

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Faculty Senate Meeting

Friday, April 20, 2007, 1:00 p.m.

Stephens Center, Legends Room

MINUTES

XPresent: CAHSS—Chadwick, Cheatham, Dhonau, English, Eshleman, Garnett, 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— Sullivan. LIBRARY—Watkins. CPS— Faust, Lyon, Montague, Robertson. CSM— Douglas, Elsalloukh, Hall, Kosmatov, Prince, Tarasenko. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Belcher, Bates, Ford, Williams.

XAbsent: CAHSS— Anderson, Amrhein,. CE—Hunt, Kushner, Moley. LAW— Aiyetoro, Peltz. CPS— Call, Rhodes. 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 March 16, 2007, meeting were reviewed. The minutes were corrected to show Senator Garnett was present at the March meeting. Motion to accept the minutes carried on voice vote.

III. Announcements

Report on Jump Start Day, Pete Tschumi

President Ford commended the past presidents of the Assembly for all their work, and they received applause. Registration lists are still being tallied, but we served more than a thousand people lunches.

Tschumi reported that the expected bottleneck, advising, did occur, confirming the need for more trained advisors ready to help first-time registering freshman. Next year we'll look to colleges to pull together key faculty advisers; Cyber College did it this year, Tschumi said, and it worked well.

Evaluations were extraordinarily positive, by both parents and students. Tschumi heard several comments to the effect that folks didn't know how nice a place UALR is.

Tschumi noted that Jump Start represented a great team effort: from administration and faculty, from the colleges, from admissions, advising, registrar's office, and financial aid.

They found that students really wanted to talk to people in the areas of study they're most interested in, which makes faculty enormously important to this process.

Cheatham remarked that she has never seen a higher level of collaboration and more positive engagement than in connection with this event. She further noted that Tschumi and she have set a personal goal of making Sandra Robertson a liar with her predictions of reduced enrollment next fall.

Katie Young in Cyber was given special recognition since she wound up in charge of the logistics group, and devoted virtually all the resources of her office, including volunteers among the college's honor students, to making the day work..

IV. Reports

Report from the chancellor

Chancellor Anderson added his words of congratulations and recognition of achievement to Rosalie, Pete, and so many others who contributed to this excellent event. He, too, was struck by the enthusiasm of responses on the written evaluations, having plowed through a humber of them himself.

About the legislative session: It finished pretty much as we were expecting. Appropriation bills came out fine. We, along with other colleges and universities across the state, did not end up with any capital funds. The chancellor met today with the Governor, along with four members of the Trustees, Dean Good, and others, to make a pitch for some of the modest capital cache of funds available to Gov. Beebe.

The chancellor reported we're working still on our budget. We'll be able to do a 3% pool raise for unclassified employees, including faculty. We are still uncertain about how much we can do for our classified employees; there are yet some pieces of information outstanding.

The textbook legislation turned out not to be as bad as might have been expected. Only five of the original ten bills passed, and we'll be looking at what we have to change, adjust, or otherwise take into account in our policies.

The chancellor congratulated the Senate on a year of important work. He saw the Senate engaged in legislating and recommending on a number of important issues, and he thanked us for it.

He indicated that we're planning for a slight decline in enrollment in the fall, a course of action that seems to be prudent. He noted that we perhaps won't lose enrolment because of our additional effort in scholarships, Jump Start, and other factors. In either case, he will be surprised and a bit disappointed if we don't have an especially well qualified set of entering freshmen.

Transfer of credit remains a large issue, and if it were now fall, he'd be placing it on the agenda.

One change he thinks will have a positive effect in terms of fall enrollment is our having extended our scholarship offers down to some students with 22-23 ACT scores. We will be offering about \$1.000 to those students, which should make going here competitive with going to the community colleges.

The chancellor also highlighted the new faculty-scholarship program under which full-time faculty can select a student for an award of \$200 in the

fall and \$200 in the spring. He hopes that, too, will serve to attract at least some students who would not otherwise have come. We did consult with university counsel on the conflict-of-interest questions raised earlier in the Senate; the Honors and Awards Committee will make the actual award decisions on recommendation of faculty.

