Faculty Senate Minutes

Monday, May 18, 2020

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

Absent: none

Guests:Linda Schott, Susan Walsh, Jody Waters, Karen Stone, Lee Ayers, Sherry Ettlich, Dan DeNeui, Alena Ruggerio, Kristin Hocevar, Bret Anderson, Rattiphon Wuthisatian, Britney Sharp

Meeting called to order at: 4:01 pm

1. Approval of Minutes from 05/04
   * Fedorek moved to approve the minutes, Chenjeri seconded.
   * Carlton, Chenjeri, Condon, Fedorek, French, Golding, Harmon, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, Yamaguchi, and Yates voted to approve. None opposed. Anderson and Gay abstained. **Motion passed.**
2. President’s Report – Linda Schott
   * The end of year breakfast will be virtual, on June 10th from 8:30-9:30. It will be live with no audience; the president and VPs will be in the RRR, and people who would usually speak will be invited to come and do their part, such as Chenjeri, Harmon, Yates, etc. and the DMC will televise it. We do want to celebrate the end of the year and recognize accomplishments, and give outstanding staff awards. It will be different but we will do it.
   * The administration had wanted to do some budget sessions, but it’s not practical with the amount of time left. On May 28th from 12:30 to 2 they will do a budget webinar. Questions can be submitted, and it will be recorded so individuals can watch it later if they aren’t available at that time. It's a high level look at the budget situation and where we’re at with the fiscal situation at the end of this year and what we believe we are seeing for the coming year. There are still a lot of unknowns but admin wants campus to know as much as they know
   * VP Fratella and Woolf also will give a webinar on reopening, but they don’t have a date yet. They want to update campus on where the groups are in the planning. They are expecting guidance from the Oregon Health Authority by Friday for all of higher ed. Once they have the info from OHA, they will see how what they’ve been planning meshes with it and begin to build out their plans. If you get questions about reopening, say that we don’t know yet but the president’s planning to have a session for the whole campus on that.
   * The president wanted to address the vandalism occurred on Friday, we don’t have any more details yet; admin did have a meeting on Saturday with culturally identified students and their advisors and folks leading EDI work; the group hasn’t been officially announced yet, but Sabrina Prudhomme, Kylan De Vries, and Jonathan Chavez-Baez are working as a group to lead this work forward. We are actively investigating the vandalism and have a couple of leads. The president doesn’t know if they will find out who did it or not, but they have more to go on than in the past
3. Provost’s Report – Sue Walsh
   * Walsh sent out a “tome” Sunday night about professional development opportunities; more details will be coming out soon. Waters will be sending information to directors who can share it; it will also be discussed in the chairs & directors meeting on Wednesday; Walsh is excited to be able to offer so many different opportunities for professional development
   * Clay Austin has been amazing; he continues to say, “what can I do; how can I help” and to make faculty feel more comfortable with their pedagogy with distance learning/the hybrid environment; if you see him, say thank you.
   * Woolf will also be coming to talk to chairs & directors Wednesday; Walsh thought chairs might have questions for him and he was kind enough to make himself available
4. ASSOU President’s Report – Britney Sharp
   * There’s not a lot going on right now; Election results were invalidated so ASSOU has to do them again
   * A survey has gone out to get feedback from students about how the term has gone with remote learning etc.; Sharp thinks it was smart to do that
   * Sharp has been getting feedback from students in different time zones; accommodations to their time zones are not being made by some faculty, which makes it hard for those students. She knows accommodations can’t be made for everything, but it’s tough.
   * Accessibility has come to light as an issue for some students; Zoom does not always have transcription, it’s harder for students with hearing loss or difficulties; it’s not as easy to overcome via Zoom as it is in the classroom
   * Google Hangouts does do a transcription while you talk; it might not work for all classes but Sharp wasn’t sure if faculty knew about it and this transciption feature.
   * The school is talking about hiring a transcriber; but of course that costs money. Sharp suggested faculty asked their students how they can make things more accessible; maybe do it anonymously in a Google form since some students aren’t as open about those kinds of needs; they might not know how to ask for help
5. Advisory Council Report – Chair-Elect Kemble Yates
   * AC met last Monday; it was a full meeting with President and Provost
   * The meeting gave us a snapshot of fears and uncertainties around the budget
   * We will be getting the May budget forecast for the state in 2 days and that will give us more info about how the governor and legislature will actually deal with our budget situation next year; it was news to us at that point that we make a provisional plan to cut 17%; Yates personally hopes the federal government might still be able to provide more assistance
   * AC talked about reopening protocols as Walsh and Schott mentioned
   * The burning question is whether we’ll be remote in the fall, face to face, or somewhere in between. We don’t know yet.
   * The TAC recommendation will be discussed by the board this week; we know that the increase will be less than 5%
   * The post-tenure review task force will not get a full recommendation by end of year but intend to get one to Senate early in the fall
