

UMW Faculty Senate
Wednesday 30 January 2008, 16h00
Red Room, Woodard Campus Centre

Steve Fuller (President) called the meeting to order at 16:03. The minutes of the December meeting were approved after a couple of minor changes to Dean Barra's report.

Reports

Report of the Acting Provost

Provost Mikhalevsky spoke about the committee that has recently been constituted on University Faculty Governance. This committee will report to her in early March and its recommendations and the Provost's notes on same will be circulated shortly thereafter to various constituencies, including department chairs. She has also formed two working groups, on education and business, intended to facilitate communication among the faculty in those disciplines on the two campuses. The membership of all three committees is included in her report.

Provost Mikhalevsky then spoke about the committee intended to facilitate the process of creating a University Teaching Center, which will replace TIP across both campuses. This committee will select a director for this teaching center and is currently soliciting applications.

Mary Rigsby (President-Elect) said that the list of questions about this program was so long that it would be best not to use Senate time for them: a meeting was taking place on Thursday 31 January and these questions would be addressed therein. The Provost said that she was hesitant to do too much meeting or to provide more than the barest structural outline for this program, as she felt it would ultimately be the responsibility of the director and the various constituencies to structure the program in detail. She felt that the pending resolution assumed that the program had already been more fully structured than it actually had been.

Prof. Rigsby said that the main concern of many was twofold: how the search committee was selected and why there wasn't greater faculty involvement in the discussions about who among the faculty would be appropriate for this committee. The Provost answered that she had asked the deans for members who would have demonstrable records of teaching and who were aware of the faculty on both campuses; these members were also those who had experience in searches and administration. In addition, she wanted a chair who was already tenured, i.e., was not standing for tenure and was a member of the CAS faculty.

Prof. Rigsby wanted to know why the Provost had consulted exclusively with the deans. The Provost took issue with the word "exclusively," but felt that the deans were best qualified to know the faculty.

Prof. Rigsby observed that the process seemed "compressed enough that the engagement of the faculty in selecting search committee members was too quickly done." The Provost agreed that it was quick and that the timetable was tight, but felt that this had not been done "too" quickly. Her main concern was that the new director get on board before students registered for fall courses, as the director was likely to need time off from teaching. She felt that the faculty was so strong that nearly any faculty member would be able to perform well, but that the choice of director was key.

Margaret Mi (BUSAD) wanted to know whether the director would receive release time. The Provost answered that it would be a half-time teaching load, but that specific circumstances would determine this. Prof. Mi said that it appeared as if several programs were to be aggregated, and that this involved much release time, and therefore the director ought to be a full-time position. The Provost

answered that she felt we really needed to build the teaching center, and that as it evolved, the specifics of the position might change. After two years, the position would be revisited.

Charles Sharpless (CHEM) said that there were a number of questions in the resolution, and that it was best to answer them now. He asked about the cutting of funding to the TIP programs. The Provost said that funding was being pulled from different sources, and that if there were programs funded from TIP that the faculty felt were beneficial, these should be brought to the attention of the director, who would then choose from the limited funds available which programs to continue supporting.

Eric Gable (SOCANTH) asked what might happen if the search committee decided that a teaching center that included both campuses wasn't useful, i.e., whether it might be better to have two separate directors for two very different campuses. He also asked what might happen if the position evolved into an entirely administrative position: would the salary increase implied by this reduce overall funding? The Provost responded that decisions about funding could be made in a variety of ways: even if there were a salary increase, it might come from other sources. If the director position became a full-time administrative position, there would most likely be a national search involved. As for Prof. Gable's first question, the Provost answered that courses of study and curricula were very different even within each campus. She envisioned the new teaching center as a rich source for information about teaching, including the specifics of any given course of study.

Gary Stanton (HPRES) said that by choosing a new model, the new center will cut off activities that have come to be part of the TIP center, and we may need to find another form of support, especially for new faculty. The improvement of teaching is becoming an administrative rather than collegial issue. The Provost respectfully disagreed, saying that programs that were considered valuable could continue through the new center; nothing precluded this. She felt that a structure that accommodated a multiplicity of initiatives across both campuses was what was needed; TIP is local to the Fredericksburg campus, whereas the director of the new center will report to her. This elevates teaching to a higher level of importance.

Margaret Ray (ECON) returned to the selection of the search committee. She felt that either she had missed calls for interest in participation or she was not considered for membership. The Provost said that she had put out a call for the committee on university faculty governance. Prof. Ray wondered about the teaching center search committee. The Provost answered that the criteria were so broad that there was no way that the search committee could be other than objective. She mentioned that the search committee's email had solicited information as well as nominations. She had felt that a smaller committee would be better. Ultimately, the Provost felt that putting a director in place and then soliciting faculty input about the specifics of the program was a better idea than soliciting faculty input on the membership of the search committee.

