

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Faculty Senate Meeting

Friday, March 16, 2007, 1:00 p.m.

Donaghey Student Center A & B

MINUTES

Present: CAHSS—Chadwick, Cheatham, Dhonau, English, Groesbeck, Musgrove, alt. Lytle for Parins, Ramsey, Smith. CB— *Alt. Kusel* for Holland, Edison, Watts, Nickels. CE—Barrett, Lindsay. CISSE— Jovanovich, Patangia, Tschumi, Wright, Xie. LAW—Aiyetoro. LIBRARY—Watkins. CPS— Faust, Lyon. CSM— Douglas, Elsalloukh, Hall, Kosmatov, Prince, Tarasenko. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Belcher, Bates, Ford, Williams.

Absent: CAHSS— Anderson, Amrhein, Eshleman, Garnett. CE—Hunt, Kushner, Moley. LAW—Peltz, Sullivan. CPS— Call, Montague, Rhodes, Robertson. CSM— Leslie, Ragsdale. EX OFFICIO—Garrett.

I. Welcome and roll call

President Ford declared it to be 1:00 p.m., and called the meeting to order. The secretary called the roll.

II. Review of minutes

The minutes of the February 16, 2007, meeting were reviewed. Hall noted that the minutes included in error an earlier version of the language describing the Undergraduate Research Committee. Motion and second to accept the minutes as corrected. Motion carried on voice vote.

III. Announcements

Report on Faculty Excellence Awards, Steve Anderson, ad hoc committee chair

President Ford reported that Anderson is in class, and that he is prepared to send out the recommendation to the Senate before its next meeting. The committee, Ford said, basically reviewed procedures for the Faculty Excellence Awards, and the recommendations will have to do with tightening them up. Ford asked that if senators have issues or concerns in connection with this matter, they e-mail them to Anderson.

Report on formation of the ad hoc committee on academic freedom, President Ford

Ford wished to report back to the senate about progress on getting this committee up and going. He has the names of several volunteers and draftees, and is not quite ready to appoint but will shortly. He asked that if senators want to serve or have recommendations of people who should, and

have not contacted him yet, they please do so. He said the committee certainly need not be made up only of senators.

Update on admissions and Jump Start, Pete Tschumi

Tschumi reminded the Senate that we passed a new admission policy in the fall and that we purposefully made the policy flexible in order to slowly raise the floor of expectations of entering students. It is, he said, a wise policy, and a lot of trouble to implement. A work group has been reconvened this semester and is meeting every Friday afternoon to work out the bugs and the new bits. The current status is that Admissions and Computing Services intend to throw the switch on the new system in April. They're working on Banner now and will need to be some testing to be sure the new processes are doing what we mean them to do.

A big unanswered question is the policy's impact, short-term, on enrollment. If senators subscribe to FacFocus, they see enrollment figures for days one through eleven at the beginning of each semester. Lower-level student-semester credit hours (SSCH) have been declining for years, he said. Fortunately, graduate SSCH have been increasing. We're now admitting as regular and conditional students about 600 fully admissible first-time students, yet we have more faculty than we've ever had. This makes it pretty hard for the provost to support all the requests for new faculty. Some departments are going to be told no, and perhaps told they cannot replace some faculty who leave. In light of this, we can't let new admissions standards carve away too many students from the numbers we admit.

Our attention, Tschumi said, now needs to zero in on getting students who have been admitted to actually enroll and come to school here. Before our change in policy last fall, we used to send letters that said, "You've been provisionally admitted." That didn't compare well to the letters some of those same students got from other schools: "Congratulations! You have been admitted." And further, we sent them one of those unclear "provisional" letters every month thereafter until all the needed documentation was in.

The new Friday working group has been addressing the need to make better and stronger connection with prospective students. Administration is now sending a real "Congrats!" letter. We're thinking of sending a sequence of letters, each giving the student something useful. And we've planned Jump Start Day, inviting accepted students to come to campus on April 11. We will advise students and let them register right then. Those with long memories hope this will to some extent recreate the feel and the personal connections and conversations that happened long ago when registration took place in the student union through students picking up course cards from faculty members.

Q from Watts: How can students come on a Wednesday? *A:* Their high schools give them college days. They go to schools all over the country and in Arkansas, but UALR hasn't had anything for them. We already have more than 900 students who've begun sending us their documentation and can be registered. We simply need to capture way more of them than we have.