   * The president talked about some of the ongoing work on presidential advisory committees and those kinds of groups. The possibility of a Staff Senate or University Senate was mentioned. It’s very preliminary but discussions are going on about how to get more segments of the university involved in the consulting process
   * Yates read results of recent elections by the Elections Committee (Yates, Anderson, and Phillips): Library--Anderson got reelected to a 3 year term; STEM: Oliveri and Parker got re/elected to 3 year terms; Yates got reelected to a 2 year term; BCE: Siders got reelected to a 3 year term; OCA: Brendan McMahon got elected to a 3 year term; EHL: Thatcher and Amy Belcastro got re/elected to 3 year terms; Longhurst got reelected to a 2 year term; H&C: Merrilyne Lundahl got elected to a 3 year term.
   * We need to set our core leadership and other positions; most will be done at the next (last) Senate meeting. Yates will be chair since he was already elected as chair-elect this year. Anderson is interested in running for chair-elect, but others can also run. We’ll also need a new Secretary if Anderson wins. It gives you a seat on AC, and you take minutes at Senate meetings with the help of the video. Faculty Senate also has a student assistant. Anyone who is interested in being secretary should let AC know.
   * President Schott said she is recommending a tuition increase of 3.7%; that will be going forward to the board. She did a lot of thinking about it, but it’s in line with most of the other universities and she feels it’s affordable for most of our students and we’ll be able to provide financial aid for those for whom it’s not affordable
   * Fedorek asked if 3.7% was across the board; Schott said it was undergraduate resident rate; then there are different rates for other categories, but it’s all built off this rate; Walsh added that WUE is 1.5 times more; the out-of-state undergrad, and grad except for MBA and MSEd online, will be 4.99%
6. New Undergraduate Curriculum (Vote)
   * Kurutz moved to approve the new curriculum, Yamaguchi seconded
   * Siders wanted to discuss the e-sports minor proposal. He noted that only 20% of students had a minor at all; and most of them were in business since it is required; the mode number across all minors was one; we don’t have many large minors. The minor count has more to do with the size of the major than anything else. This minor is a little different from others because it has 2 classes for minors only, these classes will be very small. Siders wondered why we are doing this
   * Fedorek added that 24 of our minors have a major; 13 don’t have a major but they have a lot of faculty affiliated with them, like GSWS and Philosophy. He noted that Carlton is a new chair and will be teaching 2 of the classes for this minor. He wondered if it’s not the right time; maybe a certificate would be better?
   * Carlton said that we do have a feeder into this minor; also it is interdisciplinary and it encourages interdisciplinary buy-in. Also we are going to have the club sports teams that are going to act as feeders. He reached out to Eastern Illinois University and Shenandoah University which both have brand new e-sports programs. EIU had 50 brand new students in their program the first year. Shenandoah is already launching 3 other programs including a master’s degree all tied to e-sports because it is growing exponentially. This all speaks to growth potential. With COVID and everyone at home there is increased interest in gaming also. He thinks there is vast merit to this. 2 billion people are avid gamers. In response to Fedorek, the first year will be a bear, especially with also being chair, but Carlton is not afraid of taking this on. We could get content experts to take it over later but he thinks we should strike while the iron is hot.
   * Gay asked why they had proposed a minor and not a certificate. Carlton said the idea was to have a lean process and stay flexible. Initially he pitched it as a degree after talking to industry insiders, but this is just to get the ball rolling. He wouldn’t have committed to it if he didn’t see the potential for exponential growth.
   * Sharp said her mother works in social media; she asked about e-sports at SOU, she thinks this would be a great thing to bring to SOU; it would be great for commuters, intramurals, etc.
   * Carlton said he did a survey with 323 student respondents; a majority showed favoritism to doing it
   * Thatcher said he has been diving into this topic; he thanked Carlton for introducing it; it’s massive
   * Anderson, Chenjeri, Condon, French, Golding, Harmon, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, Yamaguchi, and Yates voted to approve. Fedorek and Siders opposed. Carlton and Gay abstained. **Motion passed.**
7. New University Studies Recommendations (Discussion)
   * Ayers stated that this is the final batch of US recommendations for this academic year; there are 8 courses; 5 E strand exploration and 3 integration courses
   * All templates are in the shared folder; some are new like Psych 470 and NAS 360; US had to wait for hard numbering and that’s why there are more than usual
   * Gay noted that we won’t be voting until next meeting
   * Gay asked about the number of E strands; he’s heard we have a lot already and wondered if there were concerns about adding more
   * Ayers said there were no concerns at this time; they have not put restrictions or limits; she has quantified all the current courses and how much they are increasing per year, how many substitutions we are doing etc., and she will be sharing it in her end-of-year report. Senators can ask questions about this at the next meeting
   * Thatcher asked if there was a problem having a lot to choose from; Ayers said there was a concern that we might be increasing the number of choices but serving the same number of students. She believes the Gen Ed task force may do some of the shifting for University Studies in this regard and help find the “Goldilocks” moment with the right amount of classes
