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2020-04-24 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

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Approved Minutes
Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
April 24, 2020
9:00 am – 10:30 am
Zoom meeting

Present: Paul Benson, James Brill, Anne Crecelius, Shannon Driskell, Deo Eustace, Mark Jacobs, Denise James, Leslie Picca, Jason Pierce, Fran Rice, Andrea Seielstad

Absent: Joanna Abdallah

Guests: Janet Bednarek (Faculty Board representative)

Opening

- Call to order
- Opening prayer / meditation – Mark
- Approval of minutes from 04/17/2020 and 4/20/2020 ECAS meeting Minutes approved for both meetings.

Announcements

- ECAS will, at the discretion of the next leadership team, meet weekly through summer. This is the recommendation to the next group.

New Business

- Approval of MS in Construction Engineering & Management—The concern from SBA has been resolved, the accrediting body approves, and a letter of support from the SBA dean has been provided. The proposal will be sent to the Provost Council.
- DOC2007-05 and the Sport Communication Certificate have been included on the agenda, both need full senate approval.
- CAP-C nomination of Tim Reissman from the Dept. of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering— Approved by ECAS.
- Discuss logistics for 4/24 senate meeting- Suggestion to continue to use Zoom for Academic Senate meetings to help boost attendance. Time allocated to student senators and faculty board were increased, time for committee reports was decreased.
- Discuss feedback from 4/17 senate meeting & how to constructively engage faculty—Themes emerged from the senate meeting. 1. find ways for faculty to be engaged and contribute to the decision making 2. find ways to leverage faculty expertise 3. encourage discussions with local universities. Senators serving on the new normal group could report to ECAS to keep them informed. Response: This is a large, specifically academic, group. It is not a decision-making group, but rather tasked with developing 4-5 scenarios. Regular reports to ECAS would be good. Reach out to Carolyn if we want more input.
 - How were members of the new normal group chosen? Response: Not sure how the initial group was chosen. The initial task was short term, to gather information from higher education press, etc. This has become a large group, but can include others. The group is

- focusing on possible pathways for next year given we will most likely not be on campus next year. Reach out to Carolyn to help determine who should be added to the committee.
- A question for the Faculty Board, what is your sense of how engaged faculty who are not under contract be engaged over the summer. Response: Faculty board will be meeting through the summer, some are on contract, some are off contract. We want to be involved in decisions, particularly on the academic side. They want to be part of the process.
 - We need a formal tool to disseminate information including who are the point people, who are the people leading this? We also need a formal tool to gather community input so when feedback is received, it can be referenced in a more structured way.
 - Should the focus of the senate be more on how to effectively teach in an online environment? We need to focus on what is in faculty scope and control. Focusing on the administrative aspects may not be the best choice.
 - Use existing mechanisms to recruit members to the new normal committee and subcommittees.
 - Seems to be 3 areas of senate overview 1-hybrid classes what can we recommend now and invite people to give input. 2. the impact on faculty 3. engagement of faculty and students, the impact on research and experiential learning. Survey the faculty on what they are doing. What are the COVID-related impacts on faculty? What is the level of university engagement on COVID rebuilding?
 - The communication piece is critical, the framing and how it is discussed.
 - The student experience with online classes has been very mixed. How can those teaching online deliver them in such a way to create a sense of community and connection with one another? If we can achieve one to one connections in the class, it will make summer courses more successful.
 - We need to focus on the things the senate actually has control over. Can the online learning recommendations proposed by APC, especially the best practices section, be part of the learning templates developed by Ryan Allen and the Faculty Development Committee?
 - Will Proctor U be available for summer courses? Response: We're looking at the cost factor. Comment: Law does not use this service, because of privacy concerns.
 - Perhaps special groups could be created by ECAS to leverage faculty expertise. Comment: While we can strategize, we cannot plan because of all the unknowns.
 - Appears as if the primary focus has been the finance of the university, could faculty expertise from SBA help with this? Response: The administration is in conversations with private universities and catholic colleges. There are a lot of resources available to us because of our various higher education memberships, nationally and in Ohio. Their primary focus is higher education finance, and we are drawing on this expertise.
 - We talk of faculty workload as if it is independent of staff partners. There are other things happening that we might not be able to carry out ideas until we know who will be left to help.
 - Would it be possible to use IACT to engage faculty in brainstorming ideas?
 - There should be opportunities to hear and synthesis information. People want to be in the loop.
 - Need to make sure the student voice is heard. How do we ensure we get everyone's voice?

- The new normal group is gathering information from other universities. Please pass along anything you might find about other universities to this group. Comment: The new normal group is not well known, make sure everyone knows about it.
- Students from WSU were given the option for pass/fail or credit 2 weeks after grades are out, why not do the same at UD? Response: A variety of options were weighed before making this decision.

Ways the Senate wants to be involved with the new normal

- Find ways to create a sense of community in summer courses
- Leverage faculty expertise, find where they can participate
- Include APC guidelines for online courses on the senate website
- Engage with the LTC to improve learning experiences in summer courses
- Address workload concerns for those remaining as the university's workforce is reduced

Comment: Faculty would like to have a summation of decisions. They would like to see the rubric used for decision making. Can benefits to lecturers be extended until December? Response: A number of things are being evaluated, do not assume decisions have been made on things that haven't been announced. The delay of contracts for lecturers has nothing to do with money, instead the concern has to do with enrollment in the fall. It is administration's intention and hope to bring all people back.

Comment: Will those without contracts in the fall be able to keep their associations with the university, like their offices or email addresses? Response: The university is looking at what we can do to reasonably support people.

Mark thanked everyone on ECAS for their contributions and their engagement this year, Joanna, Paul, James, Anne, Shannon, Deo, Denise, Leslie, Jason, Fran, and Andrea.

- Charge to APC to evaluate and revise teaching section of handbook to address all forms – pend
- Discuss an action plan based on the SAPC report on S.E.T. – pend

Old Business

- Strategies for stimulating greater faculty participation in shared governance – pend
- Senate composition discussion – pend
- Mini-course approvals – pend

Adjourned: 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Fran Rice