Tschumi said the working group has encouraged the chancellor to set aside some money, since we're so late in the budget cycle, that we can get access to if we really need it..

Q from Barrett: Has Records and Registration has been involved and have they tended to the problems of students registering early, finding they have early deadlines for payment, and then being knocked out of the system and out of classes if their payments are late? *A:* Tschumi said Records and Registration has been involved, but he's not sure that particular issue has been asked, and it needs to be.

Cheatham talked about what an excellent experience this has been of people in many different administrative offices saying, "We can," instead of "We can't." She emphasized the need to identify all the parts of the system that are still unfriendly to students and prospective students and to plan ways around them

IV. Reports

Report from the chancellor

Over the next several months, Chancellor Anderson said, we will be developing a study of UALR's economic impact on the community. These are common; we have done our own, as well, but it's been more than a decade. The study is being driven by the Comprehensive Campaign steering committee, who need to know what the economic impact of the university is on the community in order to explain to prospective contributors what kind of bang they can get for their giving buck. The chancellor reminded the Senate that economic impact extends far beyond relatively simple calculations such as total salaries. It might include, for example, the impact of conferences that the university creates or brings to the community. He said senators may be receiving calls in this effort at gathering comprehensive information.

On the legislative front: He reminded us that public entities in Central Arkansas host a Friday lunch for legislators, and that's why he's run a bit late to Senate meetings today. The Ledge is now, one might say, "roaring to a conclusion." They've expressed the intent to get out on time; expert observers suggest that's unlikely. It's hard to report on progress, he said, even with adjournment relatively close, because so much is still hanging fire, including all the major budget bills and a bill governing the bidding process, which would be troublesome to us.

Today was Pulaski Tech's Friday at the Central Arkansas lunch, and they gave a nice presentation and initiated discussion. Among the first questions from legislators was this one: "How well are we doing on transfer these day?" We had a pretty good answer, but again we see an illustration of how, like it or not, transfer and transfer-of-credit issues are a major concern—and, as often as not, a major complaint—on the part of legislators.

Gov. Beebe asked UALR, UAMS, UAF, and ASU to meet with him. We are now routinely referred to as one of the research institutions, and research as it relates to economic development is the topic prompting the appointment of a working group comprised of two representatives from each of the four schools. The chancellor wanted the Senate to know that Gov. Beebe

described himself as firmly an ally of higher education and sees us as a critical part of any and all efforts to move the state forward.

Q from Nickels: Under S.B. 1730, concurrent enrollment would take away money from AP. Representatives of UAF reportedly spoke in favor of it. Do we have a position? *A:* The chancellor understands Bisbee's bill bit the dust. (Murmur of approval.) We have not taken a position, but we are not in favor of anything that would weaken AP. Nickels reported that the governor signed the elimination of the rising junior exam yesterday. (Scattered applause.)

The chancellor noted that April 11, Jump Start, is a big event coming up, and one of real importance to the university.

Report from the provost

Provost Belcher has spent the last five weeks immersed in the budget, and so couldn't think of anything else to talk about to the Senate today. Departmental prioritization took place in January and early February. He said he had to arm wrestle Sandra Robertson, budget director and chancellor's chief of staff, to push the chancellor's hearing later in the spring. On the previous schedule, he said, there was not time between the two sets of hearings to fully concentrate on and consult on budget priorities. The provost's hearings were Feb 14-16, and this was the first time he required all the deans to attend all the sessions. The hearings were open, of course, to members of the Senate's Planning and Finance committee, and they were there.

At the following meeting of the deans' council, they had this exercise and discussion: "What are the issues that should drive our budget decision making? New positions, research, scholarship, salary enhancements, quality niche programs? What? You've got 20 minutes and a million dollars; make your choices." Had each person report out, and tell him under what topic each of his or her recommendations would fall. It was revealing to him, he said, and he believes it was to them, to hear the priorities across the campus. The winner? Recruitment. The very next day, he went to the Planning and Finance Committee meeting. Holland had every person there talk about what the university's budget priorities should be. They named the same things as had the deans. As CAO, the provost said, he found that concurrence immensely reassuring. "Increasing student enrollment within the context of increasing admission standards" seems to be a widely recognized priority issue for us. We're making the move toward admitting more capable students, and admitting more of them. Even salary increases support that overarching priority. There are other priorities, of course, and he thought they would not surprise us: a focus on teaching (the Academy of Teaching Excellence, a grassroots, faculty-based initiative), equipment, increases in maintenance budget.

