



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

Faculty Senate Meeting

Friday, January 30, 2009, 1:00 p.m.
Donaghey Student Center, Rooms B & C

MINUTES

Present: CAHSS— Anson, Chadwick, Clausen, Estes, Levernier, Martin, Ramsey, Webb. CB— Holland, Nickels. CE— Bandre, Garner, Hayn, Lindsay, Pack. CEIT— Chan, Jovanovich, Tschumi, Tudoreanu. LAW— Aiyetoro. CPS— Collier-Tenison, Faust, Rhodes, Robertson, Smith-Olinde. CSM— Chen, Douglas, Kosmatov, McMillan, Perkins, Prince, Tarasenko, Wiscaver. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Belcher, Ford, Williams.

Absent: CAHSS— Bunch, Eshleman, Giammo, Vinikas, Yoder. CB— Brice, Edison, Watts. CEIT — Patangia, Tramel. LAW— Fitzhugh, Foster. CPS— Robinson. LIBRARY— Pine. CPS— Collier-Tenison, Robinson. CSM— Sims. EX OFFICIO— Davis, Lyn-Cook.

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

The Senate reviewed the minutes of the December 5, 2008, meeting. **Motion and second to accept the minutes carried on voice vote.**

III Announcements

A. Pending topics

The president reminded the Senate that there are three pending issues that we have ad hoc groups working on.

- University Professor: the working group hopes to have a proposal before the Senate at its next meeting.
- Code of conduct statement: this group also expects to be ready with a proposal for your review next month.
- Reworked resolution on universal design: This motion on behalf of the Disability Resource Center came forward first last spring, was considered briefly in the fall, and was withdrawn for further refinement. The Resource Center has assembled a group of faculty and staff who are working on a rewrite.

B. Midsemester grades

President Ford reminded the Senate of the policy it approved in April regarding midsemester grades.

Although reporting midsemester grades to administration is not required, the University Faculty Senate has established the policies that any student has the right to an evaluation of his or her grade in a course prior to the end of the drop period and that faculty are expected to facilitate availability of grades to all students. In addition, faculty will inform students of midterm grades for all semester-long 0 level, 1000 level and 2000 level courses offered during the fall and spring semesters.

Each faculty member is expected to select appropriate times for the periodic evaluations which are necessary or desirable during the course of the semester, but the complexities of an academic institution make it necessary that all faculty members comply with an orderly schedule of final examinations.”

It seems that perhaps everyone is not on the same page on this matter across the campus, which prompted Ford to bring to senators’ attention the exact wording of the resolution. He also reminded them that the Faculty Senate interprets its own legislation.

The dates BOSS is open for midsemester grades were set by Records and Registration. If they are insufficient or ill-timed, faculty might convey their concerns to that administrative office.

IV. Reports

A. Chancellor Anderson

The chancellor talked about legislation pending in the current session of the General Assembly. One is a bill on transfer of credit sponsored by Burris. It provides that if a transfer student from a two-year institution has completed an AA degree, the four-year institution can’t require more lower-level classes except under certain circumstances. The chancellor observed that the presence now of a number of exceptions is a result of the good work of the provost and his people, along with Walker and Lee. The bill is thought to be likely to pass, and is in the chancellor’s opinion a harbinger of what may be a 35-hour core across the state.

He was reminded of an example he used in teaching government: When there aren’t many cars in town, you don’t need signal lights and traffic. When there are lots of cars, you do. In higher education in Arkansas, there are now many, many more institutions than there once were. We’re constantly negotiating the balance between conformity and diversity. We may see a statewide academic calendar one day, for example. He thinks UALR has frequently led the way in flexibility and responsiveness to the changing needs and circumstances of students and the community.

After the North Central accreditation review coming up in the fall, the chancellor said, it’s probably going to be time to revisit our core curriculum. It’s been a long while, and we have these new developments in the state to consider. We are, he asserted, fully capable of dealing with changing times. He thinks the opportunity is emerging for us to brag that our courses are better. A little snob appeal may be in our future as there are fewer and fewer freshman and sophomore students.

The chancellor reported we’re up 193 students this spring, which is good news. We were down about that number in the fall, a fact that he tried to keep just under the radar.

Now he can respond easily if anybody noticed. Our numbers are a little misleading all across the state, in that concurrent-enrollment high-school students are included in the numbers.

