

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

Friday, February 15, 2008, 1:00 p.m.

Donaghey Student Center A & B

MINUTES

*Present:* CAHSS— Amrhein, Anson, Bunch, Chadwick, Cheatham, Dhonau, English, Eshleman, Estes, Levernier, Ramsey, Smith, CB— Brice, Edison, Holland, Nickels, Watts.). CE— Barrett, Kushner, Vander Putten (*alt.*). CEIT— Bayrak, Patangia, Tschumi, Wright.. LAW— Aiyetoro, Fitzhugh. LIBRARY— Medin. CPS— Faust, Robertson, Turturro. CSM— Chen, Davis, Douglas, Elsalloukh, Kosmatov, Perkins, Sims, Tarasenko, Yanoviak. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Belcher, Ford, Williams.

*Absent:* CAHSS—Vinikas. CE— Garner, Lindsay, Moley. CEIT —Jovanovich, Trammel. CPS— Gregg, Montague, Robinson. LAW— Foster. CPS— Gregg, Montague, Robinson. CSM—Davis, Rurup. EX OFFICIO—Bates, Garrett.

*I. Welcome and roll call*

President Ford declared it to be 1:03 p.m. (thanks to his first-ever, very smart cell phone), and called the meeting to order.

*II. Review of minutes*

The minutes of the November 30, 2007, meeting were reviewed. Motion and second to accept the minutes. **Motion carried on voice vote.**

*III. Announcements*

President Ford announced that the minutes of the Senate would soon be posted to the Faculty Senate's web site [www.ualr.edu/facultysenate/](http://www.ualr.edu/facultysenate/). Drafts will be posted there as well as approved minutes. We'll be adding past years to the on-line archives as time permits.

President Ford called the Senate's attention to the final exam schedule. There was a problem last fall, and then again this semester. It seems that the procedure for assigning courses to exam slots is not as straight-forward as we'd always thought it was. The Calendar Committee is working to develop a set of templates, one for each day of the week on which final exams might begin.

The president gave a heads-up to the Committee on Committees, which will begin its work soon. He asked senators to be willing to help their colleges' Committee on Committee members recruit good people for our many working committees. The list of committees, their charges, and their current members and terms of office is available on the Faculty Senate web site.

*IV. Reports*

*A. Chancellor Anderson*

The chancellor updated the Senate on the most important thing for the institution for next year: some developments on the funding formula, which

determines how many of all the dollars available will go to each institution. We have been relatively pleased, as have most institutions, with that formula as revised in recent years. The governor has said he's not really interested in undoing the formula—and while that's not the whole story, it's good news. U.A. System leader Sugg and all the presidents recently met with Gov. Beebe. The governor thinks there need to be some elements in the funding formula that reward performance. such as, for example, retention, course completion, or graduation rates. The chancellor said he gave the spiel to the governor about how we have more part-time, more who did not go directly from high school to college, more minority, and more first-in-their-family students than any other four-year school in the state. There are such students on all campuses, but we do have significantly more of them. All of these factors affect the persistence of students in institutions of higher learning. He believes the governor understands this, and that we're being taken seriously. Still, when the formula is tweaked, it likely will work best for Fayetteville, least well for UALR. The bad news the chancellor took away from the recent meeting is that the governor is very interested in course completion as a key measure. We are more vulnerable on that measure than the other four-year institutions. His guess: there will be some designated pool, possibly all the new money, to be distributed based on this performance criterion.

*Q from Eshleman:* He heard a rumor that at UCA when students are identified as needing significant remediation, they are logged as associate-degree-seeking students. Tschumi noted that as long as they're focused on graduation rates, only full-time degree-seeking students count.

*Q from Tschumi:* Did the governor define what he meant by completion rates?  
A: No. The difficulty in defining completion rates seems to illustrate how mischievous such a standard is. The chancellor emphasized that our approach as an institution is to be happy warriors in this, to find out what the governor and the General Assembly want to see, and then to convince them about what are the best ways to get there. He noted that while course completion might not be our favorite standard, the fact is that if we keep more students in courses, we'll also be retaining and graduating more students.

