

3-10-2006

2006-03-10 Minutes of the Academic Senate

University of Dayton. Academic Senate

Follow this and additional works at: http://ecommons.udayton.edu/senate_mins

Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. Academic Senate, "2006-03-10 Minutes of the Academic Senate" (2006). *Academic Senate Minutes*. Paper 69.
http://ecommons.udayton.edu/senate_mins/69

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Academic Senate at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Academic Senate Minutes by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu.

[APPROVED April 21, 2006]

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
DAYTON, OHIO
MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
March 10, 2006
KU West Ballroom, 3:00 p.m.

Senators Present: A. Abueida, J. Biddle, D. Biers, M. Brill, C. Chen, B. Conniff, D. Courte, G. DeMarco, M. Doenges, G. Doyle, C. Duncan, E. Gustafson, R. Hardie, S. Hileman, P. Johnson, T. Lasley, C. Letavec, P. Meyers, M. Morton, M. Mullins, F. Pestello, C. Phelps, L. Simmons, S. Singer, R. Wells

Senators Excused: K. Bullinger, J. Desmond, T. Eggemeier, D. Gudaitis, L. Hausmann, L. Kloppenberg, J. O'Gorman, R. Penno, D. Poe, J. Saliba, A. Seielstad, P. Thimmes, B. Turk, D. Wolff

Guests: P. Benson, D. Bickford, U. Cadegan, J. Farrelly, F. Jenkins, P. Marshall, S. Mize, D. Pair, J. Untener, K. Webb, T. Westendorf

1. Opening Prayer: Senator Doenges opened the meeting with prayer, asking that insight, integrity, and compassion be brought to the work of service of the academic Senate.

2. Roll Call: Twenty-five of thirty-nine Senators were present.

3. Minutes:

February 10, 2006: Moved and seconded, minutes were approved as written.

4. DOC-I-06-02 Change in Course Withdrawal Policy:

Senator Biddle introduced the document explaining that the action is legislative and that the recommendation is for the policy to become effective with the 2006-2007 *Bulletin*. The current withdrawal policy allows for "change in career objective" as a "special nonacademic reason" for late withdrawal from a course. This poses a problem for deans' offices because it is not consonant with other examples given and because it is a commonly used excuse for poor academic performance. Senator Doyle asked for clarification about the authority of the deans' offices to make decisions about late withdrawals. Senator Biddle explained that the deans' offices do have the authority to make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Senator Mullins asked for a revision in the proposed wording. The proposal was reworded to read:

During this period, a W will be permitted only for special nonacademic reasons. These include, but are not limited to financial difficulties and matters of personal or family health. Documentation may be required.

Effective with the 2006-2007 *Bulletin*

Moved and seconded, the document was approved with 23 Senators voting yes, and no Senators voting no or abstaining.

The document will be forwarded by the Secretary of the Senate to the Provost. Faculty have eleven class days after notification of approval of this policy to request a meeting of the entire faculty to address the issue. If such a meeting is desired, a petition must be presented to the President of the Senate with the signatures of twenty percent of the University tenured and tenure-track faculty (#). (See Article III.B. of the Constitution of the Academic Senate)

5. Tentative Orientation Schedule for Fall 06: Senator Johnson explained that the tentative orientation schedule for Fall 06 had been distributed to members of the Academic Senate because it calls for the cancellation of 8:00 and 9:00 classes on the first day of class, Monday, August, 21, 2006. The Executive Committee met with D. Bickford to discuss the issue because of their concern that this does not send a consistent message about academic rigor. Several options have been discussed, but because the schedule is already so far along, there is not much flexibility to move the Convocation. Senator Johnson asked that for this year the Executive committee be charged with the responsibility of working with Bickford to resolve this issue and that, in the future, those charged with developing the schedule for orientation keep all orientation activities in the days prior to the start of classes. Senator Doyle moved that only classes for first-year students be cancelled. The motion was seconded. After some discussion, he withdrew the motion in favor of this suggestion being included in the work of the Executive Committee. Senator Pestello noted that orientation has been moving in a more academic direction with the introduction of Convocation and then the first-year reading. Senator Biers indicated that this issue is part of the larger issue about the need to get the Academic Senate back into the loop on decisions that impact the academic life of the University. Bickford agreed, indicating that there are other pieces of the first-year experience where it needs to be decided who has authority to make decisions.