Report from the provost

“Greetings from the office of David Bleacher,” Provost Belcher began in good-humored reference to how his name appeared on the Assembly agenda for next week, offering the Senate President as evidence that leadership ability and spelling ability are not necessarily linked.

He also added that since we’re here in the Stephens Center, he wants to say one thing—and Chris Peterson, he noted, was not here to hear it: he’s never seen an athletic department as committed to the academic achievement of its students as this one. We are number one in the state in graduation rate for athletes, and no one else is close—with the next at 30% or so less than ours. Kudos to Chris.

Beginning in the fall, we’ll be starting our ten-year review by North Central, our accrediting body. We’ll have a lot of work to do to prepare, but he wanted us to know we’ve done much, much good work on assessment.

This year stands out as one in which faculty leadership on several issues has led to significant achievement: the teaching academy, the idea of faculty-sponsored scholarships, endorsing undergraduate research by moving it to standing-committee status. Another that took a tremendous amount of work, he noted, was the Senate’s commitment to raising admissions standards. This happened, he said, only because of great faculty engagement in the process. And then there’s Jump Start. Having taken a stand for increased enrollment standards, faculty went the next step and asked, “What can we do to offset that? How can we help get more students here?”

The provost very clearly acknowledged that this is all work that goes beyond and on top of what faculty do in the classroom, the lab. at the computer, in the community—and he expressed his great gratitude for it.

He’s looking forward to carrying on with the recommendations of the Faculty Roles and Rewards Task Force, including taking a look at the infrastructure to support our faculty, and at roles and rewards issues in connection with nontenured and nontenure-track faculty, and at promotion and tenure documents.

Ford recognized Tschumi’s request for an unscheduled announcement: Last Monday, the new admissions standards went live and we’re now applying them. It took us a while to get all the procedures worked out and friendlier letters drafted, but they’re now in place.

V. New Business

A. MOTION: Faculty Senate Executive Committee (Resolution. Requires majority vote at one meeting.)

Move to accept the final report of the Faculty Roles and Rewards Task Force and forward it to the Chancellor.

Commentary: In the fall of 2005, Provost Belcher and Senate President Williams created a task force to contemplate the roles and rewards of UALR tenure track faculty over the next decade and beyond. The task force worked hard for a year, and over the past several months has provided numerous opportunities for the campus to review and comment upon drafts of its report. The final draft of the report is now before you.

The report does envision some redistribution of faculty roles in coming years, but it does so in ways that are fundamentally consistent with current practice, especially as manifest in expectations of recent hires. Moreover, it allows for substantial flexibility across the disciplines and reserves substantial autonomy for colleges and departments. Perhaps most important, the report makes clear the significant increase in resources required for the fulfillment of its recommendations.

And these are recommendations: the report provides guidelines only; it does not mandate rules. The task force urges your approval of its report.

Professor Moneyhon noted that the copy of the report sent to senators in advance of this meeting was not the final, revised copy, which included only one change, made in keeping with Senator Aiyetoro's comments at the last meeting. Line 54 has been changed to read: "From its inception as a state institution, UALR has educated a diverse body of students."

Comment from Jovanovich: Lines 535-536 talk about increasing teaching loads for people not doing enough research. We would surely never, he said, find the reverse, that someone who isn't teaching enough will be asked to do more research. Says he pointed it out in more than one meeting.

Comment from Groesbeck: His reading is different. This section speaks not at all about punishment, but acknowledges that there is more than one profile of professorship.

Comment from Jovanovich: Lines 460 infra, reference to extra compensation for extra research, no such reference to extra teaching. The trade-off for a very small reduction in teaching load is a much heightened expectation for research. He argues for letting people who want to teach, teach, and not skew the document toward one or the other.

Ramsey: Hates to see the enormous good in this document lost to concerns that it is not perfect.

Eshleman: Would like to know how this section (lines 534-536) was intended.

Cheatham: Can we include the minutes as an attachment to the document, which will help capture all these issues of concern and serve as a kind of commentary?

