

Minutes of the Faculty Senate
7:00 pm, Tuesday April 1, 2014 – 140 DBRT
Room 140 DeBartolo

Attendees: Gail Bederman, William Berry, Karen Buranskas, Matthew Capdevielle, Mark Caprio, Jeremiah Castle, Anne Coleman, Xavier Creary, Matthew Devine, John Gaski, Nasir Ghiaseddin, Alexandra Guisinger, Martin Haenggi, Michael Hemler, Danielle Joyner, Michael Kirsch, Linda Major, Paul McGinn, Hildegund Muller, Walter Nicgorski, Dianne Pinderhughes, Kali Rath, Denis Robichaud, Jeanne Romero-Severson, Frank Rossi, Joshua Shrout, Marsha Stevenson, Sandra Vera-Munoz, Richard Williams

Excused: Anjan Chakravartty, Antonio Delgado, Dennis Doordan, Liangyan Ge, Matthew Leevy, Carolyn Nordstrom, Catherine Perry,

Absent: John Duffy, David Gasperetti, George Howard, Eric Morgan, Sylwia Ptsinska, John Stamper, Meng Wang, Bruce Williams

Meeting began at 7:03 pm.

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introduction of Senators
3. Approval of Minutes of the March 4, 2014 meeting
 - a. Question were raised about a Faculty Senate member serving on the Committee for the School of Global Affairs, it stays in the minutes with Dianne Pinderhughes' name added.
 - b. Minutes approved.
3. Chair's remarks
 - a. Academic Council – No March Meeting
 - b. Mentoring Policy Survey was finished and sent to the Provost. A copy will be posted on the website.

c. Benefits Committee met with Chris Mazier on 3/21. She will visit the Senate in the late fall. There are several graphs that show general salary comparisons. Notre Dame seems to be consistently below the salaries for comparative schools. A request has been made to put the graphs on the website as well.

d. Benefits also had a meeting with HR – big change about to be announced in 403b to simplify investments. External record keeper will be Fidelity, there will be different tiers that allow people to choose how active they can be with their investments. Meetings will start with advisors in the fall to facilitate the changes.

e. Reception with Fr. Jenkins in the Library Penthouse on April 15. It is the second night of Passover, but this is the date that could work with Fr. Jenkins. Any questions to be addressed by Fr. Jenkins need to be sent to Monica within the week.

f. Elections will be held at the next meeting. Certain rules pertain to the election process Josh Shroul has agreed to chair the elections committee. 4 other volunteers were needed on the committee, representatives from different colleges. Jeanne Romero-Severson from Biology, Matthew Capdevielle, an SPF in the University Writing Program, Hildegund Müller, Classics and Mike (last name?) have volunteered to be on the committee. The slate includes a Chair, Vice Chair, 2 Co-Secretaries and a Treasurer. Candidates need to be assembled by the next meeting for the election. Chairs of committees have been asked to write reports about what the committee has done this year and what is still pending. This will help with continuity from one year to the next.

g. Physical Education – P.E. requirement is now defunct. Instead, 7 new themes were developed and students will take courses associated with those themes. The committee asked the Provost's Office to help reassign those people who will lose their jobs because of this requirement change. It is on its way to the Academic Council next.

h. Academic Council Undergraduate Studies Committee is revising the Absence Policy. No more than 2 job interviews per semester can qualify for an excused absence, and the student must provide proof of the job interview. Non-acute medical conditions are not excused. Notes from Rectors are no longer acceptable, only Health Center notes will be acceptable for an excused absence. Religious holy days, military service and legal proceedings are now considered excused absences. Instructors will need to provide an unexcused absence policy according to the Academic Code, so the Dean can review decisions made. There were several questions and discussion about details.

- i. Bill Berry has completed his second 3-year term as a representative of emeriti/ae – shout-out from the Senate! John Gaski has completed 9 years of service as well, shout-out to him too.

4. Joshua Shroul presented the Administrative Affairs committee work on the Vote to join the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics.

- a. The committee unanimously recommends that the University decline the invitation to join. The invitation is to Faculty Senates to join an independent committee that would then perhaps exert influence on the NCAA. The Academic Affairs response clearly spells out the Pros & Cons of their findings. Questions and discussion ensued.

- b. Put to a vote. 23 members voted to decline / 0 voted to accept / ? voted to abstain.

5. Break for Committee Meetings at 7:53 pm.

6. Committee Reports.

- a. Academic Affairs – Room 140

- i. Brainstormed about questions to take to Fr. Jenkins

- ii. Topics for next year's committee, spending time either in committee or entire Senate discussing possibilities for action rather than just reaction. What are the strengths and possibilities of the Senate? How can the time be best used to solidify bridges across colleges and disciplines to allow for more cohesion.

- b. Administrative Affairs – Room 136

- i. Raised question about what is the purpose of the Senate, how it can affect change at the University.

- ii. Raised possibilities about business for next year. One is a concern for emeriti/ae, such as benefits, frozen health subsidy, and also that there is no organization for emeriti/ae faculty as there is at other universities (also no faculty club!), as well as a tendency in the university to drop emeriti/ae from various lists once they retire so the professors are “out of the loop” of communication.

c. Benefits – Room 131

- i. Committee meets regularly with HR to discuss various issues concerning benefits and health care. Recent 2 meetings with Chris Mazer about salaries and with HR about changes in retirement funds.
- ii. Faculty salaries have not been improving the last several years – there was no answer forthcoming from Chris Mazer. Only assistant professor salaries increasing to compete against the market.
- iii. Big changes in retirement investments, moving to a single record-keeper that will reduce administrative costs for faculty. Going to a flat fee for the administrative portion of the costs regardless of how much money is invested. Fidelity was chosen as record-keeper based on various criteria. It will be a four-tier system. Roth will be added as an option as well. Questions about TIAA Cref raised and discussed.

d. Student Affairs – Room 138

- i. Student comporment faculty survey is finished and it is currently being issued to a selection of faculty members.
- ii. Concern about the University’s policy on undergraduate audits, that is the prohibition against undergraduate auditing. Perhaps the registrar can explain?
- iii. New policy about “interview absences” which seems potentially problematic. The University ought to provide samples/models to offer language to faculty for their newly required need to put policies into their syllabuses. The faculty should not have to judge the validity of medical absences either. University should make clear to students how to request and appeal decisions.

7. New Business

- a. Issue of background checks raised again. Mismanagement of funds, sexual misconduct, and violent behavior are the three things that “get faculty in trouble.” An outside source would gather records for new hires and search for activities that are associated with the three categories of behavior mentioned above. Already employed faculty will not be checked. They are still working on the policy. Some discussion ensued.
- b. John Robinson had major knee surgery but he is better and now back on campus.

8. Next Meeting, 7:00 pm, Tuesday, May 6, 2014; 140 DBRT

9. Adjournment at 9:05.