Faculty Senate Minutes

Monday, April 06, 2020

Zoom Meeting Room: <https://sou.zoom.us/j/3706930432>, 4:00-5:30p

Present: Melissa Anderson, Jeremiah Carlton, Paul Condon, Brian Fedorek, Paul French, Andrew Gay, Marianne Golding, Cynthia Hutton, Dennis Jablonski, Laurie Kurutz, Matt Moreali, Jesse Longhurst, Tiffany Morey, Anna Oliveri, Michael Parker, Aprille Phillips, Mark Siders, Ellen Siem, Michael Stanfill, Precious Yamaguchi, Kemble Yates

Absent: Prakash Chenjeri, Justin Harmon

Guests: Linda Schott, Sue Walsh, Jody Waters, Karen Stone, Lee Ayers, Alena Ruggerio, Britney Sharp, Sarah Guenther, Devora Shapiro, David Bithell, Clay Austin, Dave Carter, Sherry Ettlich, Ed Battistella

Meeting called to order at: 4:00 pm

1. Zoom Procedure Orientation for Senate – Andrew Gay & Clay Austin
   * Clay Austin welcomed everyone to the first Zoom session and explained how the remote meeting would work.
   * Senators will be muted until called upon by the chair. Only Gay and Austin can mute/unmute people. Attendees can raise their hand to make a comment by using the “raise hand” option. They can also use the “chat” feature, but only Gay will be able to see the chats.
   * Voting will take place using the options under “Participants”--aye votes will be logged with “yes,” no votes with “no,” and abstentions with the “coffee cup.” Senators only should vote, but all votes can be made at once.
   * Anderson asked if the voting would be recorded, and Austin replied that the meeting would be recorded, but non-verbal “participant” activity such as the voting would not be recorded.
2. Approval of Minutes from 03/09
   * Kurutz moved to approve the minutes; Stanfill seconded.
   * Carlton, Condon, Fedorek, French, Golding, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, and Yates voted in favor. None opposed. Phillips, Parker, Yamaguchi, Gay, and Anderson abstained. **Motion passed.**

1. President’s Report – Linda Schott
   * The Incident Response Team (IRT) is continuing to meet 2 times a day; they are focused on creating a safe environment for students and everyone
   * As far we know, there are no COVID-19 cases on campus
   * Many students moved out of the residence halls; about 130 still living in campus housing, about 110 still getting takeout food from the Hawk. A couple of students are in isolation; they are not confirmed cases, but we are taking care of them, delivering food if they can’t get it
   * About 300 employees are working from home
   * Schott is working from home, she thanked faculty for all they did getting ready for the start of classes today; it was a huge amount of work at the same time that faculty are dealing with their own fears, concerns, grief, etc. She wanted to acknowledge that and thank faculty for all they are doing to make this term go as well as possible
   * Schott gave a special “shout out” to CATL and IT staff for all the work they have done. They are working overtime and we couldn’t have done it without them. She is glad we added a week onto Spring Break to have enough time to do all the work.
   * Schott reminded everyone to go to the [COVID-19 site](https://sou.edu/campus/notifications/); we’ve been trying to overcommunicate; there are a lot of emails that have gone out and they can be found on the COVID-19 campus site. She said she felt like it’s a constant frustration when she feels like we’ve missed a step communicating, or sent a message intended for students to all faculty and staff, but we need to be kind to each other and live in an attitude of grace
   * Finances are on folks’ minds; we’re waiting to see what we will get as a response to the CARES act. ACE [[American Council on Education](https://www.acenet.edu/Policy-Advocacy/Pages/HEA-ED/CARES-Act-Higher-Education-Relief-Fund.aspx)] put out an estimate of what universities will get but it’s all still being worked out. ACE thinks we might get around 3.5 million which would be great but we don’t know that. For now, the administration is just waiting to find out more and working with the networks we have. Given the emergency and disaster declarations; we’ll be eligible for assistance by FEMA, but we don’t know how that will work either.
