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2013-08-27 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

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Approved
Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
August 27, 2013
Kennedy Union Room 312

Present: Abdullah Alghafis, Phil Anloague, Paul Benson, Harry Gerla, Linda Hartley, Emily Hicks, Carissa Krane, Terence Lau, Ed Mykytka, Carolyn Roecker Phelps, Joseph Saliba, Dominic Sanfilippo

Absent: None

Guests: Jim Farrelly, Jesse Grewal, Jon Hess, Kurt Jackson, Steve Wilhoit, David Wright

Opening prayer/meditation: Carolyn Roecker Phelps opened the meeting with a prayer.

Announcements: C. Phelps announced that all ECAS meetings this semester will be held from 8:00-9:30 am in KU 312.

Minutes: The minutes of the April 10, 2013 ECAS meeting were approved with one correction. The last sentence of the second paragraph under **Old Business:** Competency Discontinuation will be changed to read "He argued that students do not necessarily attain an outcome simply by completing a course."

Reports:

Committee Reports

FAC: L. Hartley reported that the first meeting of the FAC will be held on September 5th. One possible topic of discussion for the committee this semester is intellectual property.

APC: P. Benson reported that the committee will continue work on a consolidated procedures document for department changes which is very timely since several schools and/or departments are considering changes in the near future. Other topics for the committee include information literacy and developing a process and criteria for evaluating undergraduate certificate programs. The APC will continue oversight of the CAP committee.

SAPC: T. Lau reported that discussion of academic integrity in online courses would continue this semester. The committee will also be discussing the current university policy that prohibits the development and operation of student-run businesses on campus. D. Sanfilippo affirmed that there is concern from students about this policy.

Old Business:

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)

Members of the SET Committee (L. Hartley, J. Grewal, J. Hess, K. Jackson, S. Wilhoit, D. Wright) were present to answer questions about the "Final Report to the Academic Senate" dated August 21, 2013 and distributed to ECAS with the meeting agenda. The goal of the SET committee is to have this report ready for discussion and possible vote at the September 27th Senate meeting. L. Hartley gave a brief review of the SET process, timeline, and activities to date.

Issues/concerns/questions:

- How are issues of respect/ethical behavior being addressed? Example: complaints from students about professors "playing favorites" Is there an objective way to evaluate "fairness?"
- Wording of some questions open to interpretation. Examples: "environment" "presented"

- How many science and lab classes were included in the pilots? Are large science classes at a disadvantage with new instrument? What is meant by “smaller” and “larger?” What impact on response rates?
- Questions 1-6 relate to instructor and 7-8 relate to course. Is this gap confusing?
- Do online courses raise different issues related to evaluation of teaching?
- Will the anonymity of an online evaluation instrument promote more “mean” or “colorful” comments?

Responses/discussion:

- Students used open-ended questions when there were problems with respect/ethical behavior/fairness.
- SET Committee explored issue of question interpretation during pilots and determined that students consistently interpreted questions correctly. Example: “environment” = learning environment (within professor’s control), not physical environment (not within professor’s control).
- Handout “Student Evaluation of Teaching—Cumulative Participation Data—Fall 2012 to Summer 2013” was distributed. Here is a cumulative summary of participation in the pilots:

Cumulative Results:

Course sections (#):	182
Faculty (#):	67
Gender (% female):	45
Student seats (#):	4106
Distance learning (#):	16
Undergraduate (%):	82
Graduate (%):	18
Completion rate (%):	71.5

- The SET instrument was developed to be sensitive to biases. Appendix D of the Final Report presents potential biases in the guidelines for interpreting SET scores, not actual biases found during the piloting phase. An awareness and understanding of these guidelines is necessary for anyone interpreting SET results. Several years of data will be needed to determine actual issues and patterns in the SET process here at UD.
- No lab classes piloted the new SET instrument. However, pilot participation included a diverse group of classes from the College and all schools, except Law.
- All evaluations were administered online and were open for an extended period of time. The questions were divided and clearly labeled Instructor and Course to minimize confusion. One advantage to online is the ability to more easily address issues/problems and make changes.
- Handout “Student Evaluation of Teaching: Overview of Online Experience” was distributed to ECAS.
- The use of broad language was acknowledged. The language is necessary for the instrument to be applicable campus-wide.
- Students provided a large number of comments in response to the open-ended questions during the pilot.
- The introduction and framing of the instrument is extremely important. Students must understand the importance of the process and the impact of their comments. Research shows that ratings are higher when students know they are an important part of the evaluation

process. Timing of delivery (during finals, before finals, for example) may also play a role in avoiding unhelpful comments. The number of questions asked may also be a factor—fewer questions = greater importance of answers.

Discussion of the Final Report will continue at next week's ECAS meeting. The report may be shared with colleagues to encourage further discussion. The SET Committee was thanked for their hard work and service to the Senate.

T. Lau encouraged ECAS members to attend the upcoming grand opening of the Center for Professional Selling in the School of Business Administration.

New Business:

Proposal from Department of Engineering Management & Systems (EMS)

E. Mykytka distributed a handout "US Air Force Education with Industry Program" and gave a brief overview of the Department's participation in this program. This is a rare opportunity for UD to participate in this program. The EMS Department is hosting Mr. Richard Sugarman, a civilian from AFIT. As part of this experience, hosting institutions are asked to include the participant in a variety of relevant activities such as Academic Senate meetings. C. Phelps will extend an invitation to Mr. Sugarman to attend ECAS and Senate meetings, unless a conflict of interest may occur or an executive session is declared.

Skype in for meetings/votes?

L. Hartley may be out of town for the September meeting of the Academic Senate where it is anticipated that the Final Report of the SET Committee will be discussed. As Chair of the SET Committee, Linda is concerned about listening to the conversation and being available to answer questions. The possibility of participating in a Senate meeting via Skype was discussed. The following issues were discussed:

- Is there a precedent for using Skype in other meetings on campus?
- Who would monitor the computer?
- What are the technological issues? It is a large meeting in a large room and sound is already an issue face to face. Connections regularly get dropped.
- What if a large number of Senate members were Skyping? What parameters would be in place? Nuances of face-to-face could be lost.
- What unintended consequences could be triggered?

Two possibilities were brought to a vote:

1. Option to allow Senators to Skype into meetings—8 no, 0 yes, 2 abstain
2. Option to develop guidelines for a Presenter to Skype into meetings by ECAS invite only—10 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

Guidelines for the usage of Skype by presenters during Academic Senate meetings will be developed. Senators will not be allowed to Skype into Academic Senate meetings for discussion or voting.

Reminder: J. Farrelly reminded ECAS to consider the reduced size of the Academic Senate (caused by the elimination of the Dean designation for the Graduate School). The current size is now 39 members. Quorum is still 20 +1.

The issue of individual honors course designations on transcripts was not discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by Emily Hicks

Work in Progress

Task	Source	Previously assigned	To	Work due	Due
Consultation	ECAS	ECAS	ECAS	Open communication	ongoing
Department Processes	ECAS		APC	Proposal	
Tasks ongoing					
SET Committee oversight	ECAS		ECAS	Hear monthly reports; Linda Hartley, chair	
CAP Competency Committee oversight	Senate		APC	Hear monthly reports	