Sullivan: Seems to him the real issue is whether this document represents a step forward for the university. There may be a number of questions that can be raised, but this seems a straightforward and progressive step that represents a vision, and not the elaborated details of

policy, and should be endorsed. Sullivan noted that he was a skeptic, but has come to support this work in a most respectful way.

Robertson: What we need is a policy that speaks strongly to where we think faculty roles and rewards need to go. We have that here: lots of responsibility to colleges and departments to define their directions, and a clear call to the administration to create the infrastructure to support this vision. Robertson sees it from the point of view of his unit and his college as something that we can work with and that will get us where we want to go.

The motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

B. MOTION: Calendar and Scheduling Committee (Legislation. Requires majority vote at one meeting.)

The Calendar and Scheduling Committee moves the attached Academic Calendar for 2010-2011.

Commentary: In proposing this calendar, we anticipate more flexibility in summer scheduling to be developed during the Fall, 2007 semester and desire to implement those opportunities quickly.

Douglas presented the motion for for discussion. **Nickels**, having brought forward at an earlier meeting his concerns about late registration; **moved to amend the calendar to change late registration in August to the twenty-third (instead of the twenty-fifth) and in January to the twenty-first (instead of the twenty-fourth), and that there should be no late registration for Web courses. Seconded by Edison.**

The chair called for discussion of the amendment. Ramsey indicated his strong objection to the amendment, suggesting that there are other ways to take care of students who don't attend the first class sessions, and suggesting further that such a restriction is not student-friendly.

Edison clarified the intent of the amendment to refer only to on-line classes, and not to classes that may be Web-enhanced through use of WebCT.

Sullivan: Does it cost us money if we get rid of late registration?

A, from several quarters: Yes. A lot.

Douglas clarifies that unless the Senate chooses to rescind its own policy, the calendar will be complete and not available for further amendment once adopted.

Nickels offered an alternate amendment, accepted by the seconder, to pull the late registration dates out of the calendar, and charge the Calendar Committee with addressing those issues that have been raised.

Robertson reinforced Nickels proposal. Believes his point is on target, and believes there are some differences in the kinds of courses we offer that prevent an easy, one-size-fits-all solution. We must also accept that there are financial implications, but if we change our policy now, perhaps we can create new norms among students.

Douglas notes that in her discipline, they test students in the first session and may not have results before the next week, in which case

students need to be able to drop classes they're not ready to take and register for others.

The amendment passed on voice vote.

The original motion minus the four dates referencing late registration was before the Senate. Groesbeck pointed out the continued absence of a fall break. President Ford recalled that there was an effort to engineer a fall break several years ago. Douglas said that given the constraints of beginning dates and fall graduation, it has not seemed possible to schedule a fall break.

Douglas asked people with calendar concerns and issues to come to the committee's meetings, and President Ford noted that the Committee on Committees will be meeting shortly and would be glad to appoint interested persons to the Calendar Committee.

The motion carried on voice vote.

C. MOTION: Faculty Senate Executive Committee (Legislation. Requires majority vote at one meeting.)

Those applicants completing all requirements for various degrees in the Spring and Summer Semesters of 2007 at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock shall be approved for graduation.

Discussion:

The motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

D. MOTION: *Ad hoc* Committee on Faculty Excellence Awards. (Resolution. Requires majority vote at one meeting.)

The committee moves to recommend to the Chancellor the parts presented in bold listed below as suggested changes to the guidelines for the UALR

Faculty Excellence Awards: (Notice the following lines not in bold are issues or suggestions presented to the committee from the Chancellor for comment and input.)

1. Require a minimum number of years at UALR to be eligible to be a nominee in order to increase perception of a level playing field.

Committee response: **New faculty should be allowed to apply at any time, but the support materials in the application should reflect achievements attained at UALR. Or, certainly, substantial weight should be accorded the nominee's work at UALR.**

2. Lengthen the period of time before one can re-apply for the same award.

Committee response: **Possibilities range from allowing awardees to be renominated in any future year to allowing no renomination at all. One compromise suggests that faculty should wait five years for renomination in the same area, either Teaching, Research, or Service. (Presumably, a person could be nominated in another area without a waiting period). Or, or any nominee,**

the college committees could consider only new achievements at UALR since the last award.