Prof. Rigsby reiterated that there is already a strong program on teaching and pedagogy on campus, and that it cannot continue if the Provost blocks it off. The Provost responded that it was not being blocked, but rather placed under a larger, more comprehensive structure. Prof. Rigsby said that these programs were lost for the next year: the Provost said that this was not necessarily the case.

Mary Beth Matthews (CPR) asked if these cross-campus relations were so important, why hadn't it begun earlier than December? She felt that a key part of the Provost's message through her actions was that the responsibility had been taken away from the faculty. The Provost said that it had to do with time, budget and giving adequate notice to the director of TIP. Once this notice had been given, the news got out, and the faculty needed to know more about the issue. She said that things had not

started until December because she wanted the TIP people to have a whole semester to finish what they were doing; moreover, time had been taken up by the reforms to the General Education requirements, and this had pushed back the announcement of the new initiative. She felt that the college's having become a university necessitated the larger teaching and pedagogy center.

Prof. Rigsby returned to the question of urgency: she felt it might work better if time were taken to allow the faculty full input into the development of the center. The Provost answered that the new program represented a reduction, rather than an increase, of administrative input into teaching and pedagogical programs. She said that nobody had yet made any decisions as to which programs would go forward.

Melina Patterson (GEOG) wanted to know whether things had been cancelled. The Provost answered that anything that had been funded through TIP would be funded through the new center, starting at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Suzanne Sumner, the current TIP director, said that some of the confusion came from the notes from the chairs' meeting, wherein it said that all TIP initiatives after this semester would be cancelled.

The Provost suggested that faculty ask the search committee to place on their agenda the question of what initiatives might survive. She suggested that the new director be placed in charge of such decisions.

Dean Barra arose to say that because TIP will no longer exist, it cannot have any funding, and therefore any commitments it made will not be on the schedule. However, because the funding will be switched to the new center, and it is possible that certain initiatives will still be funded through the new center, but it is up to the director of the new center to make these decisions.

Prof. Patterson said that this information had come down to the faculty that such initiatives were simply gone; the Provost agreed to attempt to clarify this.

Kristen Marsh (At-Large) wanted to know why there couldn't be some continuity. The Provost answered that this question was best posed to the search committee. Prof. Marsh wanted to know how a department could go forward with planning schedules without knowing anything; the Provost answered that they couldn't, and that the upcoming semester's schedules were being submitted without such presumptions.

Anand Rao (ESL) wondered how it would be practical for the new director to make such decisions on such a compressed schedule. The Provost responded that this was unlikely to be practical, and reiterated that departments should submit a schedule without presumptions.

Prof. Rigsby pointed out that the Provost kept saying that she, the Provost, had taken initiative and that even though it was ultimately the faculty's responsibility, the faculty had not been sufficiently consulted. The Provost answered that at the end of the day, she had certain responsibilities, and that she was empowered to choose the search committee, and that she would be choosing the first director of the center. Prof. Rigsby said that this had the feeling of "destroying the village in order to save the village," and spoke of the work of the numerous faculty members to create the existing structure. The Provost reiterated that the TIP program reported to the Dean of Arts and Sciences, and that this new teaching center simply represented a change in administrative structure: nothing precluded TIP initiatives from being subsumed into the new teaching center.

Prof. Gable suggested that in the future, it might be better, overall, in order to maintain faculty morale, to refrain from moving too quickly. He felt that faculty make good schools by "capillary action," whereas many of the recent decisions have been made quickly and appeared draconian, and

this tended to make faculty feel as if the decisions were imposed rather than arrived at by consensus. He felt that the Provost's decision-making style was corporate and authoritative, and suggested that if she wanted to maintain good relations, there needed to be more access to and by faculty at large. He suggested that if, as the Provost had argued earlier, any faculty member could direct the center, an election might be the best way to choose this person.

The Provost responded that democracy did not necessarily lead to happiness, and that she was deeply committed to faculty governance and felt it was necessary to create a "feisty, dynamic, on the barricades" faculty. She felt that the faculty governance process will take two years, and that this was okay. She felt that many faculty were regarding the establishment of the new center as a *fait accompli*, when in fact this was the first stage of a long process that would involve years of faculty involvement. The Provost then continued with her report, and spoke of SCHEV's new plan to implement "value-added assessment" across the VA higher education system.

She has also put together a small group of faculty and staff to look at the digital resources across the university. This group will put together recommendations as to what the university has and what it needs. The composition of this group is available in her report. She also gave a brief report on the new property at Dahlgren.