   * Ryan Schnobrich [SOU internal auditor] is helping the rest of the team code and track expenses so we can have really good records to submit to FEMA or others for emergency funding. We’re hoping to have more financial information in 2-3 weeks. We’re also hoping to get more insight into Fall, but that is very fuzzy right now. We are planning different scenarios depending on what might happen; doing short, medium, and long term scenario planning. The administration will pass info along to faculty when they get it; but they’re just not there yet.
   * Schott wished everyone the best in this unusual time. She encouraged everyone to be kind to themselves, each other, and students, and thanked everyone for all they are doing.
   * Schott also reached out to the mayor about economic recovery once we’re through this part
   * Kurutz asked how many students are usually in the residence halls. Schott said that about 450 have moved out since March 6. Usually we have about 30% living on campus. It’s a huge financial hit for auxiliary operations, but we believe the CARES act should help us recoup some of our losses.
2. Provost’s Report – Sue Walsh
   * Walsh said she didn’t have much to add.She echoed the president’s thanks, and said she couldn’t be more proud, proud to be a colleague and to support everyone.
   * The administration is trying to get out in front of any issues to head them off. Enrollment Services feels that the situation is pretty standard for now, with the usual numbers of calls and questions, etc. She also “called out” CATL and IT for all the work they are doing. They are wonderful colleagues and she knows faculty have been reaching out to them more than ever before.
   * Walsh said she is thankful she and Gay were able to send info out to faculty; they were trying to overcommuncate. Please send questions about anything that was unclear to her and to Gay and they will send out more info. The information will be posted on the COVID-19 site.
   * Fedorek asked (via Gay) if there would be a chairs and directors meeting this term. Walsh replied that there would be one on Wednesday 4/15. Anderson will be there to talk about the student evaluation task force and get feedback on their work. Her office will be there to answer questions and find out about concerns from chairs and directors. She wants to know what people are seeing in the immediate short term, but she is also accepting agenda items.
   * Schott added that the administration has not forgotten about the response to the incidents of racism; they are looking into virtual types of training as a first step; starting with Executive council next week and then moving on from there
   * Walsh noted that faculty would be seeing info about Navigate training; Navigate is going to be a very important tool for communication with students. The university has accelerated the rollout of the predictive analytics. The more we can plug into this technology, the better for retention.
3. ASSOU President’s Report – Britney Sharp
   * Sharp said that ASSOU is working on the development of the Multicultural Commons in the SU; they had a meeting with about 30 people, and will have a virtual town hall on April 16.
   * SOU did a 20% reduction on student fees; it’s about $132; they will try to find more reductions; they need to find the cuts now; the big push is to not lose student employment; they will try to find savings
   * When this first happened, there were a lot of questions, but the general feeling among students is that ASSOU and the administration have been very transparent and responsive; Sharp got emails thanking her/everyone for this.
   * She said she wanted everyone to know what a great campus we are a part of. She has been talking to others in the Oregon Student Association, from other campuses. She has been updating them on how everyone is handling the COVID response here, and we are shining brighter than everyone else; other schools aren’t including students in meetings, aren’t dealing with student employment etc. SOU is handling this really well and she hopes the HECC notices this.
   * Students have questions about getting books; they don’t know if the bookstore is even open, and Amazon is prioritizing food and essential items. They are concerned about where to buy books and how fast they can get them.
   * Siders asked about the money from student fees that were to be paid for a trip. He wondered if those fees were refunded or what happened to them. Sharp responded that all incidental fee expenses were frozen. The money is probably rolling back in to pay down the deficit
   * Gay thanked Sharp for her leadership and everything she has done being involved with the administration and helping communicate with students
4. Advisory Council Report – Chair-Elect Kemble Yates
   * Senate advisory council did meet last week to talk about how the campus is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
   * Yates gave an Elections committee report; elections for chairs and FPC are done. Elections for senators are next.
