

UMW Faculty Senate
Wednesday 07 November 2007, 16h00
Red Room, Woodard Campus Centre

Steve Fuller (President) called the meeting to order at 16:00. The minutes of the October meeting were approved after one extremely trivial change.

Special Order of Business

Mary Rigsby (President-Elect) offered a motion to suspend the normal order of business in order that a special motion addressing the racial incidents depicted in the *Bullet* for 01 November be debated. This motion carried.

Anand Rao (ESL) expressed the opinion that the University needed to have the resources and policies in place to address such issues proactively, i.e., that sensitivity training should be part of orientation for new students. He also hoped that everyone would consider the issue a top priority and that the University should move more rapidly to address the larger issues involved.

Margaret Ray (ECON) suggested the wording be changed to more clearly express that the rights of all individuals be protected.

Susan Fernshebner (HIST) called for an independent task force to address the general climate on campus. Prof. Fuller said that many of the details were not allowed to be made public at this point, and that this was retarding the progress to a certain extent.

Kristen Marsh (At-Large) said that students were taking the opportunity to have these important conversations and hoped that faculty would support students in these matters.

Prof. Rao expressed further concerns about the lag time and its potential to create further problems. He expressed approval of the upcoming student forum and astonishment that students were the only group addressing the issues. He suggested that the upcoming general faculty meeting take the time to discuss the issues. Prof. Marsh supported this suggestion.

David Long (MUSC) wondered whether this was in fact a resolution rather than a motion and felt it was premature. Others disagreed. Prof. Fuller said that the authorities were working on the issues and that patience was required.

Steve Watkins (ESL) said that one of the most problematic aspects of the incident was that two weeks elapsed between the incident and the first public knowledge thereof – this suggested that there was no structure in place to address such issues, and he hoped that one might be erected. Prof. Fuller said that the acting President was in contact with other institutions in order to determine how those institutions were addressing such issues.

Angela Gossetti-Murrayjohn (CPR) expressed support for addressing these issues at the faculty meeting.

The student representative (Kathryn LeBoeuf) expressed support for having an institutional approach to addressing such issues structurally.

Melina Patterson (GEOG) said that this and other such issues had been addressed as residence life issues rather than as issues of class or racial exploitation, and that people of all categories deserved respect: no matter how lacking in diversity this campus is, it was still necessary to address the issue.

Prof. Rao once again argued for a proactive, structural approach to such issues.

Ms. LeBoeuf said that the pressure to retain confidentiality allowed incidents to be covered up,

misinterpreted or addressed as isolated incidents rather than symptoms of a general problem.

Prof. Rigsby felt that the issue represented an important opportunity to confirm to the community that this was an issue with which we were all concerned.

Tom Fallace (EDUC) felt that the statement was essentially banal and that faculty time and attention might be better spent by addressing the issues in class time rather than intruding into the areas of administration or law enforcement. Others argued that both could be accomplished. Prof. Patterson said that limiting faculty involvement to the classroom would be irresponsible to the notion of faculty governance.

Prof. Fernshebner felt that the statement didn't go far enough and that some kind of official committee was a better demonstration of faculty commitment. Prof. Marsh and others said that the statement was still important.

The motion carried unanimously.

Prof. Rao agreed to begin to organize a committee, on the condition that the administration be involved.

Reports

Report of the Acting Provost

Nina Mikhalevsky reported on the establishment of a University Council, and asked the question of the faculty whether they still wished to have such a council and how it might be organized. She said that she appreciated the motion on the table in re the establishment of the council, and also spoke of soliciting recommendations for people who might be willing to serve. She hoped to appoint the committee within two weeks and intended to share the composition and charge of the committee at that time.

Report of the Interim Dean of the Faculty

Dean Barra spoke of faculty salaries and how they were determined. The overall raise was added to the base salary before the percentage raises for merit pay were calculated. The average salary overall was therefore increased by 6.22%.

Prof. Watkins wanted to understand why the relative gaps between the merit levels had changed.

Dean Barra answered that this was because the previous year's increments had been a decision made by the now-former President.

Marcel Rotter (MDFL) asked when the raises would take place. Dean Barra said that both raises would go into effect 01 December and thus appear on the 16 December paycheck.

She then addressed the nomination for Faculty Achievement Awards. The deadline for such nominations will be 01 December. These are calendar year rather than academic year awards.

There are currently sixteen faculty searches taking place. Dean Barra is currently looking at solutions to the problems posed by the online application process. The state application form will be the first issue addressed, followed by that of the limit to uploaded material.

