

Faculty Senate Executive Committee
MINUTES
August 25, 2008

Present: Vince Anfara, Doug Birdwell, Toby Boulet, Marianne Breinig, Donald Bruce, Paul Crilly, Becky Fields, Joan Heminway, Margo Holland, Suzanne Kurth, Catherine Luther, Beauvais Lyons, Susan Martin, David Patterson, Carl Pierce, Wornie Reed, John Romeiser, Anne Smith, Ken Stephenson (for Joanne Hall), Tse-Wei Wang

Guests: Jan Simek, Dixie Thompson, Scott Simmons

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

J. Nolt called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of April 7, 2008, was passed unanimously.

III. REPORTS

Senate President's Report (J. Nolt)

The Senate's Executive Council charged with acting for the Executive Committee during the summer met a number of times to address the proposed elimination of academic programs (Audiology and Speech Pathology, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and Dance). The Executive Council objected to their elimination without appropriate review, as the *Faculty Handbook* specifies a role for the Faculty Senate in the formation and closure of academic programs. After action by the Board of Trustees was postponed until its October meeting, the Council worked on a plan to have the programs reviewed before then. The planned reviews by the bodies specified in the *Handbook* (Graduate and Undergraduate Councils) is proceeding, despite the recent administrative statement about continuation of the Audiology and Speech Pathology programs, as it is unclear how they would exist. Two processes have been initiated. One process involves the programs slated for closure. The Graduate Council will review the graduate degree programs in Audiology and Speech Pathology, as well as the Industrial and Organizational Psychology program. The Undergraduate Council will review the Dance minor. (The undergraduate program in Audiology and Speech Pathology is not being terminated.) The other action was formation of a task force on program reduction that will address the process for evaluating programs for termination. T. Wang asked what the original criteria for eliminating the programs were. Nolt deferred discussion of those until Interim Provost Martin and Interim Chancellor Simek gave their reports.

The other major activity of the Faculty Council was a tenure termination recommended by a Cumulative Performance Review (CPR) Committee in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. (The CPR process is initiated when there are a certain number of unsatisfactory evaluations. CPR committees have three possible decisions, one of which is tenure termination.) The current process has committee recommendation going to the chief academic officer (DiPietro in this case), then the Chancellor and finally the Faculty Senate. A subcommittee of the Executive Council reviewed the materials and recommended that additional time be given to the faculty member. No response to that recommendation has been received. In the process of considering the case some contradictions between Board of Trustees' policies and the *Faculty Handbook* became apparent that require revision of the

Faculty Handbook. The Faculty Affairs Committee will be addressing that and other important proposed revisions to the *Faculty Handbook*.

Other items:

- A Senate Effectiveness Task Force has been appointed (Candace White, Chair). The goal is to have recommendation from that group by the end of the year.
- The Senate budget has been increased to pay for a course release for the President. The Board of Regents' schools provide such support.
- The Senate has not had an Information Officer, although such a position is allowed. Nolt appointed S. Ohnesorg to serve in that position. She will condense the minutes of every Senate meeting for distribution to all faculty members.
- At the Faculty Senate Retreat on August 29 time is allotted for all committees and caucuses to meet.
- Nolt noted that new energy conservation initiatives are planned for this fall.

K. Stephenson asked about the *Faculty Handbook* and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Nolt indicated the Board policy specifies that tenure termination cases have to go to the Chancellor. P. Crilly commented that with the number of changes in campus administrators, he was concerned that all of the candidates for Chancellor were from other institutions. Nolt referred him to H. McSween, Search Committee Chair.

Provost's Report (S. Martin)

S. Martin reported that the Student Success and retention initiatives would be continued. She encouraged people to participate in the campus visits of the Chancellor candidates. The campus faces financial challenges, but energy costs provide an opportunity to institute an energy conservation program. She indicated rationales were provided for the program eliminations proposed. Although the administration had only about one week to make the decisions limiting communication opportunities, serious consideration was given to the quality, centrality, and importance of the programs (measured by funded research profiles, fit with college, etc.) in question for years. The Deans provided rationales that in some cases went back to earlier APEC recommendations.

V. Anfara indicated he did not know about the Dance program, but knew the Audiology and Speech Pathology Department had a good reputation and seemed viable. Martin said it did provide service.

Chancellor's Report (J. Simek)

J. Simek reviewed the rapid shift in the anticipated budget from 2% raises to the need to cut \$11.7 million from the budget three months later. He has given up virtually all the discretionary money allocated to him. Auxiliary units were tapped for money. After those adjustments, \$5 million had to come from academic units. Decisions about cuts were to focus on the institution's core mission (e.g., number of students served, contribution to general education, how it interfaces with other units) and quality of education. Audiology and Speech Pathology operated as a separated world with only 180 students. It was expendable and the clinical program was very expensive. The Dance program was an "orphan" that had been considered for elimination for a number of years, as either it needed to be substantially expanded or dropped. The Industrial and Organizational Psychology (IO) program had been considered for elimination for some time and admission to the program had been stopped. The Audiology and Speech Pathology program could not be shifted to another campus unit, as the money had to

be cut from the campus budget. Simek expressed the desire for the campus to be more nimble in responding to crises.

