

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

Friday October 19, 2007, 1:00 p.m.

Donaghey Student Center A & B

MINUTES

*Present:* CAHSS— Anson, Bunch, Chadwick, Cheatham, Dhonau, Estes, Levernier, Ramsey. CB— Nickels, Williams (*alt.*). CE— Barrett, Kushner, Lindsay, Vander Putten (*alt.*). CEIT— Jovanovich, Tschumi. LAW— Aiyetoro, Fitzhugh, Foster. LIBRARY— Medin. CPS— Faust, Robinson. CSM— Davis, Douglas, Elsalloukh, Perkins, Sims, Sweeney (*alt.*), Tarasenko, Yanoviak. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Belcher, Ford,

*Absent:* CAHSS— Amrhein, English, Eshleman, Smith, Vinikas. CB— Brice, Holland, Edison, Watts. CE— Garner, Moley. CEIT — Bayrak, Patangia, Trammel, Wright. CPS— Gregg, Montague, Robertson, Turturro. CSM— Chen, Kosmatov, Rurup. EX OFFICIO—Bates, Garrett, Williams.

*I. Welcome and roll call*

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

*II. Review of minutes*

The minutes of the September 21, 2007, meeting were reviewed. Motion and second to accept the minutes. **Motion carried on voice vote.**

*III. Announcements*

President Ford reminded the Senate that the appointment of ad hoc committees is part of the awesome power of his office, and that we have two working presently:

Continuing from last year is the *ad hoc* committee on academic freedom, headed by Rick Peltz. Peltz's term as a senator has ended, but he will report on the committee's work at the next Senate meeting.

The *ad hoc* committee on textbook legislation oversight has formed. Anson is chairing, with members Eshleman, Brice, and English. The president reminded the senate that what we passed last time was a resolution authorizing the provost to promulgate interim policies, the strategy looking a lot like letting him go forward first and make all the mistakes while the faculty stays safely behind the line. Ford assured the faculty, though, that we have not lost sight of the fact that the selection of textbooks is a faculty prerogative and that the *ad hoc* committee will be active. He thanked the provost for his work over the summer in crafting a response to the legislation that's keeping up in compliance.

The third *ad hoc* committee—which will meet for the first time at 7:30 one morning, clear evidence of the members diligence and devotion to duty—has been charged to deal with the faculty rank of “university professor.” The rank exists; while we have never used it; at least one other school in the

system does. The committee is asked to consider policies and procedures for promotion to the rank of university professor.

As for regular committees, the president noted that the committee list is as complete as it's likely to get—except for the selection of chairs by the groups—and probably more accurate than it has ever been. We know there are errors and gaps and would be glad to correct any that especially perturb anyone.

The Tenure Committee is off and running on planning for implementation of the Moneyhon task-force report from last spring (the Task Force on Faculty Roles and Rewards). Gary Geisler, chair, gave a brief update on the committee's early work. They've put together a plan of work, and intend to emphasize getting feedback early and often throughout the process. They will, among other approaches, survey faculty about guidelines for tenure and promotion.

One last point on committees: The president a couple of weeks ago e-mailed one person on each committee, asking him or her to convene and chair the first meeting of each committee, at which time a chair should be elected. He's heard from a couple, and encouraged all committee members to shake appropriate trees and be sure they get going. He noted also that we have space on the provost's web site for the posting of committee minutes. He referred senators to Pete Tschumi for instructions if they need them.

#### *IV. Reports*

##### *Report from the chancellor*

The chancellor greeted the Senate, and opened by saying he gets a little tired of hearing people say we should run universities like businesses. He thinks that reflects some lack of perspicuity on their part. After all, he observed, "In business it's dog eat dog. In academia, it's just the reverse."

The chancellor extended condolences to Sam Howell and Jimmy Greer who recently lost father and mother, respectively.

He commented on a recent meeting with legislators and university staff and trustees with the National Center for Higher Education Management. Various ones of us from UALR, he said, attended sessions. His impression is that we're making some progress in increasing legislative understanding of some of these issues. Example: the idea of counting what percentage of students complete classes. Policy makers are properly concerned about retention and graduation rates, If the focus ends up exclusively on graduation numbers, it would be reasonably fair to all institutions. Rates, however, get tricky. Institutions don't start with identical students, and the basis for comparison of institutional performance is thus problematic.

