Faculty Senate Minutes

Monday, November 18, 2019

Present: Melissa Anderson, Jeremy Carlton, Enrique Chacón, Paul Condon, Brian Fedorek, Paul French, Andrew Gay, Justin Harmon, Kristin Hocevar, Dennis Jablonski, Marc Koyack, Laurie Kurutz, Matt Moreali, Jesse Longhurst, Tiffany Morey, Aprille Phillips, Mark Siders, Ellen Siem, Michael Stanfill, Chad Thatcher, Kemble Yates

Absent: Linda Schott, Michael Parker, Prakash Chenjeri, Cynthia Hutton

Guests: Susan Walsh, Sarah Guenther, Lee Ayers, Britney Sharp, Kylan DeVries, Carey Sojka, Jody Waters, Bret Anderson, Anna Oliveri, Sherry Ettlich, Joan McBee

Meeting called to order at 4:03 pm

1. Approval of Minutes from 11/08
   * Fedorek moved to approve the minutes; Kurutz seconded. Carlton, Chacón, Condon, Fedorek, Hocevar, Jablonski, Koyack, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, and Thatcher approved. Anderson, French, Gay, Harmon, and Kurutz abstained. [Yates arrived after the vote]. **Motion passed.**
2. President’s Report – Linda Schott
   * President Schott was traveling and absent from the meeting
3. Provost’s Report – Sue Walsh
   * Walsh stated that a lot of things were in process or wrapping up at the moment
   * The State of the University speech was last week; Wash was unsure if a video would be available or not, but it was streamed live and supplementary materials from the presentation (e.g., charts) could be made available to anyone who wants them. [Video is available at: <https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/w9sPsSE7vna3XTN_39bs1rEXjVWF0kfP/media/525875?autostart=true&showtabssearch=true> ]
   * Walsh was encouraged by the president’s remarks about the future; Schott and her leadership team are always thinking about sustainability for the institution, reading demographic trend studies, and focusing on not just surviving but thriving. It’s challenging and will remain so. There is a lot going on and more to come but the president touched on the important things going on in her address
   * Gay said that he had received a few questions from faculty after the speech. Some wondered if the task force on financial sustainability was a repeat of prioritization. Walsh responded that it was not, that there is a process for prioritization and it had been already done in the past; we are not doing program prioritization now. There will be an all-inclusive shared governance process looking at programs, but that is only one part of the conversation. The charge of the group will be more than just looking at programs.
4. Advisory Council Report – Chair-Elect Kemble Yates
   * President Schott was out of town, but all faculty were there, plus the provost and a student, Sarah Guenther.
   * Managing the agenda is always one of the things AC does; otherwise we talked about how we need to update our committees on the web
   * Neil Woolf and the provost have been asked about our admissions process and we’ll get a report on that at a later time. The report will be about what the GPA is for admission, special conditional admits, and so on.
   * AC talked a bit about the Faculty Development Committee, and their charge
   * Michael Parker will be away next term and Anna Oliveri will be filling in for him
   * Gay said that we did talk about representation on committees, but the Committee on Committees charge is to make committees as representative as possible. We want to avoid filling committees with a bunch of people from the same division.
5. ASSOU President’s Report – Britney Sharp
   * Voting on the student fee amount is taking place tomorrow night at 7 pm in the Gallery; there are 3 options, and all options are increases
   * The student fee has been taking a dramatic hit due to lower enrollment, more graduate students, and more online students
   * SOU already has one of the highest student fees in the state, but lower rates mean fewer programs, and could affect retention. ASSOU is wondering if they should we just let the programs drop or should they find the money elsewhere
   * Sharp stated that it should be alarming to that students will have a $400 fee proposed to students when they just had a 10 percent tuition increase
   * A lot of the budget is made up of actual salaries for staff, or for lights in the building; there are a lot of tough decisions
   * Students don’t understand why the fees are going up, or cuts are made, and it’s going to be upsetting no matter what happens
   * Walsh stated that a lot of people don’t realize students pay staff with their fees. Gay asked which positions are funded by student fees, and Walsh responded that all student life positions are funded by fees. The students get help from Deborah Lovern and Josh Lovern help them work on budgeting.
   * Sharp said that budgets were already cut 5% and stated again that students don’t understand why.
   * Siders asked for clarification about who pays student fees, and if online students are turned away from services. Walsh responded that they are not turned away, but she’d have to get more information about exactly how it works
   * Sharp noted that Advanced Southern Credit students also do not pay fees, and reiterated that this year some things are going to get cut.
   * Gay asked if there is any data on how enrollment is looking for next term and noted that lot of students have not registered and have significant balance holds
   * Walsh stated that students with significant balance holds need to see the registrar and see what can be done--it might be that making one payment will get them below the threshold and let them register.
   * Sharp sent the PDF of the student fee options to Gay, who added it to the Senate drive
   * Walsh stated that faculty should reach out to students who aren’t registered, a list can be gotten from the Registrar’s office, and they can then work with the Registrar’s office, the Bursar’s office, and Business Services. Faculty are often the ones the students have the closest relationships with.
   * B. Anderson noted that SSCs also have information on registration and significant balance holds