   * Yates reported on post-tenure review task force; they met with the FPAR task force. Task forces will present their recommendations together; FPARs will be a part of post-tenure review so that’s why they are going to present together
   * Advisory Council talked about concerns around promotion and tenure guidelines, about canceled conferences, student evaluations, etc. that will be addressed later in this meeting
5. Academic Policies introduced 03/09 (Vote)
   * Kurutz moved to approve the policies; Fedorek seconded the motion.
   * Anderson, Condon, Fedorek, French, Golding, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yates voted in favor. None opposed. Parker, Yamaguchi, and Gay abstained; Carlton had stepped away. **Motion passed.**
6. Graduate Curriculum introduced 03/09 (Vote)
   * Kurutz moved to approve the curriculum; Fedorek seconded the motion.
   * Anderson, Condon, Fedorek, French, Golding, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yates voted in favor. None opposed. Parker, Yamaguchi, and Gay abstained; Carlton had stepped away. **Motion passed.**
7. New Graduate Curriculum (Discussion)
   * Waters presented two sets of recommendations; one is about the Holistic Education certificate; the other is changes to SLI world languages and culture curriculum; two pertain to French and Spanish and the other is just catalog copy. Some of those catalog changes have not been approved by the committees yet.
   * Holistic Education--the program has proposed something that’s been a long time coming given the work William Greene and others in Education have been doing. The program feels there is a significant amount of interest in this in the community (local and disciplinary) and they feel it would be a powerful tool to draw folks to the region. Not many programs address this curriculum; it would attract non degree-seeking learners as well. We might want to have a conversation about it being a standalone certificate.
   * Fedorek asked about the academic probation form in the Senate documents. Waters explained that we have graduate programs that have processes to discontinue a student or ask them to step out or step back because they aren’t succeeding. Waters said that we don’t have a probation policy, though, nor do we have a transcript notation or a Banner function to support a student being on probation. It’s an internal conversation, and we’re trying to address that and make it more structured. Each program has been asked to create some language around that for the catalog so students are clear about what’s expected of them. Education created some language, and the process and the petition in the Senate folder. The petition won’t be in the catalog. Terry Longshore thought it would be interesting for Senate to see. They are hoping to inspire other programs to make a similar change so students have more clarity; then the hope is to get some Banner function support for this.
   * Fedorek asked about resources for students; Waters talked about that being decided by programs. Grad students have the same support structures in place that undergraduates do. Generally a student in this situation would draw up a plan; Grad Council doesn’t want to be prescriptive about that part, which is up to the programs.
   * Gay noted that the vote on this will be in 2 weeks
8. 5:00p New Undergraduate Curriculum (Discussion)
   * Oliveri stated that there are two certificates coming up; one in holistic education and one in sound design; there are a bunch of proposals for changes to classes; a psychology class, and an undergraduate studies class.
   * Gay asked if anyone from the programs in question was present
   * Waters noted that people from the programs were in attendance, but they weren’t the ones that submitted the proposals. She could answer questions, though.
   * Parker asked about the Spanish and French classes; they were already being taught before, but were they just changes or revisions?
   * Oliveri explained that the courses were being brought to a lower level and taught in English; primarily different courses taught in different ways; so they were treated like new course proposals.
   * Waters added that they were substantively different, so they needed to be treated like new course proposals. Parker clarified that they were replacements for existing courses, not additions, and Waters confirmed this.
   * Golding noted that they had offered French and German 101 for those who had a deficiency coming in, it was a requirement for graduation. They were asked to offer classes that had more culture and didn’t have languages; they were taking them as seniors and not passing them, and so we were asked to teach culture classes instead of language classes. As of next year there will be no more German language classes. There are still some French language classes, but there are also purely cultural classes that will fulfill the requirement for graduation.
   * Matt Moreali stated [via chat] that he and Ayers were available for questions about the UGS proposal.
   * Fedorek asked if the UGS course was mostly a subtitute for WR 122.
