



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Faculty Senate Meeting

Friday, January 22, 2010, 1:00 p.m.

Ledbetter Rooms A & B, Donaghey Student Center

MINUTES

Present: CAHSS— Amrhein, Bailey, Chapman, Clausen, English, Eshleman, Garnett, Giammo, Ramsey, Webb. CB—Holland, Nickels, Watts. CE— Bandre, Hayn, Hughes, Kuykendall. CEIT—Tramel, Tschumi, Tudoreanu. LAW— Fitzhugh. LIBRARY— Russ. CPS— Barnes, Collier-Tenison, Faust, Rhodes, Robertson. CSM— Chen, Guellich, Kosmatov, McMillan, Perkins, Tarasenko, Thompson, Wright, Yanoviak. EX OFFICIO— Belcher, Davis, Ford, Smith.

Absent: CAHSS—Anson, Groesbeck, Vinikas, Yoder. CB— Edison. CE—Pack. CEIT— Anderson, Chan, Jovanovich. LAW— Aiyetoro, Goldner. CPS— Driskill, Smith-Olinde. CSM— Douglas, Prince, Seigar. Sims. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Williams.

I. Welcome & Roll Call

The president declared it to be 1:00 and convened the meeting. The secretary called the roll.

II. Review of Minutes

Several senators reported problems in opening the minutes as posted on the Faculty Senate web site. The secretary apologized for having failed to e-mail the minutes to senators, observing that she was obviously so self-satisfied at actually having completed the minutes within a week of the meeting that it clouded her ability to recognize that she hadn't mailed them out at the same time she posted them on the web site. Review of the December minutes was postponed until the February 19 meeting of the Senate.

III. Announcements

There were none.

IV. Introduction of new topics

Ford opened the floor for senators to bring up items that need to come to the Senate's attention. None was mentioned.

V. A short debate on a topic related to "Rethinking the Bachelor's Degree"

Resolved: A minor is not required for graduation from UALR with a bachelor's degree except as determined by the department or program.

Speaking in support of the proposition: Sen. Roger Webb,

Speaking in opposition to the proposition: Sen. Joe Giammo

President Ford reminded the Senate of his intention to have a series of what he calls “mini-debates” on issues that have emerged as relevant to rethinking the baccalaureate. He emphasized that the only reason for the straw poll is to give everyone opportunity to voice their opinion on the issue at hand, and see where the preponderance of opinion is in the group today. The decision is in no way an action of the Senate.

Webb began the debate with the pro position. Following is a paraphrase of his remarks:

I let myself get elected to this body last year only to “put a bullet in the head of the minor.” Had never heard of a minor before coming here. Searched a number of university web sites, and found one only at the University of Mississippi. Suggest we should emulate our academic betters.

When we revisited the bachelor’s degree some twenty years or more ago, it was pretty clear that the purpose of the minor was primarily to protect the economic interests of departments.

We’ve programmed 101 of the 124 hours we require for a degree. That’s too much. My pitch is that we should give students more leeway to take a variety of the very interesting courses offered at the university.

We see far too many students graduating with far more than 124 hours as they get snarled up in meeting all our many requirements. Our students deserve the freedom to take electives. We seem to have so many students who come here looking for a degree rather than an education; we should make it easier for those who really are looking for an education.

Giammo followed with the con position:

I hadn’t actually made up my mind on the issue, and in preparing I’ve thought of four things. Will start with the high-minded and work down from there.

The danger of not having a minor is that too many students might overspecialize. The minor requires them to take some things out of their major, and thus serves to broaden their horizons a bit.

The minor provides an avenue for students to develop supplemental knowledge and skills that might be very useful to them later as they go into the world of employment.

There are minors, such as the one I supervise, presidential studies, that might well just cease to exist without the requirement that students seek out a minor.

Finally, there’s the issue of SSCH and narrow departmental interest. It’s useful to have that exposure to students who may discover they care more than they might have thought about the field of study selected for the minor. It can be a good recruitment tool.

Comment from Robertson: We see at the graduate level the burgeoning interest in certificates that often cut across departments and disciplines. He leans toward Webb’s position, but does believe we should do what we can to encourage students to reach for broader education.

Comment from Ramsey: The minor requirement is often a headache for students. If we make it optional, the major advisor’s role will be more important than ever in helping students plot out a curriculum that makes sense and supports the major.

Comment from Eshleman: It’s important to think about these issues together. If we remove the minor requirement *and* decrease the total number of hours in the core, we might, for example, have trouble convincing efficient students why they should have thirty-five or forty hours unspecified before they earn the degree.