About the tenure and promotions recommendations that came to the chancellor in the spring: A lot of good work and thinking has gone into that document, as he's said before. At the same time, it isn't a polished policy document in its present form. It may be broken into more than one. He has had it reviewed by university counsel, and while there are a few questions about consistency with board policy, they seem not to be major problems. He has suggested to the president that he appoint someone who's a good writer to work on streamlining the document and making it more user friendly. It will have to come back to the Senate for review and approval, and then go back up to the system level, perhaps even to the system trustees.

On the budget front, we're looking at a small increase in funding that won't quite keep up with inflationary pressure. We could moan about it, but that's not what he would recommend. What's more troubling is the prospect that the larger economy's downturn will hit Arkansas full force, revenues will fall, and we'll be told—as will all state agencies—to make severe cuts later this year. He does think we ought all to be prepared for bad news. We can hope it might not get as bad here as it does in some other places, but it will surely be bad enough.

The chancellor again mentioned what a plus for UALR it is to have Nickels and Clemmer in the General Assembly, but also urged us to be respectful of them, and remember they were elected to represent a constituency other than us. He will soon issue his usual memo about lobbying activities. Faculty have, of course, all the rights of citizenship to influence public policy however we might wish. If, however, the issues are related to higher-education policy, we must at a minimum coordinate our work with Bill Walker and Joni Lee. The greatest risk to us, the chancellor said, might be that we, in the process of pursuing another kind of issue altogether, might get seriously crosswise with legislators who would extend their irritation to matters concerning higher ed, or even UALR.

We've been in the forefront of on-line course enrollment, having offered 465 courses, followed by ASU with 298 and UA-F with 268. This might attract some legislative attention.

On the issue of budget cuts, the provost and others have been looking for a strategy of reducing our budget by some \$2.3M, since our expenses have risen and revenue hasn't kept up. We haven't pulled the trigger on it yet, the chancellor said, and we won't until the budget picture gets a bit clearer.

Chen spoke in support of summer school courses, urging us to approve even small sections. The chancellor said we've occasionally used the approach of making a go/no-go decision about courses related to the System policy of paying 7.5% of salary per course, 15% for two, and courses being able to generate revenue at least equivalent to that expenditure.

Ramsey asked a rhetorical question: Does there appear to be any thinking on the part of our political leaders in the state that if we don't take a terrible hit in funding, this would be a good time to be raiding those places that do and grabbing up some good people? The chancellor demurred comment.

In general, the chancellor thinks the atmosphere for higher education in the state is not good. He was recently in a meeting with chancellors and presidents of four-year

institutions. It's hard to get consensus among that lot, but there is agreement that we need to find ways to change the nature of the discourse in the public policy arena in connection with higher education.

Ramsey commented on the inclusion of expanded Pell grants in the Obama administration's stimulus plan.

When there were no more questions for the chancellor, **Robertson moved, Tschumi seconded, to suspend the rules to add Jim Nickels to the agenda. Motion carried.**

The chair recognized Nickels.

Nickels and Clemmer met with the board of visitors recently. There are still some problems with the Burris bill, and they're working to make corrections that will be helpful to the four-year institutions.

Nickels reminded us that the General Assembly isn't a singular thing; the House is 100 individuals. As a lawmaker, you hope you can get 11 votes in committee and 51 on the floor. That, Nickels said, is how it works out there.

He distributed copies of two other draft bills, both sponsored by Rep. Roebuck et al. and by Sen. Baker, one to create a comprehensive annual report on higher education, and the other to "ensure high school graduates are adequately prepared for college and career ready [and] to reduce the number of high school graduates who require remediation." Noted that there are people working to structure the lottery distribution policies. And a final issue is the governor's proposal to fund a statewide trauma system and a number of other services with a cigarette tax that would generate \$68M to \$90M. The trauma system itself requires only about \$35M. And the governor's proposal might have some adverse effects on central Arkansas since it includes some funding for the initial development of a UAMS campus in northwest Arkansas. He also has some concerns about the rainy-day fund proposal, which he thinks would arrogate power to the governor that rightly belongs to the legislature.

Nickels reminded senators that cut-and-paste e-mails don't work very well with legislators. Messages should be personal and direct.

Ford asked if we should post these bills on the Faculty Senate web site. Robertson suggested that since bills and their statuses change so often, senators would be better off connecting to <http://www.arkleg.gov> to track their progress.

B. Provost Belcher

The provost tipped his hat to people who've been quietly working behind the scenes for about three years on revising and refining IRB policies. He has read 135 of the 183 pages of this document. He has some comments and proposed corrections, and will send them to the committee. He suggests we all do the same.