   * Gay mentioned something he had heard anecdotally about some programs relying on these courses for SCH, and as new courses get added they can draw students, and budget, from one program to another, but since we are likely moving away from this model of Gen Ed, these will eventually be questions we’ll have to address anyway.
8. New Graduate Studies Recommendations (Discussion)
   * Education has made some changes to adapt to the shift to the new online concentrations
   * There are some changes to make things more clear to students e.g. Ed 531 and 503 offer either a research project or a project with a professional track orientation. Some changes to credits have been made in accordance with workload also, such as a portfolio project for 4 credits. This is for the 7 week online program. There’s also a project design course that’s now 5 credits to reflect the rigor and allow students more time.
9. New Bylaws from the Constitution Committee (Discussion):
   * Voting on all bylaws changes will be in two weeks
   * The tenure & promotion recommendation was to include “pandemic” as one of the things that would allow for an extension of the tenure clock, and to allow Senate to make additional recommendations about things that aren’t covered in the bylaws. This change was modeled on what was already there for personal reasons for extensions, but was focused on large, collective events like natural disasters and pandemics, and it doesn’t require extra documentation
   * The Student Evaluation Task Force recommendations are much more significant changes.
   * Fedorek thanked Anderson for the work and asked about the date 2028 mentioned in the changes in reference to the transitional period. Anderson replied that it was either to allow for people who took longer than 5-6 years to get their second promotion, or perhaps it was to account for the 7 years of evaluations currently kept in personnel files. Either way, it could be removed with a friendly amendment.
   * Yates noted that the group had taken something he was concerned about and made it more operational. There won’t be a math formula to apply to student evaluations of teaching that others can look to, but they are several places, in the FPAR, in the reflection part of the P&T packet, where the faculty member is asked to reflect on student feedback. We do want student feedback to matter, and this is a healthy way of acknowledging it and more focused on students helping us become better teachers
   * Anderson said that she got feedback from the FPC, and their suggestion was to have the faculty member provide evidence, examples, etc. of how they had addressed student feedback, and the committee agreed that this was a good idea
   * Fedorek asked how the two sets of bylaws worked together; reading the two sets of proposed changes was confusing since some seemed contradictory
   * Gay noted that this was difficult to present since two different groups worked on it
   * Yates said that the MOU task force knew that the student evaluation work would overlap; they just left a “wild card” in their proposal to account for any new way of evaluating teaching. The scores currently used, including “outstanding,” won’t be there for either professional or professorial track faculty. Both groups will have to show evidence of responding to feedback in their FPARs. The hard part is going to be for those who have to read the applications, especially those in transition. Everything that was there before is still there except that one easy little word based on the teaching evaluation scores.
   * In regard to the other changes, everything that was in the expectations in bullet points and goals is now reflected in the bylaws language, but since the lion’s share of work for professional track faculty is teaching, from now on there aren’t ratings of great, good, OK, etc., there’s just a list of things in the teaching box that they must do, built from the existing bullet points.
   * Promotion to Senior I aligned with preferred, and the things that aligned with exceptional are included for promotion to Senior II. They aren’t controversial things, they are pretty much what you would expect everyone to be doing. They did get rid of the expectation that they mentor other faculty since for many programs it didn’t seem functionally practical.
   * Yates added that the goal was to see one big document with all of the changes in redlined version and “accept all changes” version as well.
   * Anderson noted that the reason they were presented separately was for clarity in voting, even though it is confusing to see two different documents.
   * Fedorek noted that this would probably affect the FPAR task force; that work probably needs to be put off until after this is resolved
   * Anderson asked if the bylaws changes pass, does that mean everyone is agreeing to the proposed model for the Student Learning Experience Survey? Gay responded that he assumed that to be so, since that would include the creation of the new committee, which would create and implement the new survey
   * Gay stated that he and Anderson had discussed whether there should be one big omnibus bylaws changes vote, or if each item should go up separately so people who did not agree with everything wouldn’t have to vote against the whole thing.
   * Fedorek noted that he had presented the proposed changes to his program and division and a lot of people like it. They had plenty of time to comment on it and as far as he knew no one had. The biggest challenge is coming up with the 5 program-related questions since he wasn’t sure what those would look like. Gay noted that there were some sample questions from Environmental Education in the drive.
   * Chenjeri asked if the bylaws passed, when they would go into effect. Gay answered that if they passed, that would mean beginning in fall we would use the new tool. Anderson said that her understanding was that basically, the new process would be in effect as soon as it is passed, although not for this term since there wouldn’t be any time to implement it.