She concluded by reminding the faculty of the general meeting on Monday 12 November at 16:00 in the Great Hall. Should the meeting run over, it will be continued on Wednesday 14 November.

Report of the President of the Senate

Prof. Fuller moved that the Senate recommend that the University not set up a University Council.

The discussion of this would be added to New Business.

Report of the Student Representative

Ms. LeBoeuf mentioned the upcoming lip-synch contest on 19 November and urged faculty to join in.

Standing Committees

Budget Advisory Committee

Charles Sharpless (CHEM) spoke of the formation of the committee and that it was just beginning to swing into operation. He urged faculty members to contact him if they had questions.

Speaking Intensive Committee

Prof. Rao said that the new forms were also available on the website and said that the new forms were designed for ease of use.

Old Business

The motion from the Curriculum Committee was brought to the floor.

Prof. Watkins expressed confusion: the motion had already been amended coming out of committee, and that therefore it could not be further amended. Prof. Fuller said that the committee's work would go through if not voted on. Dean Barra disagreed and said that a vote was required. Prof. Morello said that it was a single package, but that according to Robert's Rules, the motion could be broken up if the Senate agreed to do so.

Prof. Gosetti-Murrayjohn said that her department supports both the original and the amended package, with the exception of the language on Human Behavior and Society – they want to see the word "Experience" be added to this particular title. This motion was seconded. Prof. Watkins suggested that the Senate begin with a plan for approaching this by approving (or defeating) the overall package first. Prof. Gosetti-Murrayjohn withdrew her motion.

Prof. Watkins then moved that the Senate proceed by division of the question, with the overall package of components being voted on first. This provoked much procedural confusion. It was ultimately argued that the overall motion be divided first. This motion was approved by general acclaim.

Prof. Rao moved that PE be discussed first. This motion was approved by general acclaim.

Thomas Sheridan (H&PE) began by arguing in favor of retaining PE. His department felt that it was in the general long-term interest of the students. He also felt that there was some confusion regarding his department's role, or perceived lack thereof, in the process of defining the proposed requirements: his department felt that what they thought didn't really matter and that they weren't really faculty. They also felt that their expertise was being ignored in the issue and that the rest of the faculty had already decided the issue before they (H&PE) weighed in. He felt that the Senate's desire to address the PE issue first was a sign of this prejudgement.

Randall Helmstutler (MATH) said that in the construction of the new system, everything was removed and rebuilt, and thus there needed to be an argument for the inclusion of PE rather than its exclusion: he had yet to see an argument for its inclusion. An argument of the type that "these are good courses" was insufficient and required a stronger justification.

Eric Gable (SOCANTH) argued the opposite: that he had never read a sufficient argument for the

exclusion of PE. There was a pedagogical justification for its inclusion and none for its exclusion: its exclusion should not be based on the H&PE department's (perceived) lack of participation in the process. He felt that student enthusiasm for PE should be taken as support for its exclusion.

Prof. Ray felt the Gen Ed Committee had indeed presented a pedagogical argument for the exclusion of PE. Prof. Mellinger said that Prof. Helmstutler's understanding of the process was more accurate than that of Prof. Gable, and that rationales were given for what was included, but that nobody could come up with a good enough rationale for the existing Goal 8.

Prof. Watkins asked Prof. Mellinger whether Prof. Hegman's response on the wiki provided a good enough rationale. Prof. O'Donnell answered that during their deliberations, the idea that a lifetime fitness requirement was justified, but that if the decision were between nothing and the status quo, nothing was the better answer. The existing Goal 8 requirement was one for physical activity, not physical fitness.

Prof. Watkins made a motion to delete the PE requirement from the Gen Ed proposal and suggested that the H&PE department make a compelling case to include some kind of physical fitness requirement, to be added later.

Prof. Rao spoke in favor of physical education but against the proposed requirement. Prof. Rigsby said that the Curriculum Committee's rationale seemed sufficient for the retention of the PE requirement. Gary Stanton (HPRES) agreed with Prof. Rigsby.

Mindy Erchull (PSYCH) felt the Curriculum Committee's rationale was weak: there were a host of other skills (e.g., awareness of power structures based on race or class or gender, or financial skills) whose inclusion could be justified more strongly than the PE requirement. Prof. Rao reiterated his earlier point.

Ms. LeBoeuf said that the students generally liked the PE requirement. She said that while the other goals had all been carefully changed to develop the curriculum but that the PE requirement had not been changed. She urged the H&PE department to create a new, more compelling requirement and referred them to her report, which included a number of proposed ideas.