It was moved and seconded that the Executive Committee be charged with working with Bickford to make a decision about how to handle this year. The motion passed with twenty-two in favor, no one in opposition, and two abstentions.

6. DOC-I-06-03 Sense of the Senate Discussion—Marianist Education Working Group: P. Benson introduced the discussion. He indicated that the document distributed for discussion is a draft of the first part of a final report. He noted that this document does not yet include any statement as to how this document aligns with foundational University documents such as mission documents. He emphasized that this document should be understood as building on the history of other such documents at the University and should not be understood as a radical departure from that history. On the other hand, he noted that the document should be understood as having potential implications for “features of current university programs, for pedagogies, for faculty worklife, and for processes through which” recommendations might be developed. These implications could yield significant changes. He directed attention to the mission statement in the document and to the proposed orienting educational aims: Education in the Catholic and Marianist traditions at the University of Dayton seeks knowledge in a sacramental spirit; pursues learning in, through, and for community; cultivates practical wisdom; forges critical ability to read the signs of these times; and supports discernment of personal and communal vocation. He noted that the proposed outcomes include scholarship, faith tradition, diversity, community, practical wisdom, critical evaluation of our times, and vocation. He indicated that the document

could be misconstrued. It should not be read as proposing outcomes for any particular course but rather for the common academic program. It is not intended to dictate to academic units, nor should parts of the proposed aims be seen as being “farmed out” to particular courses or groups of courses. The outcomes identified should be addressed across the University. He introduced other members of the Working Group who were present at the meeting (Biddle, Cadegan, Duncan, Marshal, Pair).

- Senator Gustafson asked about the intended audience of the mission statement. Is this statement to be understood as directed at an external audience? She expressed concern that the language of ‘sacramental spirit’ might not be understood. Benson indicated that the document is intended for an internal audience and so is written in a more academic style. He also said that the concept need not be explicitly endorsed by all faculty. He suggested that the language affirms multiple modes of inquiry in a manner relevant to a Catholic university and specifically connects these to Catholic tradition.
- Senator Biers noted that the word “sacrament’ carries different meanings in various faith traditions, and so might be understood in a range of ways.
- Senator Singer suggested that if the document can be easily misconstrued, it should be made clearer.
- Senator Doyle asked if the main issue is to replace General Education and inquired as to an implementation plan. Benson answered that while General Education is a primary piece of the common academic program, it also includes such things as major programs, co-curricular programming, and service learning. He said that the Working Group was looking at things from a broad perspective and that any final recommendations are the responsibility of the Academic Senate. This document should not be understood as something to be swapped for the current general education document. The Working Group is looking at what the University’s aspirations might be, but is not a group that has authority to develop these.
- Senator Johnson asked for further clarification about the meaning of the term “common academic program.” Benson said that the expression refers to features that should be intentionally delivered as part of the academic program. He said that there is no structure that is called the “common academic program.” Rather this expression is a ready way of referring to a wide sense of the aims for the entire undergraduate curriculum. He indicated that what was needed was to look at how various parts of the curriculum, including general education, are realizing these aims.
- Senator Singer suggested that it would be more appropriate to use the term “aims’ rather than “program” since a “program” suggests intentionality and deliberateness. He asked how the expression could be seen as describing two different undergraduate programs such as physics and English. Benson indicated that all students in all degree programs should move towards the aims and outcomes articulated in the document.
- Senator Duncan suggested that what is meant is the “common academic experience.” Benson agreed.
- Senator Meyers asked what the term “faculty worklife” means in the context of this document. Benson indicated that, while not specific to their charge, in the course of conversations, the Working Group had received suggestions about the impact that these suggestions would have on faculty and comments about the implications for faculty development. The final report will include material related to this issue.

