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## 2006-09-18 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

University of Dayton. Academic Senate. Executive Committee

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Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate  
September 18, 2006  
St. Mary's 113 B; 10:00 AM

Present: J. Biddle, D. Biers (presiding), D. Courte, P. Johnson, W. Lockett, M. Morton, J. O'Gorman, R. Penno, F. Pestello, A. Seielstad, M. Schmitz, R. Wells

Guests: J. Farrelly (Faculty Board), D. Bickford and Kathleen Henderson (First-Year Experience Program)

Roll Call:

Twelve of the twelve members of the Committee were present. Deborah Bickford, Associate Provost, and Kathleen Henderson, Director of First-Year Student Engagement, attended to discuss the new position and its relationship to the Academic Senate.

Prayer:

D. Biers opened the meeting with a prayer from M. Gandhi.

Approval of Minutes:

September 11, 2006 approved

New Business:

D. Biers introduced Deb Bickford and Kathleen Henderson who had been asked to brief the Executive Committee on the newly created position of Director of First-Year Student Engagement. One member of the Executive Committee (P. Johnson) had been asked immediately before the appointment to review the position description and identify any potential implications for the areas of authority of the Academic Senate. This response was circulated prior to the meeting as was the position description. K. Henderson also provided the Committee with copies of Senate Document 96-04, which outlined the First-Year Experience Program, the requirement for a First-Year Experience Course, and requested the appointment of a permanent First-Year Experience Committee. In addition, she provided copies of the Provost April 16, 2004 address to the faculty, the process map developed by the First-Year Experience Committee during the 2003-2004 academic year, and the April 15, 2005 progress report presentation by Deb Bickford to the Academic Senate.

Members of the Executive Committee requested clarification concerning the movement from the appointment of the First-Year Experience Committee to the termination of this Committee, the appointment of a First Year Team, and now the appointment of a Director of First-Year Student Engagement. K Henderson indicated that she understood the process as one of three generations of work. Members also expressed confusion over the point of this discussion and over the authority of the ECAS in relationship to the work K. Henderson is charged to do. Members asked what had happened to the previous groups and why the Senate had not been part of the consultation. D. Bickford and F. Pestello reported that there were several conversations in the Provost's Council on concerns about first year issues and discussions of the advantages of the creation of a First-Year Team. The Provost council agreed that the creation of a group to examine first-year issues was a good idea. The then Senate President was a part of all of those discussions and decisions. D. Bickford indicated that the work of the First-Year Team would come to the Provost. F. Pestello indicated that the process was for him to receive input from the

associate provosts and various working committees, to take certain proposals to the Provost Council for consultation, and for him to decide whether or not Senate involvement was appropriate. In addition, the President of the Academic Senate serves on the Provost Council and may bring issues to the attention of the Senate. If the President decides to share the approved minutes of the Provost's Council with the Executive Committee of the Senate, any member of ECAS can see what was discussed and ask for Senate review prior to action.

R. Wells expressed the concern that the Academic Senate is the representative of the faculty and so has a responsibility to be involved in these decisions and processes. She noted that when the First-Year Experience Program document was approved by the Academic Senate, the Provost was President of the Senate. She suggested that the spirit of the document needed to be maintained in light of changes in the constitution of the Academic Senate. D. Courte noted that under the current process, proposals may be highly developed before they reach the Senate. A mechanism for dialogue in the early stages is important. M. Morton raised a question about the use of the words “curricular, academic, and educational” in the discussion. D. Biers noted that all of these are used in the Constitution of the Academic Senate in giving authority to the faculty and in the delegation by the faculty to the Academic Senate. M. Morton suggested that the issue of the constitution of the membership of the Academic Senate might be another aspect of this process.

J. Farrelly asked about the role of the President of the Academic Senate on the Provost Council. He expressed the opinion that the President should bring items to the Executive Committee in order to allow that body to make judgments about whether or not the Senate should be involved. He also noted that the process followed in bringing the recommendations from the three Provost-charged groups regarding changes in faculty evaluation, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review was an appropriate one that should serve as a model for other issues originating in the Provost's Council. It was suggested that there should be a reciprocal process for engagement, identification of academic issues, and consultation. R. Wells reiterated that policy development is in the province of the faculty through the Senate. There is a need for earlier involvement of faculty so that faculty can appropriately carry out their responsibilities. F. Pestello indicated that the President of the Academic Senate could distribute approved minutes of the Provost Council to members of the Academic Senate. P. Johnson observed that there may be issues that should come to the Senate before being approved by the Provost Council and that earlier faculty involvement might be vital. D. Bickford suggested that there are faculty on the various committees and sub-committees. R. Wells acknowledged that, but expressed concern that there is no clear link with the Academic Senate. Faculty serve on their own behalf and not as representatives. She also noted that the current situation involves a line that has not been decided with any clarity. There is a core academic experience that is the responsibility of faculty and there are augmented experiences for students the responsibility for which resides in other parts of the University. Determining which issues need to come to the Academic Senate is complicated by the confusion over these lines.

R. Penno suggested that this is an appropriate time to re-establish the role of the Academic Senate in relationship to these issues. He also added that the Senate's involvement should not slow down processes that must move forward quickly. He noted that this may have been the case where time was a factor, decisions had to be made, and there had been little or no previous Senate involvement. J. Farrelly suggested that the concept of the authority of the faculty was important to this process. D. Courte noted that periodic sense-of-the-Senate discussions

would facilitate dialogue. R. Penno noted that this would also aid in information gathering and decision-making.

R. Wells asked K. Henderson what policies she anticipated and what the links with the Academic Senate would be. Henderson and Bickford both spoke to this issue, indicating that the first-year course is one component that needs to be assessed. It is currently modeled as an extension of orientation. Other campuses use other models. Bickford indicated that other parts of the first year, such as the Humanities Base, are not under consideration. It may, however, be appropriate to redefine the academic experience to include those aspects that have often been thought of as augmented experiences. R. Wells indicate that AAUP information on this issue would be helpful.

There was considerable agreement that there was need for further discussion on the process for moving things forward to the Academic Senate, especially when they begin in the Provost Council. P. Johnson suggested that issues need to engage the faculty and be appropriated by them if they are to have significant impact. D. Biers indicated that he needed to have a conversation with the Provost about the process of communication. There is a need for documents to come forward, a need for faculty engagement, a need for communication as policies and proposals are developed, and a need for information-sharing. Discussions about the current process might serve to better facilitate all of these issues.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia A. Johnson, Secretary