Comment from Clausen: The minor requirement helps students to meet the general graduation requirement of a certain number of hours of upper-level courses.

Comment from Smith: Hears from students a lot that they don’t want to have to take a minor. He likes the idea of a voluntary minor—and of flexibility, so that he as a political science major might take economics, speech communication, *and* presidential studies.

The president called for a straw vote on the proposition. The tally was twenty-one in favor, ten opposed, four undecided.

Ford observed at the end that we must, as Eshleman suggested, look at all the issues together in order to assess their interactions when we enter the work of rethinking the degree program next fall.

VI. Reports

A. Chancellor Anderson

The chancellor was unable to attend today. He is attending a statewide meeting of Arkansas presidents and chancellors.

B. Provost Belcher

The provost reported for himself and in the chancellor's stead.

The chancellor has Matt McCoy, counsel, U.A. System office, looking at the proposed IRB policies document. The process has taken much longer than he had wished, and still is—but now it's in the chancellor's hands.

The provost observed that senators no doubt know a lot about the budget from news coverage. He offered a brief summary so we all know where we stand:

Last year in the budget process, we got some one-time money from the state. Dr. Sugg required the campuses to set some of that aside for reserves. The '09 budget cuts, one in August, and a larger one in Oct, totaled about \$1.3M for us. With the cash reserves, we were able to absorb those cuts without dipping into departmental budgets.

Now we have new cuts (another \$1.5M) and no reserves to cushion them. (The provost did note it could be worse, of course.)

We initiated an immediate hiring and purchasing freeze. The hiring freeze affects both this year and next year. This year's freeze has most of its impact on staff. Next year's will affect faculty and staff.

The purchasing freeze is temporary, a couple of weeks, until we figure out how we're going to handle this year's cuts.

Academic affairs must absorb \$1,085,000, 72.4%, of the total cut. Hoping to use salary savings from vacant positions to cover the major portion, just taking the money on those lines for this year. All salary savings from faculty lines go into the provost's instructional reserve budget. That allows him the flexibility to send money to departments that have a sudden instructional need. He can help McMillan staff extra calculus classes because of increased enrollment, for example. He always dips into those funds to help pay for summer school, as well. The provost is asking all the departments what their needs are likely to be, and that will tell him how much of the instructional fund he can give up to help cover some of the cuts to academic units. What's left to be cut will be distributed proportionately.

The entire cut should be taken care of by the end of next week.

Q from Giammo: Academic affairs has to cover about 72% of the whole cut? Seems a lot. How much of academic affairs is it? *A:* The budget cut is about .7% of academic affairs' total budget

A little about next year: Hard to say since things are still pretty fuzzy. The governor presented his budget last week. Our cut could be from \$1.5 to \$2M. Some think that might be a bit optimistic. The December revenue shortfall really gave the economic forecasters pause. Employment is going to lag relative to all

other indicators of recovery, and that does not bode well for state general revenue. We do know, though, that no matter what the cuts might be, we are going to have to cover rising costs.

Health-care insurance looks like it will be up about \$600K Utilities look to be up by about \$500K. There are many unknowns, including the first ever fiscal legislative session coming up soon. Enrollment remains to be seen, of course, and could be very good for us. We don't know whether the board of trustees is going to allow us any small tuition increases. The provost's guess is that we'll get some guidance from the System office pretty soon, which is almost always helpful.

Whatever cuts we must make must be made strategically—in a way, for instance, to hang onto enrollment increases.

Dr. Purcell, director of the Department of Higher Education, met with the legislative Joint Budget committee recently, and was a good advocate for higher ed. He told legislators that stimulus money can't be used for salary increases but could be used for one-time bonuses.

The provost had recently talked to a colleague in another, harder-hit state who reported they'd used stimulus money to plug holes last year in budgets, and now they're looking at further, deeper cuts, and no more one-time money. We've budgeted in a way to minimize the pain of subsequent cuts.

The provost noted there seems to be some lack of clarity among some of our elected officials about the real impact of the lottery scholarship money. It isn't really likely to change the revenue picture for universities unless it really serves to significantly increase the numbers of students enrolling in higher ed. Nickels, faculty senator and elected member of the Arkansas General Assembly House of Representatives, said a number of legislators are concerned about tuition increases as a way for universities to reach into what they perceive as a cookie jar.

He also said we're trying to get their attention on the fact that academic salaries are woefully low in this state, even as compared to the other Southern Regional Education Board states.

