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2013-09-03 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

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Approved
Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
September 3, 2013
KU 312, 8:00-9:30

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: Joyce Carter, Jim Farrelly, Jesse Grewal, Jon Hess, Kurt Jackson, Beth Schwartz, Steve Wilhoit, David Wright

Opening prayer/meditation: Ed Mykytka opened the meeting with a prayer.

Announcements: C. Phelps and J. Saliba announced that the following topics will be on the agenda for the University Faculty Meeting on Friday, September 6th:

- Upcoming Academic Senate initiatives
- Upcoming experiential learning discussions
- Updates on health care, advancement, and finances
- Reconstitution of the Educational Leadership Council (ELC)
- Global learning initiatives
- Review of classes, majors, programs, etc. to ensure alignment with student needs

Minutes: The minutes of the August 27, 2013 ECAS meeting were approved with one correction. The APC report was edited to reflect P. Benson giving the update.

Old Business:

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)

Members of the SET Committee (L. Hartley, J. Grewal, J. Hess, K. Jackson, S. Wilhoit, and D. Wright) were present for a continued discussion of the "Final Report to the Academic Senate" dated August 21, 2013 and distributed to ECAS with the August 27th 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 presented the four report recommendations via PowerPoint slides and led the discussion.

The SET Recommendations:

1. Adopt the newly proposed Student Evaluation of Teaching instrument as outlined in this report.
2. Administer the new SET instrument online.
3. Utilize the Learning Teaching Center (LTC) for providing administrative support, which would include:
 - a. Creating specific guidelines for the administration of SET (see Appendix D).
 - b. Providing a central location for student, faculty, and administrators to seek assistance regarding the SET.
 - c. Providing faculty and administrators assistance for the use and interpretation of SET data for both formative and summative purposes.
 - d. Providing faculty assistance for the formative development of teaching through resources directly linked to the SET instrument's items.
 - e. Providing leadership in coordinating with Udit and academic units and departments the delivery of SET if the decision to use the online delivery method is acceptable.

4. Review Academic Senate documents and the Faculty Handbook to make sure that policy and procedures in SET administration are consistent.

Issues/concerns/questions:

- Does the report contain policies and/or procedures?
- Implementation of new instrument must be sensitive to the possible effects of changes on tenure-leading faculty approaching their 5th year reviews.
- There are legal implications re: new instrument and tenure process.
- Mandating SET completion during class may negatively impact university network bandwidth. There are also issues with survey completion outside of class such as time limit and potential lower response.
- Concern was expressed about the pace of the process. Has the faculty been afforded adequate time and opportunities to review and discuss recommendations/instrument/pilot data? What analysis has been conducted on pilot data?
- Is there a target date for full campus participation in new SET process?
- What survey data will be reported where and how will it be used? Who decides which questions are appropriate for a particular type of class (e.g. labs vs. lectures)?
- Concern was expressed for the use of incentives for SET participation.

Responses/discussion:

- The recommendations are not meant to be policy. They are a set of recommendations based on best practices.
- Appendices are a starting point for implementation guidelines.
- There is significant student support for an online instrument.
- Policies and procedures for the use of evaluation data in promotion and tenure decisions are up to the unit.
- Several ideas for incentives were discussed including class credit, prizes, release of grade contingent on survey completion, ability to register for classes.
- Should the goal be 100% participation with higher potential for “bad” data from unwilling participants or a lower response from students willing to give more meaningful data?
- Discussion about implementation timelines led to some confusion. L. Hartley clarified that implementing the new SET process to the entire campus this semester **was not** the goal and that the final report does not include a recommended timeline for implementation. D. Wright added that the timeline for implementation is up to the Provost’s Office.
- The development of policies, procedures and guidelines will take time. The committee’s goal is to have their recommendations approved by the Senate so that the development can begin. It may be beneficial to have the new SET instrument used by a small number of classes this fall to continue gathering data.
- J. Hess disagreed with comments that the process has been rushed and has not included adequate consultation. He stated that there were multiple forums for consultation, including reviewing pilot data, but faculty participation was consistently low.
- Requirements for reporting will be set by units/departments. There will be a variety of options available, including the ability to add questions.
- The Appendices include guidelines and best practices gleaned from the committee’s research that may or may not be applicable or desirable for use at UD.
- L. Hartley briefly outlined the process for SET item development:
 - Thorough and careful literature review
 - Consultation with outside experts

- Data-driven analyses
- Feedback from UD faculty, chairs, students
- Each item selected was revised, reworked, discussed at length
- Were composed and organized as an ensemble, addressing balance of the four domains associated with classroom learning:
 - Preparation and organization
 - Learning environment
 - Student-teacher interactions
 - Outcomes from class
 - Items function together
- Other points to remember:
 - Survey fatigue can occur when surveys are too long and can negatively impact survey results.
 - Research, best practice, and consultants recommend fewer than 20 items.
 - Ours currently is 8 items plus 4 open-ended. Leaves room for approximately 6 total unit and/or department questions.

T. Lau made a motion to move the Final Report document to the Academic Senate for further action and it was seconded. The motion passed (8 yes, 1 no, 0 abstain). There was a brief discussion about what accepting the report would mean and concern about accepting the survey instrument before knowing how the data would be used and how the instrument would be implemented and delivered. A counter-argument was made that guidelines could not be developed before the Senate accepts the Report. L. Hartley stated that accepting the Report means accepting the recommendations.

It was suggested that any changes to the document stemming from the discussions at ECAS be offered as an amendment at the Senate meeting.

New Business:

Joyce Carter and Beth Schwartz, both from Human Resources, presented information about the state of health care at UD. This information will be presented at the upcoming University faculty meeting and the upcoming University staff meeting. There will be a renewed focus on improving employee wellness. The Affordable Health Care Act and a significant increase in claims at UD are two of the primary drivers. J. Carter announced that 2014 will bring some major changes, including increased employee costs. The annual health assessments will be offered again this fall with a monetary incentive of reduced premium costs for participation. The impact of increasing health care costs on the lowest paid employees will be reviewed in early 2014.

One consequence of changes to our health care benefits is UD losing its “grandfathered” status under the Affordable Health Care Act. With this change in status, all preventative care would be paid at 100% and Anthem would cover birth control at 100%.

J. Carter explained that a variety of changes to help control costs are or will be under consideration, including no longer offering retiree health care to new hires, pharmacy costs, high deductible options,

live online Skype consultation with doctor for reduced fee, and using biometrics (blood pressure, weight, cholesterol, and A1C). The university will look at revamping the Wellness program in 2014.

Questions/concerns:

- Concerns were raised about the concept of insurance. It works because the healthy employees (majority) pay a reasonable amount while a few employees will have high claims. If you pay for what you receive, then can it really be called insurance? J. Carter indicated that they want to balance employee contributions with usage. If employees want low premiums, then the usage cost must be higher.
- What impact would the lack of retiree health care benefit impact future hires? B. Schwartz stated that the majority of UD's retirees are over 65 and they have better, cheaper options for health care. Only a small number of current retirees use the retiree health benefit.
- Concern was raised about adequate consultation. Has the faculty and staff been actively engaged in the discussions?

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 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	
Intellectual properties			FAC		
Information Literacy			APC		
Academic dishonesty	SAPC				
Change in Constitution	ECAS				
Tasks ongoing					
SET Committee oversight	ECAS		ECAS	Hear monthly reports; Linda Hartley, chair	
CAP Competency Committee oversight	Senate		APC	Hear monthly reports	
UNRC			ECAS	Hear monthly reports; Emily Hicks, chair	
Summer tuition	Faculty		SAPC	On hold until tuition model is further developed	