

Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) Meeting – February 8, 2017

Minutes:

Meeting began at 2:22 p.m. in Gruening Building, Room 206

Present:

- Committee Members: Andy Anger, Jeff Benowitz, Jeff May, Val Gifford, Sine Anahita, Josh Greenberg, Tony Bouffard, Jak Mier, Debu Misra
- Paul Layer

Initial Comments:

Sine thanked Valerie and Jak for their comments in the last Faculty Senate Meeting. While difficult to have a no-confidence vote in the University's leader, the concerns needed to be voiced. She is hopeful that the "bridge" and process can be improved.

Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Sine moves to approve. Jeff B. seconds. Agenda approved (with additional new business items).

Approval of Minutes from last Meeting:

Sine moves to approve. Jak seconds. Minutes approved.

Old Business:

1. Review Revisions to the Program Review Process Update

Comments at Faculty Senate by Provost Henrichs regarding how she is already trying to implement the revised program review process as best she can in the reviews currently underway is very promising. It shows that the concerns voiced about the old process were heard and are being acted upon.

2. Update on Faculty Overload Benefit Rate

Andy and his committee met with Statewide before last Faculty Senate meeting. A January meeting was scheduled. Statewide sent letter listing the reasons it did not want a separate benefit rate just two days before the meeting. The committee felt they needed time to discuss and think through the points and concerns of Statewide before meeting with them. The meeting was cancelled because there was not enough time for the group to process this new information. The plan is to schedule a new meeting after preparing a response to Statewide's reasoning.

Andy suggested that a letter from the Deans of the College and their views on the benefit rate calculation would be helpful. That maybe would help influence the decision.

New Business:

1. Discussion of the Idea of making the University a sanctuary campus for international students and/or how to show support for international faculty, staff, and students

Some background:

- The US President announces the travel restrictions for certain countries
- The President Johnson wrote a letter on behalf of UA pledging support to trying to help minimize the impact of the federal government's new travel bans on certain countries.
- The Mayor of Fairbanks made a statement about Fairbanks not being a sanctuary city. But also that the City was not going to hassle crime victims and others about their national origin.

Sine would like to explore what it would take to make the University a sanctuary campus. A sanctuary campus was described by Sine as a formal declaration that says that the campus will nullify the federal government's policy and will not hand over lists of students, etc.

If that cannot be achieved Sine hopes that at a minimum we draft some kind of Faculty Senate resolution that mirrors President Johnson's memorandum calls for open campuses and free exchange of students and ideas.

Sine gave some example of current faculty and prospective faculty that are from Iran that will be detrimentally impacted by the federal

After some group discussion, we settled upon the idea of drafting a resolution or letter of support from the Faculty Senate wherein we comment and stand behind President Johnson and his stance on this issue. Sine asked Jeff Benowitz if he could help with the language of such a letter.

2. Discussion of Letter of Support for Adjuncts.

Sine reminded us that CBA Negotiations for the Adjuncts are currently underway, and that now would be a good time for a letter from Faculty Senate in support of adjunct faculty and advocating for better work conditions. We made no decisions on this letter, such as who would draft it and what those specific recommendations would be.

3. Discussion about ways to improve collaboration and communication with President Johnson following the vote of no confidence

Sine suggested recognizing that there were some positive changes to the Strategic Pathways Process between the first phase and phase 2 and the initiation of phase 3.

However, there still is a fear that although some options are not being talked about in the committees that doesn't mean that those options are off the table and that the Board of Regents won't be considering and weighing in on them. So the fear is that those influential options will not be thoroughly evaluated even though they will be decided upon. After some general whining and complaining (by me too), the discussion was wisely refocused back on the topic of where to go forward from here.

What positive efforts can we point out?

- Agree that his statement about international student protection was great
- His prompt comments on important issues such as academic freedom has been very good
- Before next meeting we will use a Google Doc to start a draft letter that points out laudable steps

What suggested paths can we suggest to rectify the Faculty's faith in the process?

- Recommend to offer faculty commissions to help provide assistance in this process
- Jeff recommends calling for a line item budget that doesn't include and lump in athletics with student instruction. (make athletics its own line item).
- We will think more about these and include them in the Google Doc before next meeting

Next meeting time: March 8, 2016 at 2:15 p.m. location to announced.

Sine would like to have meetings in a room with better video conferencing capabilities.