Nickels highlighted some of the contention between the legislature and the governor about who controls what money. Said Beebe has asked for the rainy day fund to be budgeted.

Comment from Robertson: Having more students brings in more money, but having more students costs more than just what tuition can cover. Our strategic thinking needs to tackle this fact and its related issues. For example, some kinds of students are cheaper than others.

Q from Ramsey: What percentage of our budget goes to remedial education? Is that a place we could save a bunch of money? *A from provost:* Interesting question. Sandra Robertson, he said, will tell you it's a cash cow for us. Also, our numbers of remedial students are dropping precipitously as a result of ratcheting up our admission standards.

The provost spoke about the University's budget process: This year, with the prospect of significant cuts that are going to allow little or no room for budget reallocation, we're thinking budget hearings might not be a great idea. We will have processes in place to talk about the budget and budget priorities—though not in our customary hearing format. This year, a here's-what-I-want approach isn't going to happen.

President Ford thanked the provost, and said it seems to him obvious we should require a minor in economics for everybody.

C. Report on Act 182 (the “Rogers Phillips Act”) –Susan Hoffpauir, AVC

Hoffpauir reminded us of several laws passed last year that are significant for us. The one that will most affect our transfer students is Act 182. The purpose of the Act was to make the transition from two-year to four-year institutions a smoother process for students. She observed that we were doing some of the things required by the Act already, but noted as well that it’s hitting us hard because we’re the most transfer-friendly institution in the state—and there are enormous reporting requirements. The General Assembly wants not to penalize folks with associate degrees from Arkansas public institutions (AA, AS, AAT), by telling them they have to take another sixteen hours of gen ed credits before they can get a bachelor’s degree.

ADHE has been reviewing degree programs, and is taking to the Coordinating Board those that “fit”: We used to not let students bring in any “technical” courses when they transferred to UALR. What we found was that those courses have often evolved. The Senate decided a few years ago that we want all courses credited to the transcript.

Act 182 means we have to accept all the hours and credits earned to complete the associate’s degree, and that includes courses in which students got a grade of D. We have to admit students with associate degrees as juniors. We can’t require additional general education courses (kind of a squishy term), so we say we can’t require them to take any additional course that’s in the ACT system *unless* it’s required by the major, or it’s a discipline-specific course and the student hasn’t taken a comparable course in his/her associate’s degree program.

About the D grades: we have to take the hours, but if we require our students to make a C in that course, we can require them to retake it.

Emblematic of some of the problems with the new policies: Pulaski Tech does not require academic advising, and articulation agreements are useless without advising. They also do not have a process of application for graduation. Students might receive a degree in the mail while they’re still in school. When they hit the numbers, they’re awarded a degree. We get students whose transcripts at the time of application do not tell us that or when they are slated to finish a degree.

We have to start reporting in August 2011 to ADHE all students who come in with associates degrees, how many gen ed hours we required of them here, and why.

Hoffpauir said there are two policy issues, where ours currently does not comport with Act 182. (1) Any student from a regionally accredited college or university would meet the core requirement if they brought at least 44 hours meeting the course distribution guidelines we approved. And (2), our current policy about accepting transfer of credit for D’s also does not comport with Act 182.

Q from English: What happened about the foreign language core requirement?

A: Chancellor and provost successfully argued that our foreign language requirement is a degree requirement rather than a gen ed requirement, and so stands.

Comment from Ramsey: Now we will have three identifiable subsets of students meeting different requirements—natives, transfers, and transfers with associate degrees from public institutions in Arkansas.

Tschumi observed that Admissions and Transfer Credit Committee is going to have to look carefully at how all these policies fit together.

Ramsey underscored the issue of equity: that our requirements of students be fairly applied.

Giammo raised the issue of lower-level courses that may be required for a minor. Hoffpauir said that issue had not come up. She'll take the question to ADHE.

Tramel observed that this discussion and the new policies apply to UALR's associate degrees as well.

D. Roles and Rewards Task Force II – Catherine Lowry, chair

Lowry reported on the work of the task force jointly appointed by the provost and the president of the Senate. Work proceeds apace, and they intend to have a proposal before this body next month.

E. Planning and Finance Committee Report on Endowment Funds –Larry Holland, chair

Holland reported that the chancellor, budget director, and provost have been very open with the committee as the university approach the annual budgeting process..