   * Ayers stated that Chris Stanek runs the list week 4 and sends it to the SSCs, who then reach out to students. The SSCs are a great resource if you are worried about your students. Walsh put in a plug for faculty contact too.
6. Faculty Development Committee Report (Carpenter II) – Bret Anderson
   * 19 out of 24 applicants were funded at 50% of ask for Carpenter II grants; This time there was $8500 to give away.
   * The FDC met this morning to work on the Distinguished Scholarship Award, and had the first pass at it. They are confirming that creating this award is bringing up some housekeeping for the service and teaching awards.
   * They hope to bring a draft to Senate in 2 weeks
   * Gay asked if it could be awarded this year; B. Anderson said they hoped so.
   * Fedorek asked if there would be 2 awards, as there are for Distinguished Service. B. Anderson said that was to be determined, but it will not be parsed as 1 for scholarship and 1 for creative work
   * Gay stated that it was brought to his attention that possibly no professional track faculty have won the Distinguished Teaching award, and wondered if it should be divided between professional and professorial faculty. He also noted that many people decline the nomination and it may be too burdensome. B. Anderson said he didn’t believe there had been much tension between professional/professorial track faculty nominations
   * Siem wondered if it was common for all 4 potential teaching awards to be given. B. Anderson said that it hadn’t been around that long. There has also been discussion about how often you can win it. Right now it is set as only once, but perhaps you could be eligible again after 10 years.
   * Anderson asked if there was a list anywhere of all the faculty who had won in the past. It was determined that the only list is what is on the wall in Churchill. Gay suggested this could be possibly be put on the Senate website.
   * Yates moved to waive two week rule; Fedorek seconded. Anderson, Carlton, Chacón, Condon, Fedorek, French, Harmon, Hocevar, Jablonski, Koyack, Moreali, Longhurst, Morey, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yates approved. Gay and Kurutz abstained. **Motion passed.**
   * Yates moved to approve Carpenter II recommendations; Stanfill seconded. Carlton, Chacón, Condon, French, Harmon, Hocevar, Jablonski, Koyack, Moreali, Morey, Phillips, Siders, Siem, Stanfill, Thatcher, and Yates approved. None opposed. Fedorek, Kurutz, Longhurst, Anderson, and Gay abstained. **Motion passed.**
7. Graduate Council Report: new Computer Science curriculum to review
   * Waters stated that the approved curriculum changes were mostly “housekeeping” changes, and that Sherry Ettlich would explain them.
   * Ettlich stated that most of the changes were bringing the 500 level courses in line with the 400 courses, mostly with regard to prerequisites etc.
   * Other changes are removing graduate courses from the Professional Science Masters program which has now been taught out. The PSM programs (Math and CS) were designed for scientists functioning as liaisons between upper management and an expert scientist group. The CS PSM program had evolved from an earlier program. Both were good programs.
   * They were relatively short-lived because the students interested in them were expecting support, such as full tuition paid graduate assistantships, which we can’t really afford.
8. Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Report--Anna Oliveri
   * Oliveri stated that the curriculum committee has been meeting over the course of the term and that they have approved a new major in GSWS, a new minor, and some new courses.
   * Kylan de Vries provided some history and explained that what would become GSWS began as Women’s Studies in the 80s, and in 2010 became GSWS. It has its own Council. Since then there has been talk of a major. The program relies heavily on courses in other disciplines, and has only 1.5 faculty devoted to it. Faculty are very involved in assessment, and have their own curriculum committee.
   * A Trans Studies Certificate is also being put forward. De Vries and Carey Sojka both publish on that topic and so feel like they can offer it. Gay asked about the uniqueness of a Trans Studies Certificate, and de Vries said that as far he he knows, it’s the only one in the nation.
   * Other faculty, such as Brook Colley and Alma Rose Alvarez are also going to teach courses for it, and hopefully others as well. Our high Pride Index number could bring interested students to SOU specifically for this.
   * Siem asked why SOU was not included in the table that listed costs for this type of program at other schools. De Vries said that he was following a model for the general costs of attending college from another proposal that did not include SOU in the table.
   * Moreali asked if the program would be in the Social Science division, and de Vries responded that GSWS is in Humanities & Culture and will stay there.
   * Jamie Vener presented information about the Health Promotion minor that is being proposed
   * Vener said that they have wanted to do it for a while; we are the only public institution in Oregon that does not offer some kind of minor in health. The American Heart Association CPR certification has been adopted because that is what employers want. Nutrition is part of the core. Students can choose their focus from the electives, such as exercise and human performance, sports injury, community health, etc. It will have 26 credits total. It is believed it would complement a variety of degrees on campus.
   * Yates asked about voting on majors, minors, and courses--Gay clarified that we vote on all of it, but usually vote on curriculum as a package.
   * Siders asked what proportion of students do a minor at SOU. Only some programs require one. Walsh stated that she did not know offhand, but could find out.