3. Limit the period of the person's record that is reviewed, e.g. 5 years (or whatever the period is for re-eligibility) so that there is an apples to apples comparison of performance; so that young faculty are not competing against what a senior faculty member did 20 years ago and at another institution.

Committee response: **The record reviewed should not include material used in a previous and successful nomination in an area (as suggested above). If the faculty member has never before been an awardee in that area, the materials considered should reflect the last five years of work at UALR (thus dovetailing with the five-year limitation suggested above).**

4. Write strict guidelines on length and content of nominee packets (to facilitate comparison and evaluation by the panelists). [Note: the Department of Excellence Awards limited the application to seven single-spaced typed pages with not less than 12-point type.]

Committee response: **Currently, the guidelines—as stated—are fairly strict, as they limit the nomination letter to four pages (though the limit above indicates a revision) and the support material to six one-page endorsement letters. The more critical issue is enforcement. Are colleges doing their job in reviewing the packets to insure that they meet the guidelines? Perhaps an additional step in the nomination process would allow for screening the packets for compliance (and would permit a short period to revise them).**

5. Include in the guidelines a tighter or clearer definition of public service to limit it to the external application of one's disciplinary expertise to problems and issues external to campus (as opposed to service to one's national disciplinary organization, such as holding an office or committee chair position; or of local good-citizen service through Boy Scouts, civic club, or church).

Committee response: **At all levels of faculty review, service is one of the categories difficult to define. For our purposes here, key words in the guidelines currently state that the public service award is for individuals who "have brought credit to the University of Arkansas at Little Rock through their successful efforts in applying the content or skills of their academic disciplines in service to the community, state, or nation" Strictly applied, this definition should take care of the problem. The key, once again, would lie with having college committees to review carefully the criteria with the nominators before the packets are submitted.**

6. Change the language to reflect the practice, which was recommended by national panel chairs soon after the awards

program began. It seems no one wants to be chair and be responsible for finding the other six panelists. So the practice for probably a dozen years has been that the chancellor selects the seven panelists. (And I agree that it is a chore!) This calls for editing of III.D.3, and IV.E.2.a & b.

Committee response: As this has been the case, we recommend editing for compliance with current practice

7. Section IV.E.1.d. has not generally been followed. It could be deleted.

Committee response: We recommend deleting this provision, as it was perhaps not a workable idea in the first place (who is to insure the quality of the one-page letter of support?).

The committee also makes the following recommendations not reflected in the chancellor's list:

- 1. We ought to address and fix the problems with the current process, rather than solely respond to the outside reviewers' comments, which reflect the symptoms rather than the fundamental issues in the faculty excellence procedure.**
- 2. There are two fundamental problems that underlie most of the difficulties with the current procedure:**
 - (a) The timetable for the faculty excellence process is artificially compact, which does not allow sufficient time to adequately prepare, review the material by the college committee and then by outside reviewers;**
 - (b) Regardless of the guidelines and good intentions the portfolio preparation process is inherently paper bound and difficult to manage in a tight timeframe.**

Additional Recommendations:

- 1. Complete the nomination and the college review in the fall semester, then do the outside review in the spring semester. The point is that "the earlier the better."**
- 2. It is time that we identify the desired features and implement an electronic system for the faculty to store and retrieve an electronic portfolio of all the material related to work activities in teaching, research, and public service. This would allow the flexibility and time-saving in preparing and submitting their portfolio in an electronic or paper form.**

Discussion:

Edison, chair of the ad hoc committee, suggested that, in light of feedback since the committee's recommendation went out with the agenda, this discussion will be either very short or perhaps nonexistent. He prefaced the discussion by reminding the Senate that we have quite a good program of recognition for faculty excellence. The committee did some research and

finds that our program compares quite favorably with all they looked at. He pointed out that it's been in place and sustained by three chancellors. The impetus to reconsider aspects of it came from the chancellor, who had accumulated a list of issues that had arisen over the years, raised in large part by the outside evaluators of nominees. The chancellor referred those issues, in the form of questions, to the Senate for deliberation and recommendations. Thus, Edison said, since the decisions are truly in the chancellor's hands, the committee wrote what it regards as fairly common-sense reactions to be forwarded to the chancellor. The committee believes the program works, in the main, very well.