The chancellor shared that he's quite favorably impressed with the new director of the state's Department of Higher Education, Jim Purcell. System president Sugg and Ferritor had been working with him on a plan focused on the number of college graduates. Someone pointed out that Arkansas has done really well on this score in the last couple of decades, with a 25% increase in the number of graduates over just the last several years. Purcell, the chancellor noted, observed that the number of students enrolled had also gone up 25% over the same period of time. In Oklahoma, they'd had only a 10 % increase in the number of students and a 25% increase in the number graduating. At the recent meeting, the governor came in citing exactly this issue and quoting Purcell.

*Q from Sims:* Any discussion of the ballot initiative for increased severance tax? A: Not at that meeting. The governor did say he was going to work hard to get new money for higher ed. The chancellor is convinced that he really is a believer in higher education.

One more point: the recommendations that came out of our own retention task force do need to be taken seriously and we need to get on with implementing them. The chancellor said he hasn't had a specific discussion about this with Ford, but ne foresees that there might be a need for a special meeting or two on the topic.

*Q from Chadwick:* What's the status of the telephone alert system? *A:* The development's been done, and the system is scheduled for a test within the next week or two. All the hard lines on campus are in the system, and a goodly number of cell phones as well are in the system. Administration is looking at some kind of campuswide loudspeaker system as well; he imagines that we will do something like that as part of a multilayered alert system. Thinks we've got our communication systems in order for who would take what roles in an emergency situation.

*Q:* What do we do to alert the alert system? *A:* Call Public Safety or 911. *Q:* Have we thought about putting the campus police number on the wall in classrooms? *A:* No, but that's a good idea.

He invited senators to bring to his attention other measures or issues we think should be taken into account. He noted that Vice Chancellor Donaldson and his staff are alert to students who may be off prescribed medications.

Sims is trying to get some funding for a project in hazard mitigation, and invited anyone who shares that interest or has information about it be in touch with him.

### *B. Provost's report*

The provost spoke about changes that have taken place in the budgeting of the Office of Extended Programs (OEP), as he had been asked to do in last week's meeting of the Senate's Planning and Finance Committee. He doesn't know all the details, but observed that there's good news and bad news about that: Chief of Staff and Budget Director Sandra Robertson's not here.

Back when we first started with on-line courses, we created a program intended to establish incentives for developing on-line courses. The numbers went way up. That would have been fine, except that, as it happened, other enrollment declined. Things continued in that way, and it became clear we had to do something different with the distribution of income from on-line courses.

Hugh Sherman was asked to head a task force to look at the financing of OEP—had some important experience in higher-ed financing, and was a relative newcomer. He put together a good task force, and soon left. Belcher inherited it. He gave credit to Robertson for coming up with a good plan, which he described in broad strokes: OEP becomes an administrative unit handling logistics, and is funded on a per-SSCH basis. On-line courses and programs will be treated as part of the academic units. Off-site locations offering complete programs that can result in a degree will be operated on an independent financial basis. (Benton, he noted, is break-even.) Start-up costs for new on-line course development will come from a pool carved out of the budget. OEP will go through the regular budget process, as does everyone else. Start-up costs for new off-site programs will also go through the regular budget process.

Some of the implementation steps include these: Separate Benton from the OEP budget. Develop MOUs with the academic departments who have had people being funded by OEP; the people and the money will come to the department's budget. (MOUs will serve to make sure the online programming doesn't get lost in the transfer.) Look at the last few years to see how much it costs to support OEP, and use that to determine the amount of money required and the rate per SCH. Add to that an arbitrary amount for innovation (trying to determine now how much is enough).

Angi Brenton added that OEP has always paid part of that tuition money back to the university's budget. Now all the tuition dollars are going to go into the

budget, and a percentage will be turned back to OEP, the changes reversing the flow.

*Q from Jacobsen:* Since faculty money and positions will be going back to the departments, will they now all be tenure track positions? *A:* Probably not; that will likely have to be worked out department by department.

*Observation from Robertson:* Online and off campus are not always the same, and there are differences between our definitions and the state's definitions of on-line. *Response:* Belcher agrees that the distinctions between on-campus and on-line programs and courses is not black and white. We have hybrids and blends, and we should be advocates for that.

*Q from Aiyetoro:* Is there still a need to offer incentives for new on-line courses? *A:* Yes. That's why we're trying to work in start-up support and money for innovation.

