

Feb. 9th, 2011

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (FAEC) Meeting

Present: Jim Morley, Elaine Risch, Max Goldberg, Jeremy Teigen, Sam Mustafa, Ruma Sen

Not Present: Eric Haye, Jillian Weiss, Alex Olbrecht

Secretary: Kristin Kenneavy

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I. Approve Minutes

Jan. 26th FAEC minutes approved.

II. Actionable Decision Items for FA Spring 2011

ARC: ARC will present two motions at the next Faculty Assembly meeting. They are also working on the once per week classes issue. FAEC will plan a joint meeting with them (next week).

Academic Commons: President Mercer has indicated that there is only one space option for Academic Commons, which is the rear portion of the Atrium dining room. ~80% of faculty voted to create this space. It was not entirely clear what the next step in this process was to be, but potentially it included a vote among faculty as to the acceptability of the location.

Tenure by Exceptional Action: An email was sent out from AFT President Irene Kuchta on this issue. The FAEC representatives agreed that the language in the guidelines was good. AFT oversees the criteria for tenure and reappointment, so this is no longer an FAEC issue.

Calendar and Schedule: It was proposed that a task force be formed to examine the academic calendar and course scheduling holistically. After some debate, UNCLEAR AS TO WHETHER A TASKFORCE WOULD BE CREATED AS SOME FAEC REPS FELT THAT THIS WAS NOT A SINGLE ISSUE, BUT RATHER A CLUSTER OF ISSUES (PERHAPS BETTER SUITED TO A COMMITTEE. Provost Barnett has indicated her support for lengthening the Winter Break to accommodate online courses and study abroad (this will need to be reconfirmed). To achieve this outcome, faculty would most likely have to agree to a shorter grading period at the end of Spring semester. It was suggested that a graphic depiction of the academic year be presented to the faculty, along with a vote to determine what percentage of faculty members are interested in lengthening Winter Break if it meant having less time to grade.

Separately Budgeted Research: It was suggested that this issue be worked on and resolved. There was consensus that the prohibition on teaching when an SBR award is granted during second summer session was unnecessary (it should be assumed that faculty can both do research and teach at the same time). However, FAEC representatives generally agreed that the entire process by which SBR monies are distributed needed to be re-examined, as SBR is no longer being utilized in ways consonant with the program's original intent (utilized more often for research expenses than to cover cost of living while not teaching). Other issues included the size of the awards, taxes on the awards, travel, the timing of the reimbursement, and itemized applications versus stipends. Sam Mustafa agreed to chair a taskforce on this issue. Rather than ask for unit reps, it was agreed that the task force would be populated with

faculty that have experience with this program as well as a variety of viewpoints on how SBR should be administered. The creation of the proposed taskforce will be voted on at the Feb. 16th FA meeting and the composition of the taskforce will be voted on at the March 9th FA meeting.

Student Honor Code: It was proposed that the faculty discuss the possible creation of a student honor code. Arguments in favor of this included the need to reaffirm shared values related to academic honesty, and that many other institutions utilize these codes. Arguments against were that this code is redundant with existing policies, that it would not be useful if it was not accompanied by substantial sanctions, and that student defend dishonesty based on specific criteria, rather than adhering to a general set of values. There was not much support for pursuing this issue among FAEC reps, but if it were to be pursued, it was agreed that students would need to be consulted and that it would be important to look at how other comparable institutions approach this matter.

Online Student Evaluations: ARC has been fielding pilot studies of these for at least two semesters. It was mentioned that the response rates did go up during the second wave of data collection. Jeremy Teigen agreed to share a report written by his colleague at another institution that indicated that online evaluations worked very well. It was noted that all evaluations are voluntary, regardless of the form (paper or online). FAEC reps agreed to ask ARC to report on the status of their research and make a recommendation on this issue.

III. May Faculty Conference

The FAEC had agreed that assessment should be a part of the Spring conference but not the only component. A number of possible suggestions for additional programming were discussed.

The Curricular Enhancement Committee (experiential learning) has asked for some time during the conference to discuss this issue.

One or more panel discussions were suggested. Possibly one on the recent book, Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses. Another suggestion was an anti-assessment text written about No Child Left Behind. A group of faculty members could be asked to read the book and comment.

Student Affairs could possibly be asked to report on changes stemming from the revised guest policy and on student life generally.

It was suggested that convening groups be given time to work on whatever issue they see fit as there is little time during the semester to do so.

It was suggested that a slideshow of faculty research abstracts be compiled and allowed to run on the screen as people filtered in.

It was resolved that Jim Morley would draft a proposal and that the Faculty Assembly could suggest and vote upon how the conference time should be divided and utilized.

IV. Future meetings with Administrators

It was agreed that there was no pressing need to meet with administrators in the immediate future, but that one topic of discussion might be reducing the number of times new faculty members need to go through reappointment. FAEC reps generally agreed that every year seems rather frequent.

V. Joint meeting with ARC

It was resolved that there should be a joint meeting of ARC and the FAEC next week (Feb. 16th).

VI. Follow-up; Ongoing Issues...

Academic Commons: Only one option is available – the rear portion of the Atrium dining area.

Transparent Postings of Reassigned Time: Joan Capizzi will post positions that carry reassigned time to the Provost's website, along with the contact person for that position for those interested in applying. Joan will contact Max Goldberg when this task is completed. The first step in this process is to make these positions more visible. The decision-making surrounding control of who receives these positions has not yet changed, but that is the proposed second step in the process (making the application process open and transparent).

Convener needs: Tabled until next week.

VII. Next Faculty Assembly Meeting

Alex Olbrect will act as parliamentarian for the meeting.

VIII. Governance Ballot

Some of the FAEC representatives objected to the persuasive email sent out by FA President Jim Morley recommending that faculty and teaching staff vote in favor of the current government structure (this was sent out in conjunction with the ballot language). The representatives felt that the president's message seemed to be speaking for the entire FAEC when there had been no agreement to such a message in the last FAEC meeting. What had been discussed was the language of the motion and the phrasing of the voting choices. Jim Morley disagreed and stated that he felt that the message was clearly his opinion (as president) and was not meant to represent the views of all members of the FAEC. Given that the message had already been sent out, it was agreed that there was not much that could be done regarding this matter, but that, in future, communications to the entire faculty should be BE CLEAR REGARDING WHETHER THE PRESIDENT OR THE ENTIRE FAEC (IN ADDITION TO THE PRESIDENT) HAD APPROVED THE MESSAGE.

Jim Morley and Kristin Kenneavy will count the governance votes in the presence of Claire Napanano, Provost Barnett's secretary.