

Agenda for Faculty Senate Meeting

7:00 pm, Tuesday, February 3, 2015– 129 DBRT

Attendees: Matthew Capdevielle, Mark Caprio, Christopher Chowrimootoo, Matthew Devine, John Duffy, David Galvin, John Gaski, Nasir Ghiaseddin, Alexandra Guisinger, Michael Hemler, Michael Kirsch, BJ Lee, Linda Major, Adam Martin, Paul McDowell, Paul McGinn, Hildegund Muller, Walter Nicgorski, Sylwia Ptasinska, Jeanne Romero-Severson, Cheri Smith, John Stamper, Marsha Stevenson, Joe Urbany, Meng Wang, Kyle Watson, Richard Williams, Xiaoshan Yang

Excused: Karen Burnaskas, David Gasperetti, Donald Kommers, Joshua Shrout

Absent: Xavier Creary, Liangyan Ge, George Howard, Hai Lin, John Polhamus, Christopher Shields, Sandra Vera-Munoz, Sophie White

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introductions
3. Approval of Minutes of the December 2, 2014 meeting – Approved by acclamation.
4. Chair's remarks – Follow up on concerns noted in December
 - a. On parking issues, bus schedules have been improved. There is an email address (parking@nd.edu) to deal with complaints.
 - b. Academic Council – no business so far; Faculty Affairs is formalizing the “Protection of Children Policy.”
 - c. A streamlining of the tenure appeals process that also abides by the Frese sexual discrimination class action settlement is being attempted. Presently it is possible that two parallel appeals processes might occur if possible sexual discrimination is a factor. ND would like to streamline this, but is still bound by the Frese decision. Hence any proposed changes need to be approved by participants in the class action lawsuit, not all of whom are still on or near campus.
 - d. Healthcare Strategy Workgroup now includes Nasir Ghiaseddin (with McGinn observing). The group is trying to reduce the rate of the increase in healthcare costs. Committee has 6 faculty and 6 staff and also includes a consultant for advice. McGinn had asked if a webpage could be provided to explain the issues. Communication consultants suggested that such a website might prove confusing. Thus news from the working group will not emerge until late Spring..

- e. Problems with 403b changes? Please let Nasir Ghiaseddin (Benefits committee chair) know.
- f. Senate Faculty needs to provide a representative on Campus Life Council. Position will last until the end of the year, but most of the work in the run up to trustee board meeting in April.
- g. On the Faculty or University Club desired by retirees (as surveyed by Nicgorski), there is a question about whether the faculty in general would support such a club. Nicgorski noted that this is a favorable moment because of the flexibility of space opened up by the new Stadium buildings. 3-4 years ago, faculty senate appeared to support such a club, but it hasn't been promoted since. Nicgorski noted that all major universities in U.S. and abroad have such a club. McGinn suggested an email survey.
- h. New administrative business raised by Rich Williams about increasing flexibility of policy concerning weather delays. Could non-essential staff be permitted later hours so that lots could be cleared properly etc.?

5. Dean John McGreevy and Dean Greg Crawford--Core Curriculum Review Committee

- a. McGreevy notes that every 10 years ND reviews the core curriculum. Currently 14 courses are required of all students. This current review specifically questions "What Knowledge, skills, and disposition that all students should hold by graduations?"
- b. Have created three focus groups
 - i. How should AP courses be counted?
 - ii. Could there be better advising?
 - iii. Can ND use core curriculum to strengthen connection to Catholic identity?
- c. Current issues
 - i. Currently core courses are "owned" by related departments. Should courses be distributed this way or should they be distributed by learning goals? For example, quantitative reasoning could be covered by a variety of departments.
 - ii. Thematic requirements. Half of "elite peers" have a thematic requirement, for example students must take a course on "Global Affairs" which will expose students to different cultures, politics, etc. Could we have themes on the environment or service or socio-economic differences?
 - iii. Skill outcomes. Almost all would like to see improvements in writing. How could further this? Should oral presentation skills also be promoted?
 - iv. Catholic Mission. Are current theology courses the best way to make this connection?