- Senator Gustafson asked about the proposed outcome in scholarship. She suggested that a public presentation and defense of a body of work sounds ambitious for every student. Senator Duncan suggested that presentations at the Stander Symposium and in specific classes would meet this outcome. Senator Gustafson questioned whether a class presentation could represent a “body” of work. Benson said that the Working Group did not think this meant that every student should or will complete a thesis. He gave the example of the portfolio developed in visual arts as an example of what is being done.
- Senator Biers commended the group for integrating prior documents but raised a caution given how documents are used at the University. He asked if the outcome in practical wisdom would mean that science would need to justify its course of study in terms of practical application. What happens to theoretical wisdom or the pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge? Benson indicated that the aim of seeking knowledge in a sacramental spirit was intended to affirm all modes of inquiry. He also said that the outcomes were not intended to be used to measure every course, but to measure the result of a total academic experience.
- Senator Wells asked if the proposed outcomes were things that all undergraduates will be able to do or if they are intended as opportunities that the total curriculum will provide. Benson said that every student will be expected to develop and demonstrate these outcomes. Senator Biddle added that the Working Group believes that these outcomes are being met in specific programs but that large segments of UD students “fall through the cracks.”
- Senator Phelps asked how these outcomes can be assessed. How will we know that these are being accomplished? Benson indicated that while these are ambitious learning outcomes, the literature on assessment suggests that they can be assessed, that there are models “out there” for assessment. He indicated that portfolio-based assessment is often used.
- Senator Meyers said that while there are items in the report that she may not agree with, she thinks that asking the question, “What is this Marianist thing?” is a move in a positive direction.
- Benson invited members of the Academic Senate to contact members of the Working Group with their concerns and suggestions. The goal of the Working Group is to develop an explicitly academic description of the Catholic and Marianist nature of the University.
- Senator Morton asked that the members of the Working Group be thanked for their work in moving this conversation forward. Senator Biers reiterated this thanks.

7. Document I-06-04 Sense of the Senate discussion—Post-Tenure Review Recommendations

Senator Meyers introduced the discussion and identified other members of the Committee who were present (Wells, Bickford, and Jenkins). She noted the post-tenure review policy that has been in the *Faculty Handbook* since the 1970’s. “Each tenured faculty member must be evaluated by peers, using a method acceptable to the department, at least once during each six-year interval.” This policy has never been widely implemented. The current work on implementation arises, in part, at the request of the Board of Trustees. She presented the overall recommendations of the Committee:

By August 1, 2007, each academic unit is to design and implement a process for post-tenure peer review to include:

1. a clear statement of the purpose of the peer review;
2. the process for identifying a peer review committee;
3. detail as to process, timing, and review events;
4. a description of the content of the review committee's report;
5. a statement indicating who receives the peer review committee's report;
6. an explanation of follow up activities for the faculty member being reviewed, including the possibilities for further development, remediation, and/or sanctions.

In addition, she reviewed the philosophical commitments, guiding principles, and recommended standards that the Committee believes should guide the design and implementation of these processes.

- Senator Chen asked how this review would be different than the annual review process which already requires lengthy submissions. Senator Meyers indicated that the annual review is year-to-year and does not take a longer term view. She suggested that the annual review may be lengthy and time-intensive and might be eased by the implementation of the longer-term view of the post-tenure review.
- Senator Lasley asked about the recommendation that the review be conducted by tenured faculty. He suggested that the recommendations might be more specific to mitigate against preferential reviews. Senator Meyers asked if he thought the document should specify that reviews should be objective and unbiased. Senator Wells added that the Committee wanted the document to ensure flexibility so that the reviews were decentralized to the appropriate level and could, therefore, make use of materials prepared for things like the annual review. Senator Lasley clarified that what he was suggesting was a measure of consistency across the units that would ensure that a good review is always disinterested in character and tone. Senator Wells indicated that the Committee assumed that faculty are part of a professional community and would operate as professionals in conducting reviews.
- J. Farrelly asked if this report was intended to replace or be supplemental to procedures in the current *Faculty Handbook*. He expressed particular concern about the relationship of post-tenure reviews to any process of dismissal. Senator Meyers indicated that she would need to look more closely at the *Faculty Handbook* to address the issue, but believed that this should be done as part of the next stage of the process.
- Senator Singer asked if there had been any consideration given to including an external reviewer as part of the process. Senator Meyers indicated that this would probably be up to the various units as it is now with tenure and promotion processes. Senator Singer indicated that he believed that the recommendations needed consideration by a larger and more representative group before any decision to move forward is made.
- Senator Duncan asked why everyone should undergo such a review when a chairperson knows from annual reviews where there are issues of concern. Why not just look for things that would trigger a review?
- Senator Johnson suggested that there should be careful consideration given to the purpose of the review. There is considerable difference between using the process for faculty development or as a preliminary step to showing incompetence or of moving towards dismissal.

