

Minutes of the Faculty Senate
Wednesday 06 December 2006, 4:00 pm
Red Room, Woodard Campus Center

Stephen Fuller (FSP) called the meeting to order at 4:02pm. After a few minor changes, the minutes of the 01 November meeting were approved.

Academic Affairs Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Budget Committee

Charles Sharpless (CHEM) said that the administration was soliciting ideas for capital improvement projects. He directed the Senate's attention to the part of the agenda packet with proposed expenditures. An engineering report is due shortly that will provide funds for those buildings whose maintenance has been deferred. Also, there is a proposed Unified Budget Amendment for the Virginia Senate, including changes to funding, faculty salaries and financial aid. Prof. Sharpless has these figures. He also had an explanation for why SCHEV figures do not match our average salaries: back in 1989, a formula was created to represent salaries, but this formula has never been updated and thus does not represent actual developments in faculty salaries. This is to be rectified shortly.

Campus Academic Resources Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Curriculum Committee

Charles Whipkey (ENVS-GEOL) had a few corrections to the report. Some changes to the Environmental Science major were approved but not included in the report in the Senate agenda.

Prof. Rycroft wanted to know why Computer Science's request to renumber a course was not approved. Prof. Morello said that this was because the course's prerequisite had a higher number than the renumbered course. Karen Anewalt (CMPSCI) suggested that this may have been a typographical error. Prof. Fuller said that such changes would appear in the approved minutes. Marie McAllister (At-Large) asked whether there were questions about the evaluation of the URES course. Prof. Morello said that individual faculty workload would be evaluated in the future based more on workload than number of students. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) asked about the difference between the minutes viewed in the agenda packet and the approved minutes: would we ever see the approved minutes? Prof. Fuller answered that we would see either those or something from the chair of the relevant committee but that this might be a problem. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) said that he would expect people to act responsibly in these matters. Prof. Davidson replied that the Senate was in theory a check on the power of the Curriculum Committee and that approving unseen minutes was a potentially difficult ramification.

Faculty Affairs Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Faculty Organization Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Bachelor of Liberal Studies Committee

Marie McAllister (At-Large) asked whether by putting a statement on American Sign Language into the report, the Committee would not consider that option: why was ASL being ruled out? Charles Sharpless (CHEM) replied that a certain number of credits would be allowed, but that there would be a cap: however, this was missing from the proposal. Prof. Fuller answered that he thought ASL would be allowed as elective credit but not to fulfill the language requirement. Prof. McAllister suggested that the minutes should be more explicit and that the Committee should provide justification. Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) concurred.

Global Awareness Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Race and Gender Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Writing Intensive Committee

There were no questions asked about this report.

Speaking Intensive Committee

Marie McAllister (At-Large) wanted to know what “evaluator fidelity is an issue” means, and what “ratings for teachers” means. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) wanted clarification on the statement about “current requirements of 2 SI courses are of concern to the committee”. He wondered whether this meant that the requirement was to be expanded or scaled back. Prof. Marsh replied that it was more a question of skill development than changing the requirement.

General Education Committee

Prof. Fuller said that Linguistics 202 was to be “Cross-cultural Communication”, not “Communications”. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) asked about the committee’s procedure: an online emergency meeting and business had been conducted, and he felt this was irregular. He asked for clarification. As the chair of the Committee was not present, no authoritative explanation was provided. Prof. Morello replied that there was a meeting scheduled to consider the proposal, and that this had been done in collaboration with the FSEM committee. As the scheduled meeting had been due to take place on the day before Thanksgiving, the meeting was postponed by consensus. The issue at hand was that adding WI status to FSEM courses

required the approval of the General Education Committee. It had been possible to postpone the meeting because the question was essentially moot.

President of the Senate – Oral Report

Marcel Rotter (MDFL) asked about the ten positions and the additional money added. Was this to be for new proposals or would old proposals be considered? Dean Barra replied that what she had presented to the Board was that originally we'd been given \$400k for the joint positions; they recommended six proposals. This would have added additional cost, so President Frawley increased the funding to \$500k to approve those positions. The \$100k referred to later is available for proposals relating to joint projects between the two campuses, for which the due date is 15 December. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) asked about the six positions: was there a standard system for sharing them between the campuses, and what were the requirements for tenure? Dean Barra replied that this was being addressed on an individual basis: four will be tenure-track and two will not. A joint meeting for faculty involved in these positions will take place on 08 December. Some of the rejected positions were turned down not out of a lack of merit but because they really weren't joint positions.