- v. Advanced Placement.
 - vi. Academic Advising.
 - vii. Delivery of courses. Most schools require core curriculum to be covered by tenured (or tenure track) faculty. At ND, especially in theology and math, many introductory courses are taught by graduate students.
- d. Request for Questions
- i. *Do other peers have similar religion requirements?* Yes, Boston College and Georgetown. Main student complaint is that the courses aren't integrated at all into other courses. Also complaints that "I did this in High School". McGreevy calls it the Grade 13 problem. ND needs to make core curriculum distinct from High School. BC is currently in year 4 of their curriculum review. They did a survey of alumni. Most students remember course called "Pulse" which is a combination of theology, philosophy, and service. Students clearly recall this course.
 - ii. *Has issue of international languages and experience been raised?* Issue is whether this should be a requirement. Already 55% do summer or semester abroad so numbers are already high. Some colleges have a language as a requirement and others don't (for example, Engineering and Business). The movement of students toward departments who don't have such a requirement has meant that fewer and fewer students are required by their major to take a language.
 - iii. John Duffy noted that students need to write well and speak well. Currently less than 50% of students are required to take a writing course because of the AP exemption. Also, there exists no coherent writing skill plan in all four years. Senior thesis important but needs planning earlier. Every department should have at least 2 courses focused on how to write in that discipline: how to write like a historian, a biologist. USEM set up that way but not clear if departments use it that way.
 - iv. Romero-Severson notes that since Biology AP is not accepted, everyone takes the intro course which is taught by tenure track faculty. One third of these students don't need to take this course. However, incentives persist because pushing larger courses with lots of contact hours can be viewed as important, particularly for the purpose of tenure.
 - v. Nicgorski notes the success of Boston College "Pulse" is replicated in other colleges. Yale for example. Very strong students interested in developing knowledge in catholic tradition would benefit from reading classic readings from this tradition – Dante, Pascal, etc. To do this,

would need to say that Catholic Character is not deepened by specific distribution but instead by common text.

- vi. Sherry Smith of Hesburgh library followed John Duffy's point about writing and speaking; students also need to learn how to gather and use information, efficiently and ethically. Currently, students can graduate without having to do research. Theses offer an opportunity, but if the first time they are accessing information is with the thesis, it is too late. Course to discover information and create information on their own.
 - vii. McGreevy had poll on whether faculty senate thought there should be a senior thesis requirement. 50/50 split which he said mimicked the split on the committee.
 - viii. Paul McDowell from Romance Languages pushed for pedagogical innovation as a way to make the course more interesting to students.
 - ix. McGreevy speculated that learning goals might break the students' belief that they are just jumping through hoops when thinking about the core requirements.
 - x. Another suggestion was offered that spreading out requirements would help since students might enjoy courses more.
 - xi. Marianne McDowell asked if committee had considered how the core linked together students. McGreevy thought that in fact rather than creating community, the linkage created this issue of a 13th grade.
 - xii. Matt Divine – noted that students might be over eager to dive in to specific reason that they came to ND. Students who take courses later tend to enjoy them more.
 - xiii. Romero-Severson asked whether it is currently a requirement to take core courses in the first years. McGreevy said no, however, advising tends to direct students in that way.
 - xiv. Questions raised about disjuncture between 10 year cycles of reviews the consistency of policy for the last 40 years. Is there real sense of a need to change? McGreevy said that is not clear. Different groups have different opinions.
 - xv. McGinn asked about the process. Given all this advice, how will the final decision be made? McGreevy said would like to have proposal submitted in the fall, followed by a full year of discussion, and then will got to the Academic Council.
 - xvi. Question about the committee composition. McGreevy noted that one can find it on the website and in emails.
6. Resolution Concerning the Role of Senate from the Administrative Affairs Committee. Current text submitted, but a revision requested. Committee agreed on it, although with some disagreement particularly on final paragraph.
- a. Text:

Whereas the Academic Articles of the University of Notre Dame specify in Article I, Section 2 that “ordinarily, the President is guided in setting policy and making decisions by consultation with the other senior administrators, by the deliberations of the Academic Council, and by the recommendation of the Faculty Senate,” and those Articles later speak of the Senate’s range of concern extending “to matters affecting the faculty as a whole and to matters on which a faculty perspective is appropriate,”

Whereas those same Articles authorize the Senate to adopt bylaws that govern its internal operations, and those Bylaws so adopted describe the Senate as an “assembly elected to represent the faculty as a whole in the formulation of policy affecting the entire life of the University” and as an “assembly through which the faculty can exercise a collective and independent voice in the governance of the University,” and the Bylaws then entrust the Senate to form recommendations reflecting the faculty’s independent voice in matters affecting the life of the University.