   * Yates asked if students had weighed in on the new survey and process yet. Anderson said that there was a student on the first task force, but they couldn’t get one for the second one. The student on the first task force had agreed with the direction they were going in, though. There is a place for a student on the new committee, because they do want students giving feedback on the survey and process.
   * Gay noted that the bylaws changes involve the creation of a new committee to oversee the implementation and evolution of the survey and process. He believed this was a huge positive change--it’s not changing it once and leaving it that way, it’s assessing it and changing it as needed in response to feedback from both students and faculty.
   * Siem said she liked the new survey/system. She wondered if 8 people was a bit large for the committee, though. Anderson said she was willing to hear feedback on that; the rationale was simply that it would be one person per division. Gay noted that this committee wouldn’t need to meet weekly. He knew some committees had trouble getting representatives, but his concerns were alleviated since this one wouldn’t need to meet weekly and he could see a reason for representation from all divisions.
   * Yates said he felt better that this committee would be there to get feedback from students and deal with any implementation wrinkles. He just wanted to make sure that those students who did really care about this had a way to make their voice heard.
   * Fedorek asked about the markup on the bylaws changes. There was some confusion over versions since an old highlighted version was in a special folder. Anderson confirmed that the final changes were the “redlined” ones in the bylaws revisions folder.
   * A discussion ensued about getting a clean copy to vote on. Kurutz thought that getting a clean copy by the end of the week would be hard. The Constitution Committee would need to talk first. Yates thanked Patrick Stubbins for his work cleaning up the version that the MOU task force worked on and wondered if he could help out. Gay noted that Stubbins was furloughed so might not have time. Oliveri said that she thought that a “clean” copy would be enough--she didn’t feel like she needed a merged redlined version. Fedorek confirmed that he wanted to see that.
   * Gay noted that we do need to put the changes out 7 days prior to a vote; also there is no AC meeting next week due to the holiday
10. Faculty Development Committee Recommendations & Update
    * B. Anderson: Four things to discuss, the first three need a vote
    * For the Professional Development Grant Awards, $90,000 was requested and $65,000 was awarded, about 70%. All applications were funded to some extent in this round.
    * Fedorek moved to waive the 2 week rule. Oliveri seconded the motion. Anderson, Carlton, Chenjeri, Condon, Fedorek, French, Golding, Harmon, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yamaguchi voted to approve. None opposed. Gay, Longhurst, and Yates abstained. **Motion passed**.
    * Chenjeri moved to approve the PDG grant awards; Yamaguchi seconded. Anderson, Carlton, Chenjeri, Condon, French, Hutton, Jablonski, Moreali, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yamaguchi voted in favor. None opposed. Gay, Fedorek, Harmon, Golding, Longhurst, and Kurutz abstained. **Motion passed.**
    * B. Anderson thanked Senate for giving the committee 2 extra humans. There are some procedural issues that have come up and the process for the new Scholarship award is going to affect the processes for the other awards, but those discussions can be held for later.
    * Distinguished Service Awardees this year are Carol Ferguson and Andrew Gay. These winners are chosen by FDC.
    * Distinguished Teaching Award: FDC is on the selection committee (Morey), it also has one rep from each division. This year’s winners are Paul Condon, Erica Knotts, Carey Sojka, and Dale Vidmar.
    * Kurutz moved to waive the 2 week rule, Harmon seconded. Anderson, Carlton, Chenjeri, Fedorek, French, Golding, Harmon, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, Yamaguchi, and Yates voted to approve. None opposed. Condon and Gay abstained. **Motion passed.**
    * Fedorek moved to approve the awards; Stanfill seconded. Anderson, Carlton, Chenjeri, Fedorek, French, Golding, Harmon, Hutton, Jablonski, Kurutz, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Oliveri, Parker, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, Yamaguchi, and Yates voted to approve. None opposed. Condon and Gay abstained. **Motion passed.**
    * Update on the Distinguished Scholarship Award: the committee split into an“awards” team and a “grants” team; Hocevar has worked a lot on the Scholarship award; the construction of award opened a lot of cans of worms for the procedures of the other awards; they want to propose what they think is best and then revise language for other awards; The committee will bring it at the beginning of the fall, which is the quietest time for committee. Gay agreed it was best to wait for fall. Hocevar noted that the current procedure is for the call for nominations to go out in week 2; she thought we could still meet the timeline even if we waited for fall to approve the new award. Gay noted that his first year they did it late and it was fine. B. Anderson said it had never been on time as far as he knew. He said there were a lot of moving parts with these awards; they are hoping to streamline it a bit with the changes.
    * Yates thanked everyone who had been working on these awards. He wondered if the streamlined procedures were going to be presented today or not, and B. Anderson said that they weren’t planning on it since there wasn’t time on the agenda. Hocevar noted that it was almost done, but since the agenda was full they decided to take the extra time to finish it up. Gay said he also could put the documents in the drive if he got them before the end of the year.
    * Gay thanked everyone for their work and for the award.