C. Pierce suggested that discussion should be left to the units charged with conducting the reviews. B. Lyons asked Simek to differentiate the current situation from financial exigency. Simek indicated that the Board of Trustees and the Faculty Senate would be involved in a declaration of financial exigency and he had not sought it, as tenured faculty were not being eliminated. Wang asked how much money was saved (\$1.3 million Audiology and Speech Pathology, \$107,000 Dance, and \$300,000 IO). Simek pointed out that in the past, reductions in based budgets were made by cutting vacant positions. He wants to make strategic decisions that allow the campus to focus on strong elements and the future. The administration is looking for further saving, while trying to retain undergraduate programs.

D. Patterson asked if Simek would be supportive of differential tuition, as a resolution recommending it was going to be proposed. Simek said he was noting that one of the revenue constraints the administration operated under was a modest tuition increase. He has proposed three scenarios to Deans and Vice Chancellors. A 2% impoundment for this year—the type of reduction usually covered with one-time money from central administration. The second scenario would be a 3% reduction in next year's based budget (1% in addition to 2% this year). The third would be a 5% reduction in base. The Deans and Vice Chancellors have been instructed to discuss proposals for reducing their budgets with faculty members before bringing them to the Chancellor and Provost.

Wang expressed concern about grade inflation contributing to the high number of new students in the College of Engineering.

Committee Reports

To ensure full consideration of important items of new business, committee reports were skipped.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

It was agreed that the Faculty Survey Resolution that was under consideration when a quorum call was made during the last meeting of the Senate did not need to be reintroduced.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Recommendations to Graduate and Undergraduate Councils (Executive Council)

A proposed charge to the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils concerning program closures developed by the Executive Council was distributed and discussed. It was agreed the Councils should report their findings by October 13, so the Senate could vote on their recommendations at its October 20 meeting. The Executive Council drew on the best available guidelines, i.e., the ones developed by the Review and Redirection Task Force and AAUP guidelines. T. Boulet moved and J. Heminway seconded that the proposed charge be adopted.

Lyons interjected that one problem with the process could be having public hearings. The document did not provide process information. He expressed the hope that the Councils would be diligent in obtaining input from administrators, appropriate data, and providing opportunities for input from the concerned programs. The challenge would be in applying the RRTF criteria, e.g., the Councils will not have comparative college data.

The Executive Committee of the Graduate Council has met and has another meeting scheduled. Anfara did not know if M. Murray (subcommittee chair) had received the data he needed to distribute to his committee. Nolt said they would have the most recent program review data and data from the department heads. On some points, the committee might have to report a lack of adequate data. Lyons asked whether the last Audiology and Speech Pathology Review was 10 years ago. Martin said there was a more recent mid-cycle review. Anfara questioned whether there needed to be coordination between the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils. J. Romeiser noted the Undergraduate Council did not have an executive committee, but had only one program to review. Anfara said he recognized the differences, but he was concerned with having a similar process. Simek said the issue was not quality but making strategic decisions. Lyons noted the *Faculty Handbook* invests authority to review programs on academic grounds but not financial bases. He expressed the desire to have faculty members involved when cuts are made for budgetary reasons. D. Birdwell expressed concern that using RRTF criteria represented "mission creep," using the merger of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering as an example. He questioned whether the problem was being skirted, i.e., if it is financial, isn't it a case of exigency. Further, he questioned whether relocated faculty would be seeking redress, e.g., through the Faculty Appeals Committee. Simek said he was involved in the merger of two colleges into one, the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences, and it went reasonably well. Birdwell indicated he did not want the RRTF to be misused. Boulet pointed out that the proposed process was "quick and dirty" given the time constraints, but the goal was to develop a better process. Heminway noted that the introduction to the RRTF material in the document presented it as having the best guidelines currently available. Wang proposed that since a budget crisis was the impetus for eliminating the programs that it should be noted that the criteria do not address quality. Nolt responded that quality was an issue. Heminway expressed the desire to not constrain the process in that way. Crilly asked how money could be saved, if tenured faculty members were not terminated. Simek replied that the Department has an expensive superstructure of clinics and clinical faculty. Martin pointed out the college proposal had retained the faculty. Motion passed.

Differential Tuition Resolution (B. Lyons and D. Patterson)

A motion to present the distributed resolution (with the deletion of the final "Whereas," grammatical corrections, and correction of UTK's research classification) at the next Faculty Senate meeting was moved and seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Senate Quorum Requirement (T. Boulet)

A document outlining four quorum options and their possible consequences was distributed for discussion. Heminway suggested the quorum standard might be something appropriately referred to the new Senate Effectiveness Task Force. Pierce noted maintaining a quorum has been a persistent problem for the Senate given the late hour at which it meets. Birdwell addressed the risks associated with having a smaller number of people constitute a quorum. Lyons expressed support for having a majority of the member present when the meeting comes to order count as a quorum. Nolt indicated he would structure the agendas for the meetings so action items would be addressed earlier in the meetings. Patterson encouraged him to remind Senators of the need for a quorum.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned 4:55 p.m.