Prof. Rotter asked about the language program at Dahlgren: the MDFL department was unaware of any such program. Nina Mikhailevsky replied that discussions were underway with the Joint Warfare centre as to how we could help them. They are particularly interested in Middle Eastern and North African studies as well as critical language studies. The discussions are as yet too embryonic for Dean Barra to have brought it to the department's attention. Galen DeGraff (BUSAD) asked what the percentage of the costs of the new positions represented fringe benefits. Dean Barra replied that it was approximately 33%.

Jason Davidson (POLSCI) asked whether the proposal's language about residence halls meant building new ones or renovating old ones. Dean Barra said it was about building new ones, but that this project was more of a wish list than a firm plan and that no location had been decided upon. Prof. Davidson said that we had been repeatedly told that there was no room for a childcare centre and that the idea of building new residence halls called that into question. Dean Barra replied that funds relating to student activities could be procured from the state, but that funds relating to childcare could not. She said that the lack of location referred to no location within the current buildings. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) said that there were in fact prospective locations but that the funding for a residence hall could not come from the state. Ms. Mikhailevsky replied that there had been some discussion about trying to finesse this by making proposed residence halls more multifunctional spaces, which would enable state funding to be procured.

Report of the President-Elect

Mary Rigsby (ENLS) provided a handout detailing some of the highlights of the Faculty Senate of Virginia. The FSV was pleased with the UMW donation. Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) asked about the first initiative, recruiting and retaining faculty. Prof. Rigsby said that this would be reintroduced without a request for funding; this would make it more likely to pass through committee.

Report of the Interim Dean of the Faculty

Dean Barra arose to speak about the FSEM program. She asked Prof. Mellinger to speak on these issues and provided a handout with information from the questionnaires from the current FSEM students.

Prof. Mellinger said that the data seem to say that the courses are meeting our vision. He directed the Senate's attention to the question of whether students felt that the course had achieved the goal of helping students develop the skills for liberal learning. 97% of respondents answered in the affirmative. He also received non-quantitative information from faculty, who felt the FSEM was also a success.

Mindy Erchull (PSYCH) wondered whether the questions were yes/no only or did they contain another option. Prof. Mellinger answered yes. Prof. Erchull felt that yes/no questions did not provide a great deal of valuable information. Prof. Mellinger answered that most questions were worded as to make a comparison with students' other first-year courses. Kristin Marsh (At-Large) said that it would be more refined to ask a question that did not have a binary answer. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) suggested that it would be worthwhile to have more categories rather than binary answers. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) wanted to know whether the Office of Planning and Assessment had participated in the survey; Prof. Mellinger answered in the affirmative.

Dean Barra continued by reiterating that the deadline for new Fall 2007 FSEM proposals was 08 December.

With respect to faculty searches, there are six new joint positions and twelve new searches, most of which are the result of retirements or sabbatical replacements. As a result of reviewing the departments' strategic plans, the administration has a number of suggestions to departments; these will be submitted to the President's office in February and the searches will take place in the 2007-08 academic year. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) asked whether, given the lateness of the hour, if a search failed would the department have authority to run the search in the following year? Dean Barra replied that this was mostly the case. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) asked whether Dean Barra had met with department chairs on the strategic plans. She replied that she was in the process of doing so but had not yet finished. Prof. Watkins wanted to know what the overall recommendations would be, but Dean Barra said that this would not take place until the middle of the Spring semester.

Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) asked about the ATC designation deadline for FSEM courses. Dean Barra said that this was 01 February.

Dean Barra spoke on the General Education Review Committee, which is due to meet on 15 December and will take a one-day retreat in January. Everyone has the ability to participate in the wiki on this issue by visiting "jtmorello.org/gened".

Dean Barra announced the 2006 Faculty Achievement Awards. Thirteen individuals will be receiving awards. Marie McAllister (At-Large) asked about awards: was outstanding service or teaching to be rewarded? Dean Barra said that she was looking not so much for the accomplishment as the outside honor. A press release will be given to the public presently. Nomination for future awards will be from the department chairs and staff perusal of FAARs.