Q from English: Once these recommendations are made to the chancellor, he can make policy decisions, and they won't come back here, right? *A from Ford:* Right.

Q from Peltz: What's the referent for item 7? *A from Edison:* Described that section of the current policy.

Comment from Past President Williams: Said he regrets having to speak in opposition to the president and the chair of the ad hoc committee, but he feels compelled to recall the history of the awards. Chancellor Young created the concept of Faculty Excellence Awards, and he gave responsibility to the faculty to develop the criteria and processes. Over the years, Williams said, we have let the awards program drift into the administration's realm of responsibility. Perhaps we want that to be the case, but he believes the change has been largely unwitting. Edison said he had understood the chancellor to be the decision maker about criteria and processes. Edison had taken the chancellor's request as consultation with the Senate on a variety of identified conditions that might need to be solved.

Edison said that if we want to do more than this, we should notify him of our willingness to meet exhaustively and continuously on the matter.

Cheatham suggested there may a parliamentary issue here; we may have inadvertently given away our power on this issue, and that is surely not in the faculty's best interest. We have, happily, a chancellor who chooses to share his authority to us. And in this instance, she hates to see us giving him recommendations that say, "Well, you could do this or you could do that..." She said we should perhaps consider a motion to table, and let the president and the chair study these issues and comprise a good working group, in consideration of Edison's expressed concern about finding people who want to work.

English said he read the situation in much the same way: that the faculty doesn't much care about several of these dimensions of the award policy. He supported the idea of a motion to table.

Tschumi praised the well-laid-out options in the report, and suggested that it wouldn't be so difficult to consider them and make the hard decisions.

Moved Watts, seconded Wright, to lay the motion on the table. The motion passed unanimously on voice vote.

VII. Open Forum

A senator (the secretary failed to note who) has been aware of considerable concern about our current catering service. He spoke of a recent political science request for services. They were told that since it was within 48 hours of the event, they'd be charged an extra \$25. When he expressed dismay, and indicated that he'd take it to the Faculty Senate, the person said, "Okay, how about \$10?"

Energetic complaining followed. Worst food, highest prices ever. Wright won't eat it even if someone else has paid for it. Garnett spoke to problems with nearly every occasion: late deliveries, deliveries to wrong locations, failure to pick up after catering..

Robertson did note there's been a recent replacement of the manager, and encouraged people to give him a chance. Robertson still wanted to know who on the university side is responsible for holding the contractor accountable: the answer appears to be Preston Slayton. Bob Wolfe is the new director, and Robertson encouraged contacting him directly.

Comment from Wright: When we have contracts with vendors, there seems to be no mechanism for the customer side to collect comments and get them to the right person on the vendor side. We probably need to figure out better ways to funnel comments to the people who can fix them. The university needs such a system to help us hold vendors accountable. Robertson believes we do have such mechanisms, and need to be using them. If we don't, we're violating the terms of our own agreements with vendors.

Q. from Garnett: Does our contract for bookstore services has a ceiling on mark-up? Bookstore is also under Preston's awning. Tony Hall questioned the bookstore's math on mark-ups. Perhaps Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association could come up with a mechanism to transmit complaints to the UALR machinery or to the contractors, as appropriate.

Q. from Cheatham: Does the Senate need to find a way to be involved with the administration in determining how we should implement the five pieces of textbook-related legislation the chancellor referred to earlier. Asked for a sense of the senators present. Douglas spoke in favor of being part of developing the solutions, since they are so important to us. Could ask the president to solicit volunteers for a task force. Jerry Stevenson said the provost only got the issue a week or so ago, and he's sure he will be looking to the faculty for help.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Judith Faust, Secretary