U.A. System President Sugg agrees that we're making some progress, but he is, the chancellor said, animated and agitated. He's worried about us. We and UA-F have terrible numbers on graduating teachers; the chancellor thinks it may be because both schools have five-year programs, and he has forwarded that idea to the provost. He emphasized that we need to be concentrating on the numbers of students graduating, and in particular, that we should keep up with the numbers of students who are close to

graduation and see how we can help them get there. He mentioned that the art department has been doing some pioneering work. Sugg also mentioned weekend classes as an approach that may be helpful in getting people over the hump to graduation.

Among the four-year institutions in the state, the chancellor said, we have a higher mountain to climb than the rest, and complaining is of little value. What we can do is figure out how to get to the top.

One thing about weekend classes: A number of years ago, we looked at the possibility of scheduling them for ten Saturdays, which would leave a few free for holiday weekends and permit us to get exams out of the way early, since we depend on Saturdays to ease any inclement weather problems. This idea, he thinks, is worth consideration by faculty.

We know our legislative appropriation for next year has only a 4% increase, and that's likely to mean a tightened-belt year. We may want to revisit the early retirement policy with an eye to temporarily increased incentives. We can increase budget flexibility; we can permit good people to go off and do other things, though the other edge of the sword is losing good people, which is something we never do willingly!

This coming Wednesday, at 2:15 in Ross hall, the chancellor will convene a meeting for departments interested in piloting some new strategies for facilitating transfer of credit. He wants very much to get some projects under way to test out ideas.

### *Report from the provost*

The provost reminded the Senate of the chancellor's charge in the fall that the provost and Associate Vice Chancellor Donaldson come up with additional retention strategies. The provost observed that a task group of the Senate worked hard in 2002-04 and made excellent recommendations, some of which have not yet been fully implemented. In the last couple of years, the Foundations of Excellence effort has also produced some recommendations.

The provost is anticipating a "Retention Summit" where we will bring together a group of faculty leadership, and open it up to anyone who's interested in the issue, to hear their recommendations and enter into a dialog about how we should move forward.

This year, the provost is visiting all departments. He's been to fourteen so far, and is impressed and encouraged by how many departments are on their own initiative taking on the challenge of recruitment and retention. He sees interesting and creative things being undertaken.

The provost has asked Mark Workman to begin looking at our evening and weekend offerings, enrollment trends, and so forth. He wants us thinking and planning about how we might use evening and weekend classes to best advantage.

Ford mentioned the upcoming changes to the Faculty Senate web site. Aaron Baker of the provost's office is working hard at restructuring the entire university web site to make it friendlier and easier to use for students and faculty. The provost expressed his intent to make it useful to faculty leadership, so that the most current information can be quickly available to whomever needs it.

They've targeted improvements to all faculty resources on the site. The Teaching Academy, for example, need to have a place there.

The provost offered salutes to several people, including a handful who have taken on the enormous job of putting on conferences here in Little Rock. He singled out Fred Williams, who with a colleague put on a wonderful conference of historians in connection with the anniversary of the integration of Central High; L'plattener and Smith who organized a Rhetoric and Feminism conference that attracted 400-500 people; Linda Dorn, for her role in the thirteenth annual Reading Recovery conference. 23 states, people from all over,, which drew people from twenty-three states and was opened by the Governor; Littlefield, Parins, and Sanderson, for the Sequoyah Center's annual conference which brings to Little Rock scholars and colleagues from across the country and sometimes from around the globe; and the Law School faculty, and in particular, Adjoa Aiyetoro, for their symposium, "Central High Crisis: Will True Integration be Achieved?"

*Q from Cheatham:* How'd we do on book orders. *A.* Right at 94% were ordered timely. Slayden.

The provost noted that the present policy calls for each college to make its own policy on textbook royalties. The College of Professional Studies' has been blessed. The College of Science and Mathematics's just went in. Anson asked for copies for his *ad hoc* committee overseeing textbook legislation, and the provost agreed.

### *Report from Lucien Shockey*

Board Policy 330.1 has a mandate for each campus to put in place a conflict of interest policy. Just recently, internal auditors have started asking for copies for their records and for review purposes. We didn't have one in place, but we had a draft.

Shockey observed that the existence of a conflict of interest is not always a problem. The problem is when such conflicts are not disclosed. Shockey included in a packet for senators a copy of the draft and the list of people involved in forming it—a group, he said, providing broad representation of roles and interests across the university.