The provost said he has come out of this realizing he can make the budget development process even stronger next year. We'll start in the fall discussing what our priorities ought to be before the colleges and departments begin generating their budget laundry lists. We need, he said, to keep talking about that strategic question: what principles should drive our budgetary decision process?

Q from Wright: We're going to talk about faculty roles and rewards today. Do you want to hear us say things like, "We're looking, through roles and rewards to increase our research emphasis, so that's one priority that ought to be guiding our budgetary decisions"? A: Absolutely. That's exactly the kind of thing the provost want to hear, the kind of guidance we need to do good strategic planning. We need also guidance about what mix of specific needs is in relation to each priority:

Report from Vice Chancellor Bill Walker

The legislative session has claimed Walker once again, along with Joni Lee. So, Judy Williams told the Senate, he's sent her in, who's been here as communications director for two months now, to present the university's current ad campaign.

The "A Difference in Degree" ad campaign was in the works long before she got here, of course. It's an image campaign, not a recruitment campaign, whose purpose is laying the groundwork for the comprehensive campaign. Williams screened the two presently running spots for the Senate. Spot 1 is "What happens when someone is the first in her family to graduate college?" Spot 2 is "How deep is the talent pool in central Arkansas?" We have given script approval for spots 3 and 4, and two more after those will be part of the series.

She asked how many have seen our billboard on Rodney Parkam, and the response was significant. We have purchased a "rotating board," which gets us two months here, two months somewhere else, perhaps Cantrell Road. They've also developed some print ads to support the campaign. These haven't made it to the big print outlets here yet, but she hopes to get a bigger schedule to run these soon. We will also introduce some radio ads with this campaign, and the bus benches around campus now say "A Difference in Degree."

Q from a senator: What's the total cost of campaign and through what period? A: Have spent \$250K so far, and it will run through September. We're giving a \$50K sponsorship to the Central High campaign, which we will get back in spots. These campaigns are paid for through the Donaghey Foundation; no public dollars were sacrificed.

Aiyetoro commented on how impressed she was when she saw them.

Williams observed that we wanted to look different from all the college ads glutting the airwaves.

Om response to a comment and question about newspaper coverage, Williams noted that the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* has a small news hole for education, and one reporter, Heather Wexler. Williams believes we're doing a good job of getting our fair share, but the news hole is so small, we just can't depend on them to get our story out. We'll continue, she said, to look for alternative ways to attract their coverage

Report from Faculty Roles and Rewards Task Force, Carl Moneyhon, chair

Moneyhon presented the Task Force's final report. Since he was last here, he said, they have held meetings with individual concerned faculty across campus. They got a 60% response rate to the on-line questionnaire for faculty, which, Moneyhon was told "by those who purport to know such

things” was quite good. Task force members have met with many departments and found widespread support for this document. He said they frequently heard, “Now, isn’t this what a university faculty should be doing anyway?” Moneyhon said they even got a comment from Prof. Sullivan that *he* liked the report. (Laughter, and *oos* of appreciation.)

The task force found there are some important concerns that require the Senate’s and the administrations attention, among them these:

- The absence of clear guidelines for promotion and tenure in many places across campus.
- Considerable concern about roles and rewards for nontraditional faculty. Strongly recommend that the Senate and the administration take this into account and set a task force to work.
- If scholarship is to really be a priority, there is a deep concern about institutional support, which seems to be less about money than about other kinds of institutional support needing to be better organized to facilitate faculty’s research efforts.

Q from Elsalloukh: We have seen great growth here and at UAMS. He has noticed that there, young professors, recently appointed, are given a great deal of responsibility. This seems to result in magnificent growth on the part of those faculty. Traditional universities seem to have much more a wait-and-see stance, letting people prove themselves first. Did you take this into account?

A: What we’ve tried to do is recommend as much latitude as possible to each department to determine what will work best. Pushing young faculty fast may not work so well in history as it does in science and math.

Aiyetoro spoke of the pressures on new faculty for balance when there are deans and department heads that do encourage leadership involvement. Moneyhon spoke again to departmental authority. Did say that the report strongly suggests that 12-hour teaching loads are not consonant with a priority on faculty research.