Whereas the last year has witnessed the failure of the central Administration to consult the Senate on significant matters affecting the faculty as a whole and the life and future of the University – most notably, changes in the 403b retirement plan and the development of the Crossroads Project – and this in the light of the serious concern of the entire faculty about their lack of participation in the governance of the University, a concern emphatically present in the recent Faculty Experience Survey reported to the Senate.

Therefore, the Senate requests that, in the future, the central Administration consult the Senate in advance on significant matters affecting the faculty and future of the University or, as a matter of policy on faculty governance, reconsider the reason for the continued existence of the Senate.

b. Request for comments

- i. Nicgorski thanked the committee for the seriousness of the discussion and the importance of reminding the administration about the existence of the Senate and its role in advising.
 1. Commendation of the final paragraph by John Gaski.
 2. Question about meaning of paragraph. What is meant by “reconsideration”? Romero-Severson noted that was meant to be ambiguous. Others questioned whether ambiguity was a good thing. Didn’t want them to consider abolishing senate for example. Nicgorski thought the ambiguity pointed out that if the Faculty Senate is not consulted in a time fashion, it does in fact raise the purpose of the Senate’s existence.

3. Question about who this should be sent to. Who is the central administration? Romero-Severson's understanding was that the central administration is 3 people - JAG, Burish, and Jenkins – and thus should be sent to them to then be trickled down.
- ii. Suggested that to resolve ambiguity, resolution should include proposals that would lead to better integration of the Faculty Senate. Also, it was suggested that faculty should have a better sense of selves as a body. This raised a series of questions and comments on what the Senate can do. Clear can only “advise”. Can only change own rules.
 1. Library senator raised point that at a library event, Burish had noted that the Senate Faculty was weaker here than any other university. Issue not unknown to Burish. Follow up point that this should increase the need to put in specific role in the final paragraph.
 2. John Gaski noted in past resolutions have been effective. Ghiaseddin noted Senate lobbied how University calculated pension. Changes in TIAA-CREF.
 3. John Duffy notes that on the core curriculum review website there is a critique of the process from Tom Stapleford of Liberal Studies who argues that faculty senate should be central to discussion of Core Curriculum changes.
 4. McGinn noted that Senate can also take advantage of presenting in front of the Trustees. Predecessors had done less.
 5. Point that Senate may also need to write resolution to themselves since could have taken a more active role. Many of these events have been known and yet we as a group haven't been proactive in voicing our opinion.
 6. Williams argued that senate has mattered in scaring the administration.
 7. Student represented another direction for influence is the Campus Life Council. Trustees formed Council to be voice of stakeholders and must discuss any resolution within 24 hours. Faculty Senate should consider utilizing it more.
 8. Another member suggested pushing for a representative of the faculty senate on the core curriculum committee. While a member does currently sit on the committee, he does so as a representative of the School of Architecture and not as a member of the Faculty Senate.
 - iii. Romero-Severson suggested that the Senate should continue to advise on wording and moved to postpone the vote.

1. Nicgorski noted concern about further delay and about overloading the document. Requested only amendment of final sentence.
2. Disagreement over final wording returned suggestion of postponement.
3. Resolved to send suggestions to Romero-Severson for changes before next Faculty Senate meeting.

7. Committee Reports

- a. None

8. New Business

- a. See in Chair's remarks above, points f,g, and h.

9. Next Meeting, 7:00 pm, Tuesday, March 3, 2015; 140 DBRT

10. Adjournment @ 8:52.