

10-30-2020

2020-10-30 Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate

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Approved Minutes
Executive Committee of the Academic Senate
October 30, 2020
8:45 am – 10:15 am
Zoom meeting

Present: Joanna Abdallah, Paul Benson, Connie Bowman, James Brill, Sam Dorf, Deo Eustace, Mark Jacobs, Carissa Krane, Leslie Picca, Jason Pierce, Fran Rice, Andrea Seielstad

Guests: Sean Falkowski (Faculty Board representative), Mary Ellen Dillon (FT-NTT faculty senator)

Opening

- Opening prayer / meditation – Leslie Picca
- Approval of minutes from 10/16/2020 ECAS meeting. Approved unanimously.

Announcements

- FAC: FT-NTT Faculty Rep Kyung Kim-accepted the invitation to serve. Thanks to Carissa for orienting Kyung to FAC.
- Path Forward with Leadership Update. Topics discussed: a new anterior nasal swab polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test is being used with results available within 20 minutes, move out and move information was sent to students, a budget update was provided, there are concerns over post-election reactions and responses, and there was a recognition that this is a difficult time for everyone as the campus copes with the death of another student. Question: Was COVID testing for faculty and staff discussed? Answer: This is an ongoing discussion. Due to a number of factors, testing cannot be offered to faculty and staff at this time. There is no evidence that staff cases are a result of exposure while on campus. It is hoped testing capacity will expand to process more students and potentially limited testing of faculty and staff.

New Business

- Debrief from 10.16.2020 Academic Senate Meeting & Planning Ahead for 11.20.2020. Sen. Jake Jagels raised concerns over the increased amount of homework assignments and requested the Senate to consider extending the pass/fail option. Discussion:
 - Some universities are offering various pass/fail options to students, perhaps these could be considered at UD.
 - Students have always been able to choose the pass/fail option at the beginning of the semester. Major or accreditation requirements will not allow some classes to be taken pass/fail. There has been less outreach this semester from students to extend pass/fail than last Spring.
 - Are there implications to pass/fail on a student's record, especially those students applying to graduate schools? Response: It could have an impact on future opportunities, but issues related to the pandemic might be considered and reduce this impact.
 - Not certain this request requires action from the Senate. Perhaps discussions with department chairs is needed if there are classes that are particularly onerous.
 - Perhaps the registrar could asterisk student transcripts to recognize the impact COVID had on student success. Response: National regulations do not allow to asterisk an event like this on transcripts, the registrar's office is monitoring regulations for any change.

- Most faculty have adjusted their course content and expectations, not sure there's enough evidence to change at this moment. There will be a communication to faculty about how to handle remote classes for the two weeks after Thanksgiving recognizing the challenges students will face ending the semester remotely.
- Suggest messaging to faculty to include, in addition to calibration of course content, collaboration across individual faculty, units and departments.
- Students report they are currently doing more work for classes and are concerned that assignments will increase even more when classes are moved to online after Thanksgiving. Some faculty have increased reading assignments and TED talks as a substitution for field work, adding more layers to assignments.
- When students return home and are off campus, internet connections may not be as reliable, impacting or reducing their ability to complete assignments or participate in group assignments.
- Encourage students to talk to their advisors if they find themselves struggling.
- There has been an increase in withdrawals from foundational courses, especially among FY students. Students who withdraw from these courses will fall behind, is this being addressed? Some foundational courses are being taught asynchronous, with no face-to-face component and lectures are not always being recorded. Faculty should be held accountable for courses taught that are not following the guidelines. Response: There is an expectation for some synchronous touch point with all classes, this is being messaged to chairs. Due to the higher number of withdrawals, summer course offerings are being reviewed to ensure students needing to take sequenced courses have a re-entry point. Departments that require tightly sequenced course are being encouraged to offer sections in the summer. The university does not want students to experience bottlenecks potentially needing them to take an additional year. The student success persistence team is analyzing withdrawals and mid-term grade results for FY students and looking to increase learning support.
- For the mental health and fatigue of students, sponsor some tips on recalibrating throughout the semester. Faculty and departments should be offered opportunities to meet with mental health professionals to talk about how to keep engaged and well.
- Students are more reluctant to ask for help from faculty, and it is difficult to ask classmates for help due in part to the virtual world. Students are feeling like they are on their own. Many students don't realize help is available or they are not asking for help. Messaging to students reminding them of available resources, especially during these last few weeks, would be very beneficial.
- Faculty need to be reminded and encouraged to use the student success network.
- Provide students with principles and coaching on how to work in this type of environment in preparation for the professional world.
- Some institutions offer workshops to students on how to learn in a remote world, do we offer something similar? Response: There are resources for students on the keep learning site, perhaps this needs to be messaged out again.