He referred to the rise this semester in enrollment and in SSCH. We're down in freshman, but most of that is accounted for by deferrals as a result of our higher admissions standards. We hear anecdotal evidence that students who've gone to schools out of town are coming home because of economic pressures on families.

Historically, when the economy tanks, people go back to school. He hopes for a significant increase in enrollment in the fall. Better tax credits for education in the Obama stimulus plan would be good news for us.

Academic Affairs budget hearings are about three weeks from now. He is inviting the Planning and Finance committee to come and hear what the various colleges and departments are looking for. There's nothing encouraging in our economic outlook, but he suggests we should be grateful we're not Arizona, which, with only three universities, is looking at \$600M in cuts to the higher ed budget.

If there are deep cuts because of a downturn in state revenue, we need to remember that K-12, by state policy, is held harmless. That means 50% of the state budget is protected from cuts. We, and everything else, are in the other half of the state budget where all the cuts will be made.

We're being hurt, too, by slashed earnings on invested funds. When we get tuition money in at the beginnings of semesters, we don't need it all at once, so we invest it in short-term interest-bearing instruments. The funds don't make a ton, but the interest is budgeted and we need it.

Comment by Jovanovich: University policy says the decision to cancel evening classes should be made by 2:30, and that "evening classes" include those beginning at or after 4 p.m. Public Safety, when he contacted them, said night classes are taken to be those beginning at 6:00. He suggested that in the future, we clarify in our announcements on the web and elsewhere what we mean by "day classes" and "night classes." Belcher deferred to the chancellor, who said he and Milazzo had conferred often, almost right up until 2:30. He said our policy is in some ways clear, in others not so much, and that we could indeed see that future announcements specified what's meant by "day" and "evening" classes.

C. Chief Information Officer Winston

Winston updated the Senate on some technical issues and projects they're working on in Computing Services.

- A master calendar initiative
- Reworking on-line admissions forms
- PAFs
- VOIP pilot in our area
- Have increased bandwidth for the campus for Internet I from 100 Mbps to 300 Mbps
- Expanding network to prepare for connection to a new research network
- Expanding phone system
- Moved student lab from SUA-105 to one big lab in the Library
- Researching and considering the possibility of outsourcing e-mail to an off-campus operation.

Q from Anson: Curious about the spam filtering. Seems to be some problems. How can I get access? *A:* Everyone has access to that system. Go to <http://mailfilter.ualr.edu>, and use your UALR e-mail login and password.

Comments by Tudoreanu: Two suggestions: One to automate book orders. Could you work with bookstore? Maybe there is a way, but I don't know about it. Second, is there a way to get grades automatically or at least easily transferred from Blackboard to BOSS? *A:* Winston clarified the questions and made note of them.

Q from Ramsey: What are the issues and what's a possible timeline for contracting out e-mail? *A:* We need more input from the campus about issues and problems before we begin to develop a potential contract. Assuming we don't find any deal breakers, we could do it by fall. *Ramsey:* Would it be cost-neutral? *A:* Good question. Won't be cost-neutral, in the sense that our old e-mail system needs upgrading. Might be able to skirt some costs.

Q from Douglas: Can we expect spam filtering as good as we have now from an external provider? *A:* If that's important to the campus, then it'll be a criterion for a new provider.

Q from Faust: Might we expect less blacklisting of UALR's domain with the help of an outside e-mail contractor? *A:* She doesn't know for sure how different it would be, but she did note that we've upgraded a couple of low-end servers on campus that have consistently been the point of attack for flooding, which is what typically results in blacklisting. She counseled that we should advise Computing Services at once if we find our messages are being rejected by others' servers.

Comment from Robertson: Advised caution in the contracting process. Said he was thinking of a number of recent outsourcing decisions in which we had contracts we thought were good, but found ourselves tied to poorly performing providers for much longer than we needed to be.

D. Reports of Standing Committees:

1. Graduate Council, Anne Lindsay, chair

Graduate Council has met only once since the last Senate meeting, and has nothing to report. This comment was met by grateful sounds from more than one senator.

2. Undergraduate Council, Jeanette Clausen, chair

Undergraduate Council has since the Senate's last meeting approved a new course, approved catalog changes in CSAM, and responded to the advance-notice comment process for the proposed BFA in Dance. Theater and Dance department came back with responsive changes, and the Council approved the proposed degree pending approval from the AHSS curriculum committee. Anson reported that the AHSS curriculum committee has approved the degree program.