The group examined conflict-of-interest policies of other institutions, including UA-Fayetteville and UA-Pine Bluff, both of which comport with the Board policy. They also chose to tie "gifts" to the definition used by the state's Commission on Ethics.

Anson noted that the proposed draft is quite general, and that he thinks more specificity might be advisable. Workman commented on page 4, part D; with the cost of conferences right now, the partners, who are vendors, tend to contribute, often, by providing meals or snacks, or technology. How would this apply? Shockey said that was a legal question he was not prepared to answer.

Foster said he found the definition of immediate family to be much too narrow; suggested changing "dependent children" to "children," and perhaps making even broader changes. As a former associate dean, it has come to her attention that faculty have, on occasion, had family members in class. Seems to her clearly a conflict of interest, and she would like to see the policy address it. Shocker replied that both points had been discussed

already in the committee. They are leaning toward the IRS definition of family. Someone asked about the university's antinepotism policy, and how the proposed conflict-of-interest policy will mesh with it. Shockey replied that there is a system policy, and did not comment on the relationship.

Cheatham asked what the committee contemplates will trigger disclosure, noting that sometimes people only think afterward. Shockey said they've talked about giving faculty members an opportunity in connection with annual evaluation to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Vander Putten comments that some institutions have instituted on-line training programs. He would encourage us to do so, and has forwarded some information to Dean Sewell about the existing programs.

Shockey asked that senators communicate with him or with other members of the committee their thoughts on these matters, and gave his e-mail address, lxshockey@ualr.edu.

The president promised that if he ran across any conflicts that are interesting, he would forward them posthaste.

### *V. Open Forum*

Aiyetoro brought to the senate a concern that came up in discussion among the law school faculty about the Senate's recommendation to the chancellor in connection with the Faculty Excellence Awards program policy. Colleen Barger, who heads the Law School's faculty awards committee, points out Law has a fairly small faculty, with a number of faculty who have not reached the five-year point of employment, but whose performance is outstanding. Aiyetoro said she would like to see if people might be willing to reopen just that one issue for further discussion.

Ford called for discussion. He pointed out that the policy has been available for discussion over quite a long period, but there is perhaps a situation warranting a relook at this provision.

Someone asked if the new policy has been set in motion for this year? It has been. The Law School does wish for reconsideration for the current year. Previous versions of the policy had required only one year of service. *Wright:* Given the limited scope, he doesn't see a problem. Aiyetoro reinforced that they'd just like not to limit eligibility to faculty having completed five or more years of service. Previously the policy said "one or more full years of service."

*Douglas:* Were folks under earlier policy able to submit information about service before they were here? *Cheatham:* the recently approved policy has an implicit ban on such information since it set the five year minimum eligibility and said documentation should cover no more than five years.

*Aiyetoro:* It really is a bias against junior faculty, since everyone eligible would be either tenured or close to tenure?

*Jovanovic:* Since this year's guidelines already been distributed, he would be much more comfortable with changing the rules for next year.

*Aiyetoro:* The policy was posted October 1, and the deadline is still in front of us. Perhaps the policy could recommend five years but not require it.

*Cheatham:* Is bothered by revisiting a policy just recommended. It does seem reasonable, however, that if the Law School feels the policy excludes

their best candidates for awards, they might apply to the chancellor for extraordinary status this year.

*Aiyetoro:* The Law School is asking to reconsider this aspect of the policy from now on, and is not just seeking a temporary waiver.

*Tschumi:* Suggested the Law School might be more successful if the two issues were separated. This year, a waiver. Next and all subsequent years, consideration of a change in the policy. Might be less confusing, and gain votes that otherwise would be negative because of people's uneasiness about changing the rules of the game midyear..

Someone suggested that yet another option might be to change the policy so that eligibility is different for faculty in small colleges.

*Ramsey:* He is troubled by policies that virtually eliminate junior faculty from consideration.

*Aiyetoro:* Asked for a straw vote on two issues: if the provost and chancellor feel it's too late to change it this year, a waiver be given to the law school for eligibility this year. The straw vote was fourteen to six against. The second straw vote was to test the Senate's willingness to reopen just the issue of years-of-service eligibility. Having established that the senators from the Law School can put this matter on the agenda for the next meeting for action by the Senate, the straw vote was dropped.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

*Judith Faust, Secretary*