Dean Barra asked the Senate to charge the Faculty Affairs Committee to make changes in the faculty evaluation process. She feels the rigidity of the current 50/25/25 system does not take into account faculty who are operating under reduced teaching loads. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) raised a procedural question: should a motion be proposed to send this to committee? Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) made such a motion. This was seconded and referred to the Faculty Affairs Committee.

Report of the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs

Prof. Morello said that IDIS courses are created by faculty and go into the catalogue, but sometimes departments do not consider whether they should withdraw inactive IDIS courses. He feels that it is time to review these courses.

Nina Mikhailevsky was attending the meeting to answer questions regarding the email policy. She said that when President Frawley arrived at the university, he became aware that there were a significant number of broadcast emails going out; he felt that these were generally ignored by students because of the number and perceived lack of significance of such messages. The development of a viable listserv system and portal at the university is intended to address this issue: this will be ready in approximately 8-10 weeks. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) asked about mass emails to staff: Ms. Mikhailevsky said that there were a great number of them. Marie McAllister (At-Large) asked whether there would be an all-faculty listserv: Ms. Mikhailevsky replied in the affirmative, but that she felt it unlikely that faculty would have a need to send mail to all other faculty. Melina Patterson (GEOG) raised the question of whether there were cases in which mass emails were in fact useful: Ms. Mikhailevsky demurred. Prof. Patterson felt that she was capable of deciding for herself whether she felt an email was important and didn't mind occasionally receiving irrelevant emails. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) said that it seemed that, since Ms. Mikhailevsky had stated that the faculty were not responsible for previous abuses of the system, the faculty were being burdened with the inability to communicate with peers. Ms. Mikhailevsky said that the faculty still had this ability but that it had to pass through the gateway of the administration. Dean Barra said that mass messages should go through *Digest*, but it was generally agreed that nobody reads *Digest*. David Long (MUSIC) felt he was more willing to put up with the abuse than to have the privilege taken away: he did not feel that the solution to students' not reading email was to take away the ability to send email. He felt it was demeaning to his colleagues for them to have to ask him as chair or the administration to send a message. Prof. Davidson said that he did not see the chair element in the email. Charles Sharpless (CHEM) felt that the portal was a good tool but that nobody used it: students should use the portal rather than webmail. Ms. Mikhailevsky said that this was true but that it required the portal to be better designed, and that this was underway.

Report of the President of the Honour Council

Stephen Gregg III gave his report. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) asked about the radical change in the structure of the Honor Council: that the Dean was no longer an observer but now had extraordinary powers. Mr. Gregg felt that these changes were not so radical: the Board of Visitors had amended the bylaws to allow the President to supervise the council, in concordance with most other universities' policies. This also solved the problem that arose from students' not being covered by the Attorney General of the Commonwealth. Galen DeGraff

(BUSAD) said there were thirty new faculty on campus this year and asked whether anything was being done to train them. Mr. Gregg said that this related to changes in the constitution and the lack of an updated guidebook: the updated book is due to be distributed soon.

Old Business

The motion about retaking prerequisite courses was addressed. Randall Helmstutler (MATH) said that his department had concerns about academic integrity: if a student were a major in a subject, they could retake a low-level course and use knowledge developed over time in the major to obtain a better grade in that low-level course. Problems with Banner, in Prof. Helmstutler's opinion, did not provide sufficient justification for the proposed new policy. Andrew Dolby (BIOL) concurred. Prof. Rotter felt this would exacerbate problems already widely prevalent in the MDL department. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) asked about the number of students repeating courses. Roy Gordon replied that the number was in fact quite small and that the grade change would not significantly alter a student's overall GPA. Prof. Rotter replied that the proposed policy raised issues of academic integrity. Prof. Gordon said that it was not unreasonable for a student to want to demonstrate basic proficiency. Karen Anewalt (CMPSCI) wondered whether completing higher-level courses did not in fact indicate that a student had mastered lower-level skills. Prof. Gordon said that this was not always the case. Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) said that nobody had ever been hurt by reviewing basic skills. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) said that the proposed new policy would place upperclassmen and women in seats that were needed by first- and second-year students. The student representative spoke in favor of the proposed new policy, feeling that the current policy was punitive. Kristin Marsh (At-Large) felt that students should be allowed to retake all courses. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) felt that it was laudable that students wanted to re-master skills.