The Council has reviewed on first reading several changes in ACT-score prerequisites for several college math classes—the requirement is supported by research and is in line with changes made at UA-F and PTC. The Math and Statistics department did a good job in reviewing all the angles on this, and is working with Academic Success Center on meeting the needs of folks who are denied enrollment in these math courses. This will come up again, and comments are welcome.

Ramsey asked about the number of hours in the Dance major itself; Hoffpauir said it was seventy-four hours.

E. Report on the draft of IRB policies, Elisabeth Sherwin, chair.

Ford reminded the Senate that the draft is available on the front page of the Faculty Senate web site. He also noted that while the Senate does not approve IRB policies, the Senate will make a recommendation to the Chancellor about them.

Sherwin ceded the floor to John Pittenger, whom she called the IRB historian. Pittenger quickly traced the evolution of the IRB. Described the IRB as working pretty much on its own for a number of years. The chancellor and provost asked the Board to codify its principles and practices, and in the process provided resources for folks to go meet with others doing the same work.

The daunting length of the drafted policies, he assured the Senate, is not the result of some demented desire for a 180-page policy manual.

Sherwin pointed out that the IRB's responsibility is to the participants in research, to their freedom and protection. Our committee is only responsible for human-subjects research, but what that *is* is often where we find the struggle. Oral history as a rule has an exemption, but not all oral history is exempt. Encourages everyone to read at least the first few pages of the draft policies, where these definitional questions are addressed. The consequences of the IRB not doing its job properly could be shutting down this university's research. We may think that can't happen, but it does: Duke and Virginia Commonwealth are examples. She observed that the universities caught in those major violations tend to be ones that do medical research.

Every institution has the right to be more conservative than the federal guidelines, and many are. The chancellor makes the call on that. The federal Office of Human Research Protection has urged, though they cannot mandate, much higher levels of protection that we have customarily provided.

The draft is now out for comment. When those come in, Sherwin said the Board will rework the document, resubmit it to legal, and disseminate it again.

Holland expressed concern about the length of the document, wondering how we could as faculty members really know what we need to know. *A:* Reiterated that most of the detail in the document is about internal policies and practices for the board itself. Expressed intent to digest the policies into FAQs which will be available to the faculty on the web. The Board borrowed much of the document from a major accrediting source for IRBs.

Holland had three points he wished to make, and Sherwin chose to respond to each: 1) *He sees nowhere any sort of appeal procedure or checks and balances should the IRB find something unacceptable.* Sherwin said the chancellor can overturn a "yes" from the IRB but not a "no." A professor can appeal an IRB decision to the federal government. That's the only recourse. 2) *There appear to be no procedures for what the chairman of the IRB is to do when an apparent violation is discovered. Holland suggests that the researcher be brought into the discussion early and fully.* *A:* Sherwin says it's in there, in section 13. Holland said he'd look again. 3) *There needs to be a clear statement about activities that are exempt from IRB review. If such a statement is present, it appears to be somewhat hidden.* *A:* "Exemption" is used in the federal language both in reference to categories of things, and to individual exceptions to policy. Section 4.001 suggests that every presentation on pedagogical matters requires review and approval. Holland asked if that means every time we talk to colleagues about our pedagogical methods, we must seek prior approval, even for our presentations at ATLE? Sherwin said apparently this is so.

According to Pittenger, the question underlying the development of comprehensive policies is, "What sorts of activities involving seeking information from human beings should be subject to scrutiny to ensure that those human beings are adequately protected?"

There was extensive discussion about "normal pedagogical activities," that were so carefully ruled out of the original federal policies on human subjects research.

Sherwin asked that people read as much as they can, and that they bring to the Board's attention the categories of questions and issues they want addressed.

V. Old Business

MOTION. Admissions and Transfer of Credit Committee. (Legislation; no second required; three-fifths majority vote at two consecutive meetings; second reading.)

That the Admission and Transfer 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 eight 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 admissions and records, Dean of Students, University College/Academic Advising, Testing Services. An Admissions Office designee shall serve as coordinator for the Admissions Committee proceedings. The eight faculty members shall serve one 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 two faculty members from any one College. All members of the committee are voting members.

Hearing no discussion, the chair called for a vote. **The motion passed unanimously by show of hands.**

VI. Open Forum

No topics came forward for discussion.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Faust, Secretary.