



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT LITTLE ROCK

**Faculty Senate Meeting**

*Friday, September 17, 2010, 1:00 p.m.*  
*Donaghey Student Center • Ledbetter Rooms B & C*

MINUTES

*Present:* CAHSS— Amrhein, Anson, Bailey, Chapman, Clausen, Deiser, English, Estes, Garnett, Giammo, Groesbeck, Kleine, Vinikas. CB— Edison, Funk, Nickels, Watts. CE— Hayn, Hughes, Kuykendall, Nolen. CEIT— Anderson, Jovanovic, Tramel, Tschumi. LAW— Fitzhugh, Goldner. LIBRARY— Russ. CPS— Barnes, Collier-Tenison, Driskill, Rhodes, Robertson, Smith-Olinde. CSM— Douglas, Guellich, McMillan, Sims, Tarasenko, Thompson. EX OFFICIO— Belcher, Eshleman, Ford, Lewis.

*Absent:* CAHSS— Yoder. CE— McAdams. CEIT— Babiceanu, Tebbets. LAW— Aiyetoro. CSM— Grant, Seigar, Wright, Yanoviak. EX OFFICIO— Anderson, Patterson.

*I. Welcome and roll call*

President Eshleman declared it to be 1:00 and convened the meeting. The lame-duck secretary called the roll. The president expressed his gratitude to senators for their willingness to take responsibility for leadership in faculty governance. He observed that this year's work may require an extra level of service from us all.

*II. Review of minutes*

The minutes of the May 7, 2010, meeting of the Senate were reviewed and approved on unanimous voice vote.

*III. Remarks on the Senate's role and conduct—Richard Ford*

Richard Ford, immediate past president of the Faculty Senate and the University Assembly, shared a few words for the benefit of those new to the Senate and for those not new whose memories are not what they once were.

He noted that Senate meetings, usually on third Fridays, convene at one and last until business is completed and the meeting adjourned. On average, he asserted optimistically, meetings last about an hour and a half.

He reminded senators that alternates elected to the Senate are, according to the Assembly constitution, to assume the role if an elected senator is unable to complete a term of service, or a partial term (e.g., a semester). Under those circumstances, alternates may vote.

It's appropriate, Ford said, to stand when addressing the Senate, and to introduce oneself by name and college or department.

Ford suggested it's a good idea to print out and bring the agenda for each meeting.

Quoting from the Assembly Constitution, Article IV, Ford enumerated the areas of The Faculty Senate's legislative authority, which include but are not limited to these:

1. Admission requirements
2. Curriculum and courses
3. Degrees and requirements for degrees
4. Calendar and schedules
5. Awards, honors and honorary degrees
6. Interpretation of its own legislation

Rather than working out new issues or problems on the floor of the Senate, Ford said it's wise for the Senate to assign them to the appropriate committees, and have the committees return to the Senate with recommendations for action.

Finally, Ford pointed out that the vice president, secretary, and parliamentarian are elected by the Senate every two years. They, along with the president, the immediate past president, and the provost comprise the executive committee, whose job it is to steer the work of the Senate.

#### *IV. Announcements*

President Eshleman reminded the Senate of the Helping Hands fundraiser sponsored by the Staff Senate and encouraged contributions.

Simone Lewis, president of the Student Government Association, was recognized and spoke to a new campaign, Reach 12,000, beginning this semester. She issued a president's challenge to faculty and staff to form teams to collect canned and staple foods to go to the Arkansas Food Bank Network. Lewis notes she can be reached at her office, 201 Donaghey Student Center.

President Eshleman reminded senators to check the agendas of future meetings for possible changes in location.

He reported that we are close to finalizing the list of University and Assembly committees and councils. The Senate's web site has a draft posted, and the final version, so labeled, will be posted there as well.

#### *V. Election of officers*

Eshleman thanked the people who've been serving in those offices to which we will elect new people today: Earl Ramsey, vice president; Judith Faust, secretary; and Laura Smith-Olinde, parliamentarian.

The president opened the floor for nomination for the office of vice president.

Art English nominated Mike Watts, who respectfully declined.

Steve Edison nominated Laura Smith-Olinde.

**Robertson moved election by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

The president opened the floor for nominations for the office of secretary.

Amy Barnes nominated Jeanette Clausen.

**Robertson moved election by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

The president opened the floor for nominations for the office of parliamentarian.

Tom McMillan nominated Steve Yanoviak

English nominated Roby Robertson, who respectfully declined.

**Robertson moved election by acclamation. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.**

The chair recognized Pete Tschumi, who noted that we need to elect one academic administrator below the rank of dean for service on the Faculty Appeals Council. **He moved to suspend the rules to permit the election. The motion was seconded by Ford, and carried unanimously on voice vote.**

The president opened the floor for nominations of below the rank of dean to serve on the Faculty Appeals Council.

Deiser nominated MaryAnne Garnett, who said she is willing to serve. Hearing no further nominations, **the president called for the vote, and Garnett was elected by unanimous voice vote.**

## *VI. Introduction of new topics*

Eshleman opened the floor for senators to bring up items that need to come to the Senate's attention.