The motion to delete the PE requirement carried, 13 to 12.

Prof. Gosetti-Murrayjohn moved that "Human Behavior and Society" be changed to "Human Experience and Society". Prof. Gable spoke in favor of the change. Prof. Rigsby asked for clarification, which Prof. Gosetti-Murrayjohn tried to provide by saying that "Experience" could be added to "Behavior" rather than replacing it. Prof. Marsh said that she would support either iteration. A rather abstruse discussion arose as to the difference in meaning between the two words: essentially, "Experience" included the effect of social structures on individuals whereas "Behavior" did not, necessarily.

The motion to change "Behavior" to "Experience" carried by general acclaim.

Questions were then asked about the proposed changes to the foreign language requirement. The ambiguity was whether the four years needed to be completed in high school or whether four total years needed to be completed. Prof. Morello suggested that the requirement could be adopted and set aside the piece about who was eligible to take first-year language courses, with instructions to the relevant departments. Prof. Watkins said that the judgement of the students should be trusted. Prof. Rotter disagreed, saying that it was the concerted belief of the MDFL department that students taking courses below their level were disruptive and intimidated actual beginners. Prof. Fernsehner concurred. Prof. Ray ran with Prof. Morello's idea and made the motion to separate the overall

language requirement from the sentence about who was empowered to take first-year courses. This motion passed by general acclaim.

Prof. Gable said that “Arts, Literature and Performance” included both doing and studying such disciplines. He suggested that the distinction be erased and that courses for the study of art be subsumed into the Human Experience and Society requirement. This was not a motion.

Prof. Rigsby wanted to go on the record saying that it was a mistake to eliminate the first-year writing requirement and that it would need to be re-inserted later.

The question was then called to accept the entire package. This passed by general acclaim.

New Business

The motion from the Faculty Organization Committee on an *ad hoc* Global Inquiry Advisory Committee was addressed. Prof. Erchull wanted to know why it was falling to chairs to serve on this committee when they had so many other responsibilities. Prof. Bowen answered that it was beyond her purview and referred the question to the Gen Ed Committee. Prof. Fallon said it was because chairs were likely to have more knowledge of a broad variety of courses. Prof. Rottter wanted to know whether a chair could send a representative. The answer was yes.

The motion passed by general acclaim.

The Senate then turned its attention to the second Faculty Organization Committee motion. It passed by general acclaim.

The third motion had its name changed to reflect the earlier name change, then passed by general acclaim.

The fourth motion also passed by general acclaim. In each case, the motion was changed to reflect the replacement of faculty members who were on sabbatical leave.

The fifth and sixth motions passed by general acclaim.

The Senate then turned its attention to the Academic Affairs Committee motions. The first motion on transfer articulation agreements, was brought to the floor. It passed by general acclaim.

The second motion on the number of required credits, passed by general acclaim.

The third motion came to the floor. Prof. Stanton wanted to know whether it should read “the same department”. The answer was no. Prof. Erchull said that her department was strongly opposed to the motion on principle. Prof. Long said that his department strongly supported the motion, on principle as well as on practical grounds. Karen Anewalt (COMPSCI) wanted to know whether there would be a cap for the major. Prof. Houghtalin said it was in her report and that it was under discussion. Prof. Watkins felt that advising could address the problem: Prof. Erchull said that the students could register for whatever they want, rendering advising largely moot. Prof. Helmstutler said that 60 credits was the cap, and it didn’t present a problem. David Hunt (THEA) agreed with Prof. Long. Prof. Marsh said that it was about a difference in the overall view of what constituted a liberal education, and that she agreed with Prof. Erchull. Prof. Gable suggested allowing majors to write their own rules rather than having a college-wide rule. Prof. Sharpless felt this would be impractical.

The motion passed, though not unanimously.

The motion that the Senate recommend against setting up a University Council came to the floor. The Senate moved into Committee of the Whole mode to discuss this. Prof. Sharpless wondered whether there would be a faculty committee investigating this: Prof. Fuller said no. Prof. Watkins pointed out

that this was technically a recommendation rather than a motion. Prof. Mikhalevsky said that she was looking for a statement from the Senate as to whether they recommended the formation of a University Council, since it had been some years since it had been suggested.

The motion passed by general acclaim and the Senate moved out of Committee of the Whole Mode, whereupon the motion passed.

Prof. Fuller adjourned the meeting at 18:11.