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Academic Policies Committee Minutes of the Academic Senate 2006-03-27

University of Dayton. Academic Policies Committee

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ACADEMIC POLICY COMMITTEE

Approved Minutes

March 27, 2006

Members Present: J. Biddle, B. Conniff, C. Duncan, D. Gudaitis, P. Meyers, M. Morton, J. O’Gorman, R. Penno, R. Wells, D. Bickford (ex officio)

1. **ACTION:** Approved Minutes of 3/6/06
2. **ANNOUNCEMENT:** Update on University P&T.
I have added the following preface to the current P&T draft. Its next meeting is April 4, so whatever suggestions APC has, I can include them in the next P&T session.
"The University of Dayton appreciates and affirms the diverse faculty roles and responsibilities within the College, schools and libraries. Because academic units vary greatly, it is not possible or appropriate to establish detailed University-wide criteria and standards for P&T. It is the responsibility of each unit to define professional expectations. However, in order to provide consistent levels of University-wide expectations, these criteria and standards should be reviewed and approved by the respective deans and Provost; furthermore, each unit’s procedures and criteria for P&T must be consistent with the University policies on P&T."
3. **INVITATION:** The MEWG has invited APC to participate in its final forum this term. A draft of the recommendations will be distributed by the end of this week. The forums will be held April 10 at 12:00 in KU 331 and April 11 at 3:00 in KU 222.
4. **DISCUSSION:** Comprehensive policy on evaluation of faculty vs. compilation of recommendations from task forces which functioned independently from each other. OR, Why is UD acting on a “Faculty” Senate model (RE the Foundational Issues Task Forces) rather than on its “Academic” Senate model?

Introduction

The following is neither a set of recommendations nor an APC consensus. Rather, it is an attempt to capture the discussion around the immediate issue of “what to do with these reports.” Some of the comments reflect the desire to engage in a conceptual archeological dig to figure out how we got to this point; others revolve around what appears to be conceptual confusion over academic governance at UD in the wake of the changed role of the Provost vis-à-vis the Senate; some address the perceived centralization trend; several question whether “representation” meets the intent of collaboration; and still others wonder whether current practices help or hinder good decision-making processes.

While the responsibility for what is listed is mine alone, I’ve asked the members who were present to help report out their comments and/or to help capture the major issues discussed. Because our discussion neither followed nor ended in some logical order, the following list is more random than ordered: it follows rather than summarizes the discussion.

- Some of the proposals--e.g., evaluation of teaching, tenure and promotion, and the post-tenure review--are inter-related. We do not want to produce unintended problems by implementing them in isolation. On the other hand, we might need to sequence our deliberations in a logical way--perhaps approving a document on the evaluation of teaching,

for instance, ahead of the others. On the other hand, some may wish to consider some proposals together in order to produce a more comprehensive set of recommendations.

- Documents related to tenure and academic freedom will need to be approved by a vote of the faculty, after the senate holds appropriate open hearings. Therefore, we need deliberations that build a faculty consensus.
- We seem to be in a muddle about the origins, hence legitimacy, of some of these initiatives. The fact (if it's true) that "the Board of Trustees wants this" does not, in itself, legitimize any academic governance initiative. The Senate has a responsibility to endorse, or not endorse, any of these proposals if they are going to move forward. At the same time, a Senate endorsement (if we get one) is not enough to institute a new policy related to academic freedom and/or tenure (see Senate Constitution).
- The Academic Senate model, as opposed to a Faculty Senate, would seem to support having studies of academic "foundational issues" authorized by the Senate (regardless of the origin of the question/issue). Because of its constitutional authority, the broadly constituted Academic Senate might have been the more appropriate body to have sanctioned these groups/committees/task forces.
- What is the role of ECAS and the Academic Senate in relation to committees reporting to the Provost's Council? Where and when is the Senate supposed to be involved?
- What does representation mean? There is Academic Senate representation on the Provost's Council, the president of the senate, and the deans. Because deans are appointed rather than elected, does this influence their actions as a "Senator?"
- How can we develop an effective governance structure that fosters both engaged ownership and enlightened decision making?
- How can we clarify decision making processes so that authority and responsibility are evident?
- What it means to "represent?" Should we offer guidelines of what constitutes effective information sharing (one model was presented by an APC member)? Representation may be necessary to determine committee membership, but it is not sufficient to produce collaboration. Shared governance cannot be attained by strategic representation.
- What is the status of the *Faculty Handbook*? It seems to be the repository of institutional rather than exclusively "faculty" issues. So, how is it revised or amended? What is the relationship between the *Faculty Handbook* and the Senate Constitution?

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.,

James Biddle