- Anson observed that the Library is currently culling printed materials.
- On the disability statement "to accommodate students...in compliance with state law." New policy says, "to create inclusive environments..." and some other things, and pretty much leaves it open as to what constitutes disability, not does it make specific reference to ADA.
- Yesterday an article about how the state of Arkansas—along with many other states—is unprepared for major geological events. Sims will be working with people at DES and encouraged others to do so. Suggested that any of us who are elected officials
- English noted that he has not seen a report to the Senate for a long time from the Library about the state of things there. Nor have we had a report in a very long time about campus parking, an issue that has historically been of great interest to the Senate.
- Watts was struck that we are electing all the Senate's officers to two-year terms, and that perhaps it would be wise to consider staggering those terms.

## *VII. Reports*

### *A. Provost Belcher*

Having come to the podium, the provost was interrupted by the president observing that it was his birthday, and by a rousing version of "Happy Birthday" by The Chipmunks. The provost was reminded of Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*. The countess has a birthday, and her husband takes her for a weekend in the country at the home of his mistress. She wanders the woods, singing sarcastically, "Every day, a little death."

Our official count is 13,242 students, up by 75 students over last year. We've upped admission standards again this year, and so were anticipating a very small increase.

There are 1,336 lottery scholarship holders among our students. One of our challenges is trying to help the lottery scholarship students understand what it's going to take for them to retain the scholarship, including a GPA of 2.5, 12 hours this semester, 15 per semester thereafter. If they fail a course or drop below the required GPA or the course-load requirement, they're out. The provost noted that Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Charles Donaldson is trying to figure out some intrusive ways to be sure they're clear about this.

Those who attended University Assembly are aware the chancellor charged the university community to give top-priority attention to recruitment and retention. Conversations are going on across the campus in individual departments about what we can do. Examples from the provost included these: The College of Business is starting Café MBA to help build a cadre of students supportive of each other. The department of Teacher Education has an open position, and has redesigned it to hire someone with specific responsibilities in this area. Music is splitting their committee on recruitment and retention to equalize the effort.

He hopes senators have seen the request for proposals from his office for one-time money available for student-success programs. Sometimes there are idiosyncrasies about one discipline that don't especially lend themselves to across the board strategies. Response has been good to the RFP, he said.

There will be a new position in the provost's office for someone vested with authority and responsibility for getting retention rates up. They are working to beef up the advising area and help get people on the path to their majors as early as possible.

A couple of years ago Chancellor Anderson asked the Senate's permission to launch a pilot project for departments to waive on their own authority some of the UALR core curriculum, major, minor, 24 upper-level hours, and residency requirements. Departments were required to track data and results. The provost handed out a summary of preliminary results, which are positive and interesting. It could be we may want to increase the flexibility around these requirements more broadly, and for all departments. The evaluation results of the pilot project may be useful to the task group working on the undergraduate degree.

On to everybody's favorite topic: the update of the strategic plan. The provost had asked Jim Lynch to grapple with the 500 responses to questions to the community about what's working. Jim did a great summary, and promptly retired. The provost has asked Huey Crisp to take on the task. The report will be more of an executive summary than a detailed tabulation of responses.

The provost decided to twist the chancellor's arm to let him use the Chancellor's Leadership Group (CLG) as a forum for working on the strategic plan update. In order to make that work well, the chancellor agreed to increase the number of faculty involved, and invited faculty leadership from all colleges. He did the same with Staff Senate participation.

Six preliminary themes have emerged:

- Student success (top priority)
- Offering high quality, cutting-edge educational experiences
- Fostering maturation of the research mission

- Responsiveness to local state regional and national priorities
- Commitment to diversity and equality
- And something about mission the secretary didn't quite catch.

His staff spent several days taking all that came out of the CLG and putting it into some semblance of order, presently a 32-page document. It will serve as a beginning for a process over the next several weeks of roundtable discussions among faculty, staff, and community.

*Q from Nickels:* Who's the author of the report on the pilot project on department discretion in waiving requirements? *A:* Hoffpauir, in connection with the chairs of the four departments. The provost solicited Tramel's comments as one of those department chairs. Tramel said they collected their data and sent it to Hoffpauir every semester. Was it a good experiment? Yes. It enabled faculty to get together and set the criteria as a group. Then he, as the academic adviser to students, could decide about individual students. It worked out very beneficially, Tramel said, "for our transfer students, and a majority of our students are transfers."

*B. Report from the Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force—Felecia Epps, chair*

Felecia Epps was ill, and unable to be present for the report. Anson noted that he's a member of the committee, but that he missed the last meeting.

The president asked if he were willing to report on what he did know. Anson agreed, and said they've decided to recommend changing the foreign language requirement to two years of Latin. The report provoked a millisecond of silence followed by laughter and cheers.

He added, more seriously, that they have decided to look in depth at other schools and how they're handling things these days.

Anson observed that he has become a historical resource, in that he thinks he's the last remaining member of the Blue Ribbon Commission that last undertook revision of the core curriculum.