Three action steps resulted from the discussion: 1. Follow up with Jake and share highlights of this discussion and that a forthcoming communication will address post-Thanksgiving workloads. 2. Reach out to Deb Bickford about co-sponsoring an event with Senate on ways to

support students. Ideally, this event would be scheduled before Thanksgiving and have a similar format as the Staying Connected sessions. Ask Deb if the wellness presentation given at Senate could be made available across campus. 3. Have a follow-up conversation, possibly with Natalie Coppolino and others from SGA, about hosting sessions geared toward students to highlight available resources for students, how to ask for help, etc. Possibly schedule these sessions after the election but before Thanksgiving.

- Planning Ahead for 11.20.2020 Academic Senate meeting-DE&I presentation from Larry Burnley. Several questions were received but due to time limitations, were not addressed. Larry will be invited back to the November meeting for Q&A. An invitation will be offered to Eric to provide an update on the 11 action steps towards becoming an anti-racist institution. Kim Bakota has agreed to present the changes that took place this summer on equity compliance and Title IX. Future senate agenda items include a presentation on the work taking place in CAP and an update on curriculum initiatives as a result of the anti-racist action plan.
- FT-NTT Faculty & Position Permanence Working Group. Discussed the possibility of moving forward to create a working group to examine models from peer and aspirant institutions which provide FT-NTT faculty greater job security. Discussion:
 - Need to define NTT faculty ranks at the university level before we can address senate composition, voting rights and job security. There are multiple faculty titles and ranks that are NTT. Each of those has a generic job description. Question: Is there something more that doesn't appear in the job title that has to do with status? Response: a fuller definition and description needs to be developed at the university level.
 - Unlike tenure, there are variations in titles and responsibilities within the NTT faculty and within units. By defining and identifying rights and responsibilities among the NTT faculty will allow the issues of senate composition, voting rights and job security to be addressed.
 - Job security seems to be the focus of NTT faculty. The focus of the working group should be narrowed to look at models used at other institutions.
 - FAC is having discussions around the definition of tenure and the differences between TT and NTT. Tenure is well defined, but NTT is not. If permanence is addressed in this working group it might conflate things.

ECAS was not in favor of creating the working group at this time. The working group will be discussed again at a future ECAS meeting.

Old Business

Charges

Task	Assigned to	Work Due	Update
Univ P&T	FAC (8/28/20)	Jan.2021	
Transfer Policy	APC (8/28/20)	Nov 2020	
Transfer Policy/Military	APC (8/28/20)	Sept 2020	

Academic Dishonesty	SAPC (9/11/20)	mid-Oct 2020	
SET & bias	SAPC (9/11/20)	Feb 2021	

Priorities for Senate 2020-21

1. Pandemic/Budgetary Crisis & Shared Governance
2. Steps to Becoming an Anti-Racist University (focus on step #2 curricular/co-curricular)
3. *Senate Composition, especially increasing FT-NTT faculty reps
4. *University P&T policy (DOC 2006-10), plus evaluation of faculty--charged to FAC
5. SET & Mitigating Bias--charged to SAPC

* Requires a vote of Senate + all tenure-line faculty

Adjourned: 10:16 am

Respectfully submitted, Fran Rice