   * Gay asked de Vries what he thought about the estimates for the students who would do the new major--both new and existing students. De Vries responded that although it is thought that some of the minors will switch to the major, the numbers were lowballed on purpose because it is difficult to advertise already for something starting next year. It’s hard to guess about the numbers. De Vries and Sojka get queries about a GSWS major every year, though.
   * Thatcher asked for more information about the Pride Index. Sojka said that it is based on a questionnaire that measures the LGBTQ climate on campus. We have been in the top 25 for several years. It draws students to SOU.
9. FPAR Task Force Report – Joan McBee
   * McBee explained that the task force interviewed directors and surveyed faculty. She then summarized some of the main points in the report, such as: The FPAR has no teeth; nothing happens if you do a poor job or if you don’t do it at all, and the bylaws are kind of vague on what should be done with it; New faculty think it is important and find value in it; Most faculty say that their program’s FPARs are not shared, but should be shared. McBee listed the topics Senate should discuss, which are in the report in the drive. Oliveri noted that there were some differences between what directors and faculty said about the timing.
   * Gay noted that the task force recommendations start out, “Senate should discuss…” and Senate is not particularly good at discussing open-ended questions
   * Fedorek stated that the task force did not feel it could make decisions for the entire faculty
   * Oliveri noted that many of the recommendations were about changing wording in the bylaws. Fedorek said that if the FPAR is just meant to be self-reflective, then no feedback is required. Nothing in the bylaws obligates feedback now. That could be stated more clearly. Oliveri said that if it is meant to be evaluative, then that needs to be more clear and what the repercussions would be if it wasn’t done well.
   * McBee stated that used well, it’s an awesome tool, but much less so if it is treated like something that no one looks at.
   * Anderson stated that it seems like we have to decide the purpose before we can address the other issues brought up.
   * Kurutz asked how FPARs were “born.” Yates said that we’ve always done something like this, and Kurutz suggested that they are basically annual reports, which most organizations do.
   * Jablonski asked if it was intended as a self-evaluation tool, or was it some kind of administrative evaluation. Walsh said that she didn’t know; it’s been a repository, and it’s been used to collaborate on research projects.
   * Waters stated that the co-existence of a self-reflection alongside some kind of external administrative review was not unusual or necessarily problematic.
   * Ettlich stated that the origin of the FPAR went way back, before computers were used for this sort of thing.
   * Fedorek stated that a lot of the questions come to purpose, and that the most benefit is to newer faculty. Walsh noted that some of the information dovetails with that coming from the post-tenure review task force.
   * Longhurst noted that it could be seen as having multiple purposes that evolve; the tool gives you a voice in your own evaluation
   * Yates said that the post-tenure review task force has also noticed the multiple roles it can play at different points in a career.
   * Carlton wondered if a better, most user-friendly system was possible. Longhurst noted that it wasn’t clear what happened next after you submitted it.
   * Condon noted that in his research, there were a variety of opinions on the optimal frequency for FPARs
   * Ettlich thought it would be hard if you weren’t filling it out every year, and noted that the FPAR is also a good way to point out the “invisible” work that you do. In Math and CS they created a framework with specific questions to answer that is aligned with the P&T expectations, which was helpful for new faculty. McBee noted that about 75% of survey respondents said that guidelines would be helpful.
   * Gay asked if Ettlich could share those questions, and she said she would look for them.
   * Yates said that by making the information specific, it makes it easier for director or others to use to recognize faculty
   * Thatcher said that he enjoys doing his, but felt frustrated that no one ever sat down with him to give feedback
   * Fedorek stated that it is nice to look back on what you’ve done. The bylaws don’t indicate that chairs have to give feedback; which is tricky because we don’t want to give the chairs more work to do. The directors would also have to agree, and we’d have to hammer out the purpose first.
   * Siem stated that she has done it with no feedback and open sharing, and with no sharing but with feedback, and both were interesting.
   * Hocevar remarked that everyone likes feedback and wondered what the next step would be; would feedback be more work for chairs and directors?
   * Jablonski talked about how important the FPAR is for promotion. He also talked about what is done in EHL; the director and chair sit down with the faculty member for an hour and talk about goals and how they can be supported. Fedorek suggested that this was unique to EHL. Oliveri commented that other programs might want something like that, but the problem is that there is no equity
   * Gay stated that there was more to discuss on this, so senators should take it back to programs and talk through it and see what kinds of recommendations people have.
   * Fedorek wondered what would happen if we recommended that chairs or directors do more work. Gay stated that Senate would make recommendations to the president, but she could overide the recommendation if there was a revolt. Walsh stated that she did not think there would be one.
10. Announcements/New Business
    * Thatcher stated that OAL students just got back from a joint conference of the Association for Outdoor Recreation and Education and the Association of Experiential Education in Spokane. They went and learned a lot about about the field.

Meeting adjourned at 5:26 pm.