*C. Undergraduate Council—Jeanette Clausen, chair*

Clausen cited deadlines of October 15 and Mar 15 for receipt of proposals for changes to existing courses. She reported that Undergraduate Council is in process of updating their operating policies so they conform to what the Council has been doing. She directed senators to the council's web site, at <http://ualr.edu/undergraduatecouncil>.

Ford noted that the Assembly constitution specifies a waiting period between the council's undertaking a decision and when the decision moves forward for incorporation into policy. That period permits the Faculty Senate to review actions of the council. Clausen thanked Ford for pointing out that aspect of policy.

*D. Graduate Council—Steve Jennings, chair.*

Jennings said the same dates apply to graduate courses as Clausen cited for undergraduate courses. He noted that forty percent of Graduate Council are new members this year. The Council has begun a process of comprehensive review of policies in the Graduate School, and they will keep the Senate advised.

*VIII. New Business*

*Motion. Executive Committee—Richard Ford, Immediate Past President. (No second required; majority vote at one meeting)*

*The requirement that a first-year colloquium (FYC) course be mandatory for all first-time full-time students shall be implemented Fall 2011, or as soon as possible thereafter.*

**Commentary:** The Senate has already approved the requirement of a FYC and the criteria for such courses. The issue here is the timeline for its implementation. The timeline proposed in this motion coincides with the original intent of the motion that came before the Senate in December 2009 from the Undergraduate Council. However, the motion was amended on the floor of the Senate at that meeting so as to postpone implementation until that time when the FYC requirement could be coordinated with the recommendations of the Undergraduate Curriculum Revision Task Force. However, the work of that task force could take as long as two years to complete, and the need to take steps to address student success has become increasingly urgent. Evidence suggests that FYC-type courses help increase student retention and graduation rates, so we should move to implement them expeditiously.

Ford reviewed the history of the proposal, noting this motion is intended to get us back in motion after having hit the pause button.

*Q from Jovanovic:* He sought clarification about the definition of “first-time,” asking if that designation applies to people who are first-time students here, but may have thirty hours of college credit elsewhere. *A from Clausen:* It is intended to apply to people coming to college for the first time, but she recognizes there are perhaps still some ambiguities.

Tschumi noted that ADHE has talked about this and seems to have decided that AP doesn't count. Douglas asked about concurrent enrollment. Tschumi said to the best of his knowledge ADHE intended that concurrent enrollment students were still coming to college for the first-time.

Eshleman looked for consensus that we're not talking about transfer students, and that AP and concurrent-enrollment students are meant to be included in the definition of first-time.

Jovanovic concurred, but added that there is certainly some level of transfer hours with which students would be considered if they had very few hours.

The president asked if the following fairly represents the sense of the Senate, and heard unanimous agreement: **Our understanding of what this means is that students who come having had advanced-placement or concurrent-enrollment courses are not excluded, nor are students who transfer in with twelve hours or fewer of other academic credit.**

Someone raised another issue not addressed in the motion: we don't say exactly when the course should be taken. Robertson suggested that while the language may not be precise, it would be inadvisable for the Senate to get too detailed in its prescriptions relative to the implementation of policy. His view is that we should express our broad understanding and expectation.

*Comment from Ford:* He reads the original language as expressing a clear intent that the FYE come early on, in order to be most helpful to new students.

*Q from Tschumi:* How are you going to handle ensuring that FYE courses meet these requirements? Will there be a separate form? *A from Clausen:* No. Existing forms will work fine

Vinikas reminded senators that the question before us is merely when implementation should begin.

*Comment from Goldner:* The motion as phrased seems to make that clear. It would be a strange interpretation to say students should take a first-year colloquium after their first year. The question for him is what it really means for us to say "shall be implemented by fall 2011, or as soon thereafter as possible."

Considerable discussion continued for some minutes.

Robertson offered an **amendment to replace the phrase "shall be implemented by fall 2011, or as soon thereafter as possible" with the phrase "by academic year 2011-2012."** **The executive committee accepted the amendment as friendly.**

Nickels moved the question, Edison seconded. Motion carried unanimously on voice vote.

**The main motion as amended by its makers carried unanimously on voice vote.**

## *IX. Open Forum*

Clarification was sought about the disabilities statement recently sent out by the provost for inclusion in course outlines. Am I now required to use it? Anson said he's using the old one on his courses, and wishes to bring this matter onto the Senate's agenda.

Eshleman noted that Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students Charles Donaldson has contacted an expert to bring to campus to talk about the broader issues related to students with disabilities and universal design. He said he hoped we would participate in those discussions before taking further action.

Russ noted that she agrees with earlier comments by senators about the absence of reporting to faculty on what the library is doing.

She said faculty at the library are concerned that many important decisions are being made in the summer, and they are not being consulted. By the time faculty get back to school, things have been done, changes have been made, and faculty have lost the opportunity to comment and guide those decisions. Russ gave a number of examples.

Robertson suggested it would be wise for the executive committee to ask the Library Committee to look at all these issues and report back to the Senate.

## *X. Adjourn*

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Judith Faust, Secretary