11. Announcements/New Business

* + There is an FYI in the “New Business--Time Permitting” folder about the Oregon Higher Education Strategic Roadmap. He wanted everyone to have that information.
  + The Foundation has asked us to renew the representative to the SOU Foundation board; it’s Lori Rutz-Burri. Faculty with questions should send them to Gay, who can forward them to Janet Fratella. We will vote on it in 2 weeks.
  + Chenjeri said that since they could not complete the campus theme this year, they are proposing “Thinking Uncertainty” for next year’s theme. They will plan the program with the Provost’s office.
  + Walsh said that there are several considerations to think about before planning anything, including the campus reopening. She asked to see the proposal before we vote on it so she can make sure she has the resources to support it, and to consider the logistics as we know them at this point.
  + Kurutz was asked by Theater colleagues to propose an extension of the deadline for FPAR to August 1, 2020. Oliveri stated her support for this proposal. Gay said that Waters had asked if he and David Bithell recommended an extension; at the time they thought individuals could ask for one if needed.
  + Fedorek wondered if this would be a union issue since that date is when we are off contract. Yates is in sympathy with proposal; he voiced a similar concern if people didn’t want to do it because they were off contract
  + Kurutz said due date could be negotiated; it would be cleaner if it was the same for everyone instead of through individual agreements
  + Waters said it was a valid point; the workload concern could be a problem for chairs and directors and they should be considered in these discussions
  + Fedorek said that at this point in time there is nothing in bylaws that obligates directors to comment; the task force has made recommendations, but right now they aren’t obligated to comment. For chairs it is also vague.
  + Kurutz annotated the bylaws that relate to the process of the FPAR; that document is in the drive
  + Gay was concerned about voting on it without feedback from chairs, but the next Senate meeting is the day they are due.
  + Yates said we should try to solve this problem but not ram it through a vote waiving the two week rule. Fedorek suggested bringing it up at the chairs & directors meeting. Walsh said they would put it on the agenda. She agreed that it should start there. She wondered if APSOU leadership could endorse it also.
  + Anderson wanted to clarify that faculty would find out before the next meeting if it did meet approval there. Gay said he would let everyone know what happened at the chairs & directors meeting.
  + Oliveri wondered if we could vote remotely. Waters said that there is no provision for a proxy/remote vote.
  + Kurutz asked Gay to notify people before the weekend if there is going to be a change and he promised he would.
  + Yates wondered if we have to vote at all; no one is opposed to it.
  + Fedorek congratulated Gay and Condon on their awards.
  + Gay reminded people that there would be elections next time; in addition to chair-elect and secreteary, he encouraged pepole to consider AC, committees, etc.

1. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.