Report of the Interim Dean of the Faculty

Dean Barra spoke about faculty searches. There are a total of 22 searches for full-time faculty: four of these positions have been filled. She had two items for the Senate to pass onto the Faculty Affairs Committee, on the bias policy and changes to the Faculty Handbook relating to the role of the Provost. She also talked about the departments moving to the new houses: at 1201 William St. will be the faculty involved in creative writing, communication and debate, and at 1004 College Ave. will be the Department of Economics.

Report of the Associate VP for Academic Affairs

Prof. Morello said that today was the final day to propose courses as General Education courses. He also said that 18 April would be the second annual day to showcase student research and creativity. He said that this semester had 31 URES projects, representing eight different disciplines. In the fall, there were 11 different disciplines represented.

Report of the President of the Senate

No questions were asked of Prof. Fuller. He made an addition to his report: the Senate passed the evaluation procedures, but the charge to work together with CGPS in order to create a unified system had fallen through the cracks. He said that the plan had been withdrawn from the Board of Visitors this month, on the premise that the Board was more likely to look well upon completed plans rather than piecemeal ones. He said that he was going to a meeting at CGPS next week in order to try to reach a consensus plan.

Report of the Student Representative

The student representative said that there was no report.

Standing Committees

Academic Affairs Committee

No questions were asked.

Campus Academic Resources Committee

No questions were asked.

Curriculum Committee

Nina McCall (EDUC) said that on item 2.5.1, “Elementary Special Studies” should be “Elementary Social Studies”.

Prof. Rao said that on item 2.6.4., the title should be “Introduction to Rhetoric and Communication”.

Faculty Organization Committee

No questions were asked.

Bachelor of Liberal Studies Committee

No questions were asked.

General Education Committee

No questions were asked.

Global Awareness Committee

No questions were asked.

Race and Gender Committee

Mindy Erchull (PSYC) made a correction to the wording of her report.

Speaking Intensive Committee

No questions were asked.

Writing Intensive Committee

No questions were asked.

New Business

The motion to assert that TIP could not be dissolved without the consent of the faculty was brought to the floor for discussion.

Prof. Sharpless said that he was torn about the motion, and that an election would be problematic because the faculty on the two campuses didn't know each other well enough.

Prof. Marsh also expressed ambivalence, but felt that the resolution was about the process of how the decision had been arrived at. She supported the resolution on the basis of TIP's grass-roots heritage, and felt the process had been top-down, even if this were not the intention.

David Hunt (THEA) said his department recognized and supported TIP, but that the changes were necessary and that he had been asked not to support the resolution.

Prof. Patterson felt that people who had had initiatives should have been directly notified, rather than having to find out through the grapevine. Dean Barra said that this should have come from the TIP director, as she herself did not have a list of all such initiatives.

Prof. Sumner said that she had not been able to do this because the meeting to clarify matters had yet to be held. She advocated in favor of the resolution; while she supported the general notion of change, she felt the changes were taking place too quickly and without sufficient faculty input.

Prof. Rao also expressed his ambivalence, but supported the general idea of a university-wide

teaching center. He had been directed to support the resolution, but felt that many of the questions had been answered, and that his department might have different concerns in light of the Provost's answers to the questions raised by faculty.

Prof. Matthews said that her department was concerned about the process, but said the resolution was unwieldy and might benefit from streamlining.

Prof. Mi read a statement from her department. They had come to a consensus that commitment and trust was an issue: some faculty members had been promised various initiatives in the upcoming two academic years, and these no longer existed. They wanted to know why they hadn't been informed with enough time to seek other options. "The faculty *is* the university," and faculty were upset that their time and effort had come to naught.

Prof. Marsh asked Prof. Sumner whether she, acting on behalf of Prof. Rigsby, would take friendly amendments. Prof. Sumner agreed.

Prof. Mi suggested a friendly amendment to strike the phrase beginning with "as it is" from the final full paragraph of the resolution, as well as the word "explicitly" from later in the paragraph. Prof. Sumner agreed that this would be friendly.

Prof. Patterson said that she might be more bothered by slowing down the process, because this might result in there being no teaching center at all for a period of time.

Rob Barr (PLSCI) echoed Prof. Patterson's concern.

Prof. Marsh pointed out that resolving nothing legitimizes the process by which the decisions were made: the resolution did not come out against the new center.

Alan Griffiths (BIOL) said that while there had been problems in communication, slowing down for faculty input before a director was chosen might be counterproductive.

Prof. Sharpless disagreed that resolving nothing legitimizes the process. He suggested a new motion for the next meeting. He also wanted to know whether it would be possible to move that the new director create open forums.

It was generally agreed that the current motion could be split in two, at the end of the first full paragraph on the second page. Procedural debate ensued.

Ultimately, the resolution was brought to the floor as a single resolution. It received more than half the votes, but because it was a "resolution," some said it needed unanimous consent. It was determined that it was in fact a motion, not a resolution, and that it therefore passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 18:01.