   * Ayers explained that students can apply for a waiver for WR 122, and put together a portfolio to show they have the proficiencies, but it wasn’t fair and equitable. Some students knew about it and some didn’t. Now they have formalized the process. In the past some applied for a waiver for 122 but found out they still needed 121. This gives them an opportunity to clear this up by doing a portfolio. They will be working closely with the professor of record; but they don’t get credits for taking a WR 122 course, they get a waiver. It is repeatable--they can do one for 121 and one for 122 or do them both in the same term for two credits.
   * Fedorek asked if the one credit class was enough to meet the UGS standard. Ayers said that it was, because it’s not a replacement for the course. It’s saying that the student is far enough along to demonstrate that they already have the skills and can waive it. It doesn’t count for a 4 credit B strand class [for example], it’s a waiver.
9. Discussion: Alleviating COVID-19 Impacts on Promotion & Tenure:
   * Gay said that this is a big discussion about how we combat the impacts for P&T of COVID 19; there are concerns around winter and spring student evaluations; about teaching observation; there are questions around scholarly activity; there are also concerns about other impacts on scholarship and creativity
   * Gay invited David Bithell who is chair of FPC; also Devora Shapiro who is one of our IFS senators. This will probably fall to FPC, but Gay also wanted to hear from IFS what other schools are doing
   * Shapiro said that they have heard from PSU, OSU, and Western; OSU extended the tenure clock; it is automatic for all who request it; they are not going to use teaching evaluations; faculty can include or exclude them when they do their reviews
   * PSU also granted a one year extension to the tenure clock. Evaluations will continue but they don’t have to be included in P&T packets
   * Western has not decided on their agreement; course evaluations are going to be optional; they are working on a service and scholarship online only relief policy; scholarship, because of all the changes, will be on hold--it won’t be negatively impacting anyone. Western is putting peer evaluations on hold and everyone will considered acceptable in “on hold” status.
   * Gay asked about programs that have requirements about presenting at conferences; if this is the only thing holding you up, rather than waiting a full year, have they talked about this?
   * Shapiro said that no one has explicitly addressed it, but she thinks it’s something that might be possible.
   * Gay asked about teaching awards as well.
   * Morey said that for the Faculty Teaching Award; FDC wants to go forward; they are going to get creative to figure out how to do the observations.
   * Gay asked Bithell if FPC had discussed any of these issues yet; Bithell explained that they were right in middle of current year applications when things started shutting down; they put their meetings on hold and will be joining up later in the week to start discussing; there shouldn’t be any effects on current applicants; they can start thinking about coming rounds; there could be impacts for a couple of years
   * Longhurst said that when they are looking at impacts, they have to consider impacts on publications as well. Publishers may be slowing down the process, canceling book contracts, delaying journal publications.
   * Bithell wondered at what level these sorts of accommodations should be examined--at program level, FPC, university, etc. He said FPC wants to look at guidelines by departments; maybe a memo could go out or maybe not even as formal as that, but program review committees can make comments related to this. They might say things like “We are accepting this letter of acceptance in lieu of actual requirements” and explain what counts, etc. Some requirements are very specific to departments.
   * Gay asked if it would it be appropriate to ask chairs/directors to look at this in program faculty meetings? Programs might need to make their own recommendations.
   * Walsh said it was important to have a process in mind. It could be a good conversation to have in the context of something specific, starting with FPC and then in various personnel committees. This needs to be a robust conversation; the implications are going to be realized differently for different faculty; each program will be a little different; recommendations all the way along the way will be important. A majority of faculty and administration would have weighed in; some of it is process and some of is good colleague dialogue and transparency; Eastern’s provost did refer this to their FPC; OIT is still trying to decide what to do.
   * Gay said that some schools put things in place pretty quickly; since P& T standards are in the bylaws, do we need some official senate action to do this? Or can you just charge FPC to do it.