Belcher reminded the Senate that next week are the departmental budget hearings. On February 27 will be a meeting with the Deans Council in which the provost will ask them what should be driving our budget decisions—not requests for this or that, but exploration of the factors that should be driving us.

*Q from Tschumi:* How's it going with the academic succession plan? *A:* The work has gone far and is continuing, and of course intersects with disaster planning.

### *C. Rosalie Cheatham, concurrent enrolment*

Cheatham, observing that the provost asked her to assume responsibility for coordinating our concurrent enrolment program, said she had asked for time on the agenda to report since the faculty retains governance over academic programs.

We have concurrent enrolment programs with the following schools: Little Rock Hall, Greenbrier, Bryant, Benton, and the Arkansas School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts. Some 1,200 students have been admitted this academic year in the last two semesters, representing just over 4,900 SSCH in roughly 16,300 enrolments (which reflects students taking multiple courses). There are eleven department presently involved in the program.

She describes the impact of the program as beginning to be significant. There are still challenges, such as other institutions near us who can offer similar opportunities. We're offering, she said, a notable benefit in our rigorous credentialing in of teachers. State policy allows people without degrees in the field to teach; we see that as unacceptable. Other institutions are not so particular.

She noted that she came to this program as a skeptic. We've had challenges in offering quality courses in our neighborhood, certainly. Cheatham asked that we and our faculty colleagues to identify competent and qualified people in our disciplines who are teaching in high schools. The program needs help finding those places where we might be able to make new partnerships and expand our enrolment.

*Q from Tschumi:* The chancellor talked about the Syracuse model, which included a process of certification along with training. Have we made progress in that direction? *A:* We're doing fine in that respect. State policy requires that we bring them to campus regularly, and we're taking advantage of that. One thing we're working hard on is getting the national accreditation in this area.

*Comment from Ramsey:* As he remembers, Syracuse had a summer institute. He suggested we look for ways to use the new Academy for Teaching and Learning Excellence. *Response:* Good idea. The issue is how we pay for it.

Cheatham said, parenthetically and in relation to the chancellor's earlier remarks, that the students in concurrent enrollment *do* tend to complete courses.

*Q from Douglas:* Are concurrent enrollment classes listed anywhere on our website? *A:* They are. Look in BOSS for course section number codes AS1, AS2.

Douglas said she hadn't been able to tease them out, since you have to know which courses you're looking for. She also asked about faculty teaching concurrent enrollment courses: if we say they're part of our faculty, where do we claim them? Can we find them?

Cheatham said there is a website in process, and her hope is that between now and next fall, the courses we're offering in partner schools will appear there.

Douglas added that part of her point is concern that we may not be communicating effectively with these folks. Cheatham acknowledged the concern, and said the nature and closeness of communication and support no doubt varies from department to department.

*Comment from Wright:* He believes there are less ethical organizations offering core courses taught by unqualified faculty that we're then required to accept in transfer. *Response:* Cheatham says she thinks there is potential for that, adding that she has no specific knowledge that it is occurring. She believes we're in good shape on the standards met by the students, because they have to report by SSN on students to DHE. Where there's potential for slippage is in the standards faculty should have to meet. We've looked, she said, at potential partner schools where we could not proceed because of an absence of qualified faculty, only to learn later that the schools are offering those courses through other institutions.

#### *D. Committee Reports*

##### *1. Tenure Committee*

Chair Gary Geissler reported on the committee's progress. They conducted an online survey of faculty last fall—got a good response level and a representative sample. The results were helpful in providing them with insights and direction. To give senators an idea of what the committee hopes to accomplish, he handed out a list of objectives that address the concerns raised in the survey, those raised in last year's Roles and Rewards Task Force, and what the committee has learned by looking at other institutions.

They plan to have recommendations for action at the March meeting. They'll circulate a document for senators' review beforehand. It may be that we can get to a decision next month,

##### *2. and 3. Graduate Council and Undergraduate Council*

President Ford took responsibility for having added both Undergraduate and Graduate Council's chairs to this agenda before talking with them about their availability.

He reminded the Senate that we need to hear from them about their work, and said we'll do our best to get them on future agendas.

##### *4. University Professor Ad Hoc Committee*

Ramsey reported in DiPippa's stead. Work proceeds apace. He is fairly confident there will be a proposal for action at the next Senate meeting.

