recommendations until they have a chance to discuss this in local groups; so far, recommendations are what might have been expected

Rich Williams: the survey is useful because it shows the concerns aren't just concerns of a few unhappy faculty members

Question: is the survey confidential within Notre Dame?

Dan: you need Notre Dame credentials to access it on the website, but it's not viewed as secret; if you want to show it to anyone, that's ok.

7. Committee Reports

A. Academic Affairs

A potential collaboration with the University in China [Xixang] is being discussed, which would involve a joint liberal arts campus (they approached us). It is a highly respected university, and we've already had interactions with the university

Notre Dame has signed an agreement to pursue negotiations, but we are not yet ready to make a decision because of the need for faculty input.

The Committee has concerns because it's all very vague. It's a risky undertaking, but it may have the potential for high reward

Christopher Shields noted that he experienced academic freedom when he was in China, although limitations on the Internet there are real.

There already is a program in Beijing, which seems to have addressed academic freedom issues

But this proposal would go beyond that program, by trying to replicate our traditional 4-year liberal arts program

Committee's Conclusion: the faculty, through the Faculty Senate, should examine this further.

Gundi Müller has served on the University committee that discussed this issue, and thinks this could be a very interesting opportunity. She noted that this issue might move quickly and we should have a voice. She will be at a town hall meeting on this issue on Friday, so please submit comments/questions to her. Also, feel free to send both positive comments and concerns to Nick Entrikin

B. Administrative Affairs (Jeanne Romero-Severson)

Walt Nicgorski's proposed resolution on the role of the relationship between the Administration and the Faculty Senate was discussed

The committee plans to make some wording modifications, and will propose a modified resolution for approval at the next meeting. Paul will put it early on the next meeting's agenda.

C. Benefits (Nasir Ghiaseddin)

There have been inconsistent answers provided to the committee on some 403b issues; we will ask for clarification.

The University has established a committee to discuss what, if anything, will happen to the health plan when the "Cadillac" tax kicks in. Nasir is on the committee and will report back to the Senate on developments.

D. Student Affairs

The parking issue was raised. Student parking is worse than faculty parking. GSU will propose to university that library parking shuttle run later to accommodate needs. The Committee plans to draft a resolution of support. Paul noted that the Faculty Senate might vote on the resolution electronically so it can be timely before our next (February) meeting

8. New Business

None

9. Next Meeting - Tuesday, February 3, 7:00pm, 129 DeBartolo

10. Adjournment at 8:51pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Kirsch
Professor of Law
Co-Secretary