The motion was voted upon and passed, 15 to 9, with one abstention.

New Business

The motion on the guaranteed admission agreement was brought to the floor. It was passed by general acclamation.

The motion on UMW undergraduates enrolling in UMW graduate courses was brought to the floor. Gary Stanton (HISPRES) wondered whether graduate credits counted as full-time enrollment, and whether there were additional fees. Prof. Gordon said that there were no additional fees but that a part-time student would be charged as such. Prof. Fuller said that the motion made it clear that such courses did not count toward the undergraduate degree. Galen DeGraff (BUSAD) wondered whether such courses would count toward a student's future graduate studies. Dean Barra said no, they would not. Mindy Erchull (PSYCH) wondered why six credit hours couldn't count toward the 122, as this was more advanced coursework and might count toward certain certification. Dean Barra said that graduate credits may be counted toward a UMW masters' degree. Prof. Morello said that one solution might be to develop a paired 400/500 level course. Prof. Erchull thanked him. Marie McAllister (At-Large) wondered why the cap was six credits. Dean Barra said that this was intended for students who wanted to dip a toe in the water of graduate studies. The motion was passed by general acclamation.

The motion on the accelerated degree programs was brought to the floor. Galen DeGraff (BUSAD) had an issue with the wording of the first paragraph: it implied that if studies were

not resumed within a certain period of time, the credits might not count toward the undergraduate degree. An amendment was offered to change “may” to “will” in order to eliminate this linguistic ambiguity. Gary Stanton (HISPRES) asked about 400/500 level courses and whether students taking such courses would be held to higher standards for graduate students. Prof. Morello said that a student pursuing the accelerated program would take the 500 level version because only that would count toward the graduate degree. Prof. DeGraff wondered whether a student could then take a core course on the other campus. Dean Barra said that as long as an accelerated program did not exist, this would not be possible, and that any such programs that were developed would be able to set requirements on this issue. Marie McAllister (At-Large) wondered whether the proposed framework might impede the development of future programs. The motion was passed by general acclamation.

The motion on urging the administration not to undertake background checks on new faculty hires was brought to the floor. Charles Sharpless (CHEM) wanted to know what perceived need the background checks filled. Prof. Rotter brought up the situation wherein a candidate had been accused of murder, though charges were later dropped. Bulent Atalay (PHYS) brought up the situation some years previously wherein an individual had been teaching at three different universities under three different names. Prof. Campbell referred to this individual as a “real go-getter” and opined that the University would be well-served by such hard-working faculty. The motion was passed by general acclamation.

The motion on the budget committee was brought to the floor. Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) said that her department felt that the Budget Committee should remain a subcommittee of the Senate. She proposed a friendly amendment along those lines. Mary Rigsby (ENLS) seconded this motion. Stephen Watkins (ENLS) pointed out that this made it a replacement motion. Prof. Fuller agreed and placed that motion on the floor. Jason Davidson (POLSCI) wondered what the selection procedure would be. Prof. Gossetti-Murrayjohn said that this would remain under the purview of the Senate. Prof. Rigsby suggested sending the motion back to the committee. David Long (MUSIC) said that there was a motion from a committee and that the Senate would need to table the motion, send it to committee or form a committee of the whole. Much procedural discussion ensued. Prof. Watkins made a motion to table the motion and to form an *ad hoc* subcommittee. Prof. McAllister felt it was problematic to overrule the committee’s recommendations. Dean Barra said that there were issues with the current motion: the Dean of the Faculty was not part of the committee and thus item 3 was inappropriate. Also, the faculty committee will not have any jurisdiction in the affairs of the UMW Foundation, as this foundation is a completely separate activity. Ms. Mikhailevsky suggested that the current advisory committee be given a couple of months to work out the details of with what the proposed committee might be charged. Further procedural discussion ensued. Melina Patterson (GEOG) suggested that time be taken at the next meeting of the Senate to discuss these issues. This was agreed upon.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:26pm.