   * Walsh responded that it sounded like OSU and Western already had a sort of prescriptive policy about disasters or similar; it might have existed in their bylaws already. UO was more philosophical; an in-the-moment dialogue; she hadn’t found anything in SOU bylaws and other documents that might be relevant or precedent setting. We can’t take all year to figure this out, but she is happy to take recommendations and work with everyone collaboratively
   * Gay said that even in the very beginning the provost and AC was discussing it; the provost is committed to flexibility. The question is how we do it, not if we do it.
   * Ruggerio said that we have heard from the provost that we can change our learning outcomes in courses given the situation, but how will that trickle down to program assessment and accreditation?
   * Walsh said that we talked about adjusting outcomes relevant to remote delivery; we want to match course objectives with pedagogy; she is fine with the accreditation piece because they’ve done due dilligence, but doesn’t know about the assessment piece.
   * Waters said she had a two-fold answer; the accreditor is being very flexible and generous, and told us to allow courses to be altered, and not to have to go through regular approval processes; one important thing is that we make sure that those outcomes are communicated very clearly to students; we may be asked to document that in upcoming reports. In terms of assessment, some programs may need to state that certain learning outcomes weren’t relevant this term. In the reports there will be space to account for what happened. Some larger goals may fall away this term; but the overall attempt to gather data and use data in ways to achieve institutional and programmatic evaluation won’t change. The overall goals of assessment--measuring how outcomes were communicated and assessed is still a dynamic that should be in play every time someone steps into the classroom. There will be a way to capture that when reports are due in the fall.
   * Fedorek had a question for Senate. For P&T we need to have a fresh colleague evaluation. His program had two scheduled for this spring, and one in fall; they have three people with ability to go up for promotion; how can they attack colleague evaluations for people going up next year, especially since we don’t have face to face classes now and they will have to jam three colleague evaluations through in the fall? Should part of the COVID-19 reponse be something about how to handle colleague evaluations?
   * Gay agreed it is challenging to try to do them now.
   * Yates said he didn’t think it’s going to be possible to groupthink a solution to this; there is a short term concern, faculty need reassurance that the university is going to make a reasonable accommodation; a message saying that would be useful; Bithell is right that we don’t need a solution for this until the fall; Walsh, chairs, and FPC could get some ideas together.
   * Walsh said she was absolutely committed to finding a solution; colleagues at other institutions are in same boat; this is a national conversation; faculty are asking all the right questions; universities are in two camps for course evals--don’t do them at all, or all faculty can use them according to their discretion; definitely extensions make sense; the colleague evaluation issue came up as well; we’re going to be scrambling to get something done if everything is back to normal in the fall, but we don’t know what we don’t know yet. This is first and foremost on her mind.
   * Yates said it might be nice to have one simple message go out; it can be noncommittal, but could say we are thinking about this, Senate is talking about it, it would be reassuring.
   * Shapiro thanked Walsh and said it would be helpful when she reports to IFS; what we’ve been talking about with regard to student evaluations; it seems reasonable to not hold them to the same standard anyway, especially since we’ve been having a larger conversation about them.
   * Gay said that we want to bring the task force proposal forward this term about student evaluations anyway.
   * Walsh said we should check with Matt Stillman about evals given that we are off schedule a bit. Also, we are going the direction Yates recommended for the schedule; final week will not be a regular finals week, it will be a regular instructional week.
10. Announcements/New Business
    * Gay welcomed back Precious Yamaguchi who said she was happy to be back.
    * Siem welcomed back Michael Parker
    * Anderson reminded everyone that the library is still open, even with reduced hours and some limited services. Librarians are available for consultations and Zoom class visits. The library is offering to scan chapters of print books for students and faculty. There are a lot of new resources available this term only due to COVID-19. The Tutoring Center is also offering tutoring in math, science, and writing online. Please spread the word about all these things.
11. Adjourn
    * Gay thanked Austin for all his work and adjourned the meeting at 5:31 pm.