#### *V. New Business*

A. MOTION: Sen. Adjoa A. Aiyetoro. (Second required.) (Majority vote at one meeting.)

*"The Faculty Senate, after further consideration of the five-year eligibility requirement to be nominated for a Faculty Excellence Award recommends to the Chancellor that he reinstate the prior one-year eligibility requirement."*

*Commentary:* The UALR Bowen School of Law faculty request that the Faculty Senate consider this motion for several reasons:

- (1) The five-year eligibility requirement biases the awards towards senior, tenured faculty.
- (2) Junior faculty members who perform at the level of excellence in teaching, service or research that warrants consideration for an award should be recognized for this high level performance. It will encourage others to reach for the highest level of performance and provide an incentive for continued excellence.
- (3) The university-wide Faculty Excellence Awards selection committee can utilize criteria for evaluating the candidates that minimize any confusion based on differences in years of service. For example, considering only the most recent 3 years of service can be a part of the review criteria.

The motion was seconded by Fitzhugh.

Aiyetoro spoke to the motion, observing that the Law School faculty was most concerned about the effective elimination from consideration of any junior faculty member.

*Q from Anson:* By this, do you mean people should only put in what they're done in a single year? *A:* No, not necessarily just one. The motion contemplates three years of service, and suggests that even if there is

Ramsey spoke in support of the motion. Sees no reason to institutionalize a bias against junior faculty. Anson spoke against the motion in light of fairness, given the number of junior faculty in his college, which far exceeds the number of junior faculty in the School of Law.

*Q from Robertson:* Would the motion would permit nomination of a faculty member in their first year here? *A:* Yes. Robertson pointed out that would mean nominating a faculty member based on performance in a single semester, which seems unwise.

Aiyetoro noted that the motion doesn't mean that people would be nominated in their first year of service, but that the motion is meant to undo the bias against the faculty who have done extraordinary work for two or three or four years.

Chen said he's been here two and a half years, but he thinks five years is fine, because we need to see some consistency in excellence.

Ramsey reiterated his point.

Wright spoke to both sides. Don't want to exclude junior faculty, but it isn't appropriate to reward UALR faculty for work done somewhere other than UALR.

Eshleman: doesn't mind relaxing the time frame because he doesn't know how competitive a very junior faculty member would be, in any case.

Aiyetoro clarified that the Law School faculty did not ever consider rewarding work not done at this university. The present policy replaced one that had a one-year eligibility requirement.

Cheatham reminded the Senate of the history of the matter: that it came to us from the chancellor, who had collected comments from outside reviewers, one set of which had raised the issue of clarity around eligibility of nominees.

Bunch spoke to the issue of newer faculty who can demonstrate remarkable work in teaching in two or three or four years. Thinks that deserves to be rewarded too.

Brenton supported Bunch's point. Noted that more than half of her college's faculty are junior, and that most senior faculty have already received awards. She argues against restricting this pool as sharply as the five-year standard does. She added that the concern about work done at UALR could easily be accommodated.

Aiyetoro again noted that the guidelines prior to the last modification did have a minimum requirement of one or more full years at this university. She believes the question of service at UALR was already covered in the policy.

**Watts moved to table. Anson seconded. Motion carried on voice vote.**

B. MOTION: Faculty Senate Executive Committee. (Majority vote at one meeting.)

*"The Faculty Senate will hold an election during this meeting to replace its vice president, Dr. Earl Ramsey, for the remainder of this semester."*

Commentary: Dr. Ramsey is on off campus duty assignment this semester and has asked to be relieved of his Faculty Senate duties for the remainder of this term. Lacking clear guidelines in the governance document and not reaching a consensus on this matter in the Executive Committee, this issue is hereby presented to the Faculty Senate. If this motion passes, it is expected that nominations will be accepted from the floor of the Senate and an election will follow.

Ramsey spoke to the circumstances that make this necessary. He did not anticipate an OCDA, but circumstances changed in his department, and he was asked to take his OCDA this semester.

There was some discussion about the possible need for a constitutional amendment, since the constitution is silent on the matter of replacing Senate officers in midterm.

Point of order raised by Wright, and addressed by the parliamentarian.

**Motion by Robertson to table. Sims seconded. Motion carried on voice vote.**

## *VII. Open Forum*

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

*Judith Faust, Secretary*