Many universities have pooled their endowment funds into one investment group: Arkansas Foundation, Inc. Total assets are approaching \$1 billion. We're the third largest contributor, with \$75-80M in the fund. The fund has almost made up the losses from the market downtown that began at the end of 2008.

What about balances on individual scholarship accounts? Some departments have full-time development employees working their funds, and may contact them for information. Denman also invited others to contact him directly if you they have a concern about a current balance.

Much of our endowment money is designated for scholarships, and there's a new, consolidated listing of all UALR scholarships available at <http://www.ualr.edu/financialaid/scholarships>.

VII. Old Business

- A. *MOTION*. Athletics Committee, presented by Jim Carr, chair. (Legislation; no second required; 3/5 majority vote required at two meetings. Second vote.)

The Faculty Senate moves to amend the description of the Athletic Committee in the University Assembly Constitution as indicated in Attachment 1.

The committee wishes to amend its charge and the composition of the committee., and where the language now lists a number of specific activities, they recommend including the words "not limited to." The proposed amendment received its first affirmative vote in the December 4, 2009, meeting of the Senate.

Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

- B. *MOTION*. Admission and Transfer of Credit Committee, presented by Pete Tschumi in the absence of George Tebbets, chair. (Legislation; no second required; majority vote of 3/5 required at two meetings. Second vote.)

That the description of the Admissions and Transfer of Credit Committee in the Constitution of the University Assembly of UALR be changed as shown below:

Admissions and Transfer of Credit Committee: On behalf of the Faculty Senate, this committee shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate standards for admitting students to UALR and accepting transfer credit. It shall recommend policies to the Faculty Senate in the areas of its responsibility. It also shall hear appeals from applicants for admission and from students concerned with transfer credit.

The committee shall consist of ten full-time faculty members to be appointed by the Committee on Committees of the Assembly, two student members appointed by the Student Government Association, and the administrative officer in charge (or designee) of the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, the Office of Records and Registration, the Office of Transfer Student Services, University College/Academic Advising, and the Office of Testing Services. An Admissions Office designee shall serve as coordinator for the Admissions Committee proceedings. The ten faculty members shall serve two-year staggered terms and there shall be a minimum of one faculty member from each College except the Bowen School of Law, and a maximum of three faculty members from any one College. All members of the committee are voting members.

Commentary: The organization of this committee reflects an older organization of the University (the Office of Admissions and the Office of Records are now two separate offices; the Dean of Students or his/her designee does not participate in the proceedings of this committee) and the organization did not include the administrative officer (or designee) of the Office of Transfer Student Services which was created in February 2009. The new organization of the committee will more appropriately represent the newer administrative organization of the University and will expand faculty participation to ensure that a 2:1 ratio of faculty to staff voting membership is maintained on this committee, so that faculty maintain responsibility for decisions affecting transfer credit articulation to UALR curriculum.

Tschumi presented the motion for a second vote, it having received its first affirmative vote at the December 4, 2009, meeting of the Senate.

Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

VIII. New Business

There was none.

IX. Open Forum

Ford invited comments from the Senate. None were proffered.

X. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Faust, Secretary.

Attachment 1

Athletics Committee

Appointed Committee of the Senate

This committee shall consider matters pertaining to the intercollegiate athletic program and shall be advisory in nature with respect to the relationship of athletics to the academic purposes of the University. These matters may include, but are not limited to, the monitoring of academic progress and eligibility of student-athletes, scheduling of athletic events, allocation of scholarships, recruitment of student-athletes, the adding and dropping of sports, NCAA, ~~NAIA~~ and conference rules and changes, and other matters related to intercollegiate athletics.

The committee shall be composed of ~~six-ten~~ full-time faculty members to be appointed by the Committee on Committees of the Assembly, with the proviso that no more than representation by at least one voting member shall be selected from any single each academic college or school (with the exception of the Bowen Scholl of Law) and no more than two member from each academic college or school (including the Bowen School of Law). The Committee on Committees shall also appoint two staff members to the committee. The Student Government Association shall appoint two students to the committee. The faculty and staff members shall serve two-year, staggered terms, and the student members shall serve one-year terms. The director of athletics, registrar, and the advisor for student-athletes shall serve as ex officio members without vote.

A faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) will be appointed by the chancellor with advice from the Athletics Committee. The FAR will serve for a three-year term and may be reappointed for subsequent three-year terms. Appointment of the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) will be for a three-year term and may be renewable. The FAR will be appointed by the chancellor from a recommendation provided by the Athletics Committee. The FAR will serve on the Athletics Committee as an ex officio member with vote.

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