Aiyetoro noted an issue with the introduction to the task force’s report. It seems to be not direct and correct speech to say that the university has always welcomed diversity. She knows we are putting important priority on it now, but isn’t sure that’s always been the case, and the introduction appears to suggest that we have had that openness since this institution was founded in 1927. Moneyhon indicated that he heard and understood Aiyetoro’s comment, assured the Senate that there had been no intention of glossing over the issue, and said he would see to some editorial mending of the statement.

Lindsay said she found the report an “excellent document.” One issue she’s heard come up often and heatedly has to do with expectations for coordinators who are on nine-month contracts. Moneyhon reiterated that the task force was working on roles and rewards issues related to tenured and tenure-track faculty, and said again it’s important to recognize that limited scope, and to press for other important questions to be taken up, perhaps by other task forces.

Q from Groesbeck: Are “hours” are the same as “instructional units”?
A: They are not. Groesbeck is concerned that in some situations the total of instructional units assigned a faculty member may add up to unreasonably high demands. Ramsey noted that elsewhere the document says the instructional load policy is inadequate to the needs of the institution.

Is there a clear distinction between directors and coordinators? The coordinator issue was raised again again by Hall. Moneyhon said the task force heard the issue but did not deal with it since it seemed not to be central to their charge. Williams said there once was such as clear distinction, but it appears not to be in use at present.

Wright pointed out that the use of “twelve hours” to describe teaching load may be misleading to people who don’t understand the academy, making them think we’re grouching about having to teach merely twelve hours a week.

Jovanovich suggested that he doesn’t see in the document what Ramsey says is in the document. The failure to distinguish instructional units and “hours” leaves the question moot. Moneyhon affirmed that the intent of the document is to say that current instructional loads at UALR are too high.

Williams explained the current definition of instructional units, and suggested that there might be many ways to deal with the combination of IUs and hours taught. He noted, for example, that excess credits could be banked: a few more this semester and a break in load the next.

Wright said he understands that one intent of the document is to spur the university to reconsider at once the instructional load policy.

The president suggested the Senate suspend the discussion of the Task Force’s report and take it up again during the open-forum portion of the agenda. He reminded senators that the report will be on the agenda for action at the April meeting of the Senate.

V. New Business

MOTION: Undergraduate Council (Legislation. Requires majority vote at one meeting.)

That at least twenty-four (24) semester credit hours or equivalent undergraduate course credit shall be granted entering freshman students who have successfully completed the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Specific credit to be awarded shall be determined within existing guidelines.

Cheatham brought the motion from Undergraduate Council. She noted the item had been raised to the Council by Diane Jarrett who had fielded a number of questions from high school students about UALR’s policies relative to the international baccalaureate (IB). In order to receive the IB diploma, one must take a range of courses tailored to the interests of the individual student and to the resources and offerings of the diplomate’s school. There are basic requirements for covering all the major disciplines. One may get credit for IB courses without getting the diploma.

The Council found a new policy in Texas that says a student with an IB diploma with an aggregate score of 24 points will receive 24 hours of academic credit, specific credits to be determined by the institution in which the student is admitted.

Our proposal, Cheatham said, does not abrogate the discretion of the department to determine what specific credit may be granted for what specific course.

Cheatham urged the faculty to remember that if a student made a C in a comp course at Pulaski Tech, we accept the credit. If the student made a 4 in an IB course, it seems not at all unreasonable to accept the credit.

Nickels commented, a bit plaintively, "Why can't high school be for high school and college be for college?" Aren't we, he asked, by giving them this credit, denying them time to be here, to study, to hang out and learn?

Ramsey pointed out, in an effort to console, that students who come with lots of advanced placement credits don't usually graduate early. They do take time to be here, to study, to hang out and learn.

Motion carried on voice vote.

VII. Open Forum

Moneyhon returned to the podium to reopen the discussion of instructional load policy. He said the Roles and Rewards Task Force is only reporting that current policy sets the load too high. The point is that existing policy is too high, too inconsistently applied, and too unclear to be acceptable. He suggested that the Task Force could do some minor tweaking of language in the introduction to help clarify the issue.

Barrett asked for a deadline for when Moneyhon must have comments. He said they were shooting for a revised version to go out in two weeks. President Ford reiterated that it will be on the agenda for Senate vote at the April meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Judith Faust, Secretary