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2004-12-03 Minutes of the Academic Senate

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APPROVED

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
DAYTON, OHIO
MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

December 3, 2004
Kennedy Union Room 222

Presiding: Dr. John Rapp

Senators Present: Apmann, Bickford, Biers, Buchino, Chen, Courte, Dandaneau, Darrow, Doyle, Gauder, Gerla, Gravier, Grunenwald, Hartley, Hayes, Lewis, Mullins, Pestello, Roecker-Phelps, Saliba, Schuman, Sucher, Thompson, Watras, Yungblut

Guests: Brill, Edmonson, Hollingsworth, John, Penno, Singer, Webb, Westendorf, Wilson

1. Opening Prayer: Linda Hartley began the meeting with a prayer.
2. Roll Call: Twenty-six of thirty-nine Senators were present.
3. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of October 29, 2004, were approved with minor changes.
4. Announcements: John Rapp introduced the new faculty senators and thanked the outgoing senators for their efforts.
The next Academic Senate meeting will be January 7, 2005, during which time representatives for the Executive Committee and officers will be elected.
Laura Yungblut distributed a summary report on responses to the faculty engagement question.
5. Evening Class Schedule, I-04-07

Nancy Buchino, on behalf of the Student Academic Policies Committee, presented Senate Document I-04-07 to the Academic Senate for a vote. The action is consultative.

This proposal would extend the time between evening courses that are taught twice a week to 10 minutes in between classes. There is currently a 5-minute break between classes.

Q: Would suggest amending the proposal to an effective start date of Winter 2006?

Westendorf: Requesting the change for programming considerations.

Yes: 25

No: 0

Abstain: 0

6. Use of Student Evaluations in Judging Teaching Effectiveness, I-04-08

Harry Gerla, on behalf of the Faculty Affairs Committee, presented Senate Document I-04-08 to the Academic Senate for a vote. The action is legislative.

This proposal seeks to amend the Faculty Handbook by adding a policy banning student evaluations as the sole measure in determining faculty teaching effectiveness for purposes of promotion, tenure or merit pay adjustments.

This proposal is only a part of what is needed. The Faculty Development Committee is working on a best practices document as well.

Comments:

- As noted the Faculty Development Committee is working on a best practices document. Steve Wilhoit has been polling departments and has found that in no case are student evaluations used as the sole measure. Is this a policy where we are setting the floor too low?
- There is a practical implication if this proposal goes through: there is no systematic means for promotion once faculty are tenured, so how will teaching effectiveness be evaluated? Will we now use peer review for merit and promotion? If so, this presents problems for large departments.
- Perhaps wait until the Faculty Development Committee report before approving?

Q: The rationale is damning. Why vote on something that the literature says does not work?

A: The literature does not say they are counterproductive. The Faculty Affairs Committee is not saying the evaluations are worthless, but encourage their use with other measures. We are hearing unofficially that the practice of using student evaluations as the sole measure is happening, particularly for merit considerations and when faculty have tenure.

- We are hoping to work with the Faculty Development Committee to get a more clear definition of what should or should not be done with student evaluations and evaluations of teaching effectiveness.

Q: What is the impact of this policy?

A: This proposal is legislative, so if it is approved, it will then go on to the Provost. If it goes into the Faculty Handbook, then the policy is binding.

Q: How will this proposal affect part-time faculty?

A: No impact on them since they are not subject to tenure, promotion or merit pay increases. Perhaps need to consider them more closely.

Q: If this proposal passes, how will it affect the current work of the Faculty Development Committee?

A: It will not affect the work, but there is concern about implementing the policy. There is a danger in referring to only recent research without the context of other studies. We suggest an expert review of policies, as they look uneven across campus.

- The AAUP also has a statement on student evaluations, that they are not to be used as the sole measure. This proposal can effect change, as it now becomes grounds for the basis of appeals.
- The pool for merit pay is small. This new policy could mean extra work without much in return. Do we want the resolution to move in that direction?
- Academic excellence is important in the big picture, but hearing more anecdotal items from junior faculty about the student evaluations—they feel vulnerable when they adverse effects on student evaluations.
- Promotion is also a concern: how to evaluate teaching of faculty who go up for promotion?

Q: What about faculty who are poor teachers?

A: Tougher considerations, another conversation later on.

- Is this resolution futile? There are no alternatives listed, no follow-up either.
- The last section offers several hopes: those who evaluate will see that this procedure not permissible way to do things and it will embolden junior faculty. And, the P&T committees will be on notice if student evaluations are now only the sole measure of teaching effectiveness.

Yes: 13

No: 5

Abstain: 7

The proposal passes by a simple majority.

This form works against academic rigor. Propose a 4-year moratorium on the policy. The suggestion will go to the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate.

7. Sense of the Senate Document, I-04-09

Steve Dandaneau, on behalf of the Select Calendar Committee, presented Senate Document I-04-09 to the Academic Senate for a vote.

The Academic Senate is being asked to vote on a proposal to talk about issues. There is nothing binding in the document right now.

People want to talk about big issues relating to the academic calendar. It is the committee's intention to push forward with these issues. They are not likely to happen before 2006, although some might be able to be implemented department by department. Big campus wide changes, however, will not happen immediately.

There are 4 issues proposed for discussion: increased use of the existing 8am and 9am standard MWF course meeting times, increased use of the MWF course schedule for 300 and 400 level courses, a new standard Monday 3-4:15pm common meeting time, and elimination of the MW 3-4:15pm course meeting time in favor of a new WF 3-4:15pm course time.

What is up for vote today is the question: Are these issues important enough to discuss?

Q: Are we asking the Provost to do anything?

A: No. The resolution is to move the conversation among departments and the faculty.

It was the Provost's desire for the calendar committee to look at course paradigm. It is possible to change the academic experience through structural change over space and time. It will also affect the rhythms of campus life. Colleges across the U.S. are looking at these kinds of issues. It makes sense to look at patterns in campus life, given changes in learning and teaching.

Yes: 25

No: 0

Abstain: 0

8. Further Discussion of Vision 2010

Fred Pestello provided an overview of Vision 2010 and outlined the next steps in developing the vision document. He then introduced Kathy Hollingsworth to help facilitate today's conversation.

Discussion centered on the following questions: What do you want the University of Dayton to look like in 2010? What is your vision for the campus?

- Learning is not limited to class time. The college experience facilitates ongoing learning.
- The faculty experience does not end when they leave the parking lot. Faculty live with/among students.
- There is an instrument for student feedback that is effective for all.
- The "ooh" factor: UD does not have it. Increase academic rigor, overall academic reputation, rankings.
- We have the stuff, needing to market better. The "ooh" is there but not apparent.
- An edge with job interviews after graduation, to be seen in competition with Notre Dame.
- More diverse faculty, staff and students. Needing more diverse experiences.
- Re Goal 5: we need more commitment to the library. Are we an undergraduate library or a graduate library?
- Extensive study abroad programs, especially throughout the year and more service learning abroad.
- Integrate diversity across campus, particularly in relation to ELMI.
- More true collaboration across units with incentives and rewards.

- Involvement in world, more academic substance—more seriousness of academic purpose.
- Campus blackouts on Wednesday nights where everyone meets and talks.
- A campus environment that provides space for critiquing.
- A campus that more fully celebrates different cultures.
- Engaged faculty and students who are intellectually ready or curious—as balanced by a diversity of talents and learning styles.
- A place where academic excellence is more than just a pursuit of the mind.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Heidi Gauder, Secretary of the Academic Senate