- Senator DeMarco asked if what is proposed is standardization of process or of content. Will units have the autonomy to set benchmarks for achievement? Meyers indicated that each unit would set its own standards, but that there should be some minimum expectations.
- Senator Duncan suggested that the reviews might be or result in an investment of resources that would have marginal utility. Those resources might be better expended on supporting faculty who are achieving at a high level.
- Senator Biers added that this report is from just one of several working committees whose independent work may greatly add to the demands on time and resources. The Executive Committee wants all of these groups to coordinate in order to determine the combined impact of all of the recommendations that are under consideration. Senator Meyers added that what is currently done should also be considered as part of this coordination.

Senator Biers thanked Senator Meyers and the Committee for the report and indicated that the Executive Committee would get the chairpersons of the various working committees together to discuss how best to coordinate the recommendations.

8. Standing Committee Reports:

Faculty Affairs Committee:

Senator Phelps reported for the Committee. They are continuing discussions of the faculty background check policy. They have reviewed and commented on a second draft and are expecting a revision of that draft from Joe Untener for further review. Untener indicated that he hopes the process will be completed so that the policy can be discussed and voted on at the April meeting of the Academic Senate. The Committee is also developing the document for a constitutional change in the election of faculty members to the academic Senate. This document will be ready for a vote at the April meeting of the Academic Senate. Hearings will need to be held and it will then need to be voted on by the faculty in the early Fall. The Committee is also looking at other possible changes in the Constitution.

Academic Policies Committee:

Senator Biddle reported for the Committee. There are two items which should come before the Academic Senate in April. They are working on a statement for the *Bulletin* in relationship to class rank. The University of Dayton does not calculate class rank. This practice is in line with professional guidelines and does not place any graduate at risk. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers recommends that class rank not be considered an official university record. Because of the multiple variables included in the calculation of class rank, any ranking provides questionable information at best and even may be of “great harm to the student.” The Committee will recommend that the following policy, reflecting current practice, be added to the next Bulletin: “The University of Dayton does not calculate class rank when measuring a student’s academic performance. Evaluation of academic achievement should be made by considering the complete academic record of each student.”

The Committee is also considering the question of whether those who are permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies before they have completed their degree program (i.e., taking no more than 7 hours in the summer) should have any Latin honors category listed after their names in the graduation program. Because no current term grades for any student

are calculated in the program listing, the Committee will recommend that the following disclaimer be included in the graduation program: “The information in this graduation program does not reflect the transcripts of this current term. Official diplomas and appropriate honors will be awarded upon completion of all degree requirements and fulfillment of financial obligations.” Furthermore, the Committee will recommend the following revision in the policy guiding the determination of the appropriate honor category: “If a student qualifies for honors or moves into a ~~higher~~ DIFFERENT category of honors on the basis of his or her academic degree program grade-point average, the diploma issued will note the ~~higher~~ APPROPRIATE honor category, notation will be made on the transcript and permanent record, and an appropriate honors key will be awarded. Due to time constraints no adjustments/corrections can be made to the actual printed graduation program.”

At the next meeting (March 27), the Committee will consider the Student Honor Pledge and review the latest draft from the University-wide P&T Committee.

Student Academic Policies Committee:

Senator Hileman reported for the Committee. They have forwarded the honor pledge proposal to the Academic Policies Committee for consultation. They met on Thursday, March 9, to begin discussions of the academic dishonestly policy. They are looking at the possibility of developing an honor code and an honor council.

9. Announcements: Senator Biers announced that the Provost’s Committee on Evaluating Teaching was bringing a proposal to the Executive committee. This will lead to a *Sense of the Senate* discussion document.

10. Adjournment: Moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Johnson