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2006-04-21 Minutes of the Academic Senate

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[Approved September 15, 2007]

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
DAYTON, OHIO
MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
April 21, 2006
KU West Ballroom, 3:00 p. m.

Senators Present: J. Biddle, D. Biers (presiding), C. Chen, B. Conniff, D. Courte, G. DeMarco, G. Doyle, C. Duncan, E. Gustafson, R. Hardie, P. Johnson, T. Lasley, M. Morton, J. O'Gorman, R. Penno, C. Phelps, D. Poe, A. Seielstad, L. Simmons, S. Singer, P. Thimmes, B. Turk

Senators Excused: A. Abueida, M. Brill, K. Bullinger, J. Desmond, M. Doenges, T. Eggemeier, D. Gudaitis, L. Hausmann, S. Hileman, L. Kloppenberg, C. Letavec, P. Meyers, M. Mullins, F. Pestello, J. Saliba, R. Wells, D. Wolff

Guests: D. Bickford, E. Elam, A. Koziol, W. Lockett, I. Morgan, J. Untener, K. Webb, S. Wilhoit

1. Opening Prayer: Senator Duncan opened the meeting with a prayer delivered originally by Archbishop Oscar Romero.

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

3. Minutes:

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

4. Announcements:

Senator Biers announced that the Executive Committee had discussed the scheduling of convocation and had made several recommendations as to when convocation could be scheduled during the four-day orientation period so as not to disrupt the beginning of classes. The Committee agreed to the Provost Council making the final decision with the strong request that classes not be cancelled. The Provost made the final decision on this issue. 8:00 a. m. classes will meet on August 21 as scheduled. 9:00 a. m. classes will not meet on August 21. Convocation will be held at 9:00 a. m. 9:00 AM classes will meet twice on Friday, August 25, at the regularly scheduled time and again at 3:00 p. m.

5. [DOC-I-06-05 Constitutional amendment to change the timing of elections and terms for faculty, instructional staff, and student representatives of the Academic Senate:](#) Senator Phelps introduced the document and the motion for the Faculty Affairs Committee, explaining that the rationale for changing the timing of elections is to bring terms of office in line with the academic calendar. It is believed that this will improve the continuity and productivity of the Academic Senate throughout the academic year. She also explained that the implementation of this amendment, if approved by the Senate and the faculty, will require a one semester extension of the terms of all current Senators and of the current members of the Executive Committee. Senator Johnson noted two small corrections to the document as distributed. With those

corrections, the motion was seconded. The motion was approved with 18 Senators voting yes, 1 abstention, and no Senators voting no.

The document will be forwarded by the Secretary of the Senate to the Provost with the request that it be discussed at the first general University faculty meeting in the Fall 2006. Because this is an amendment to the Constitution of the Academic Senate, a vote of the tenured and tenure-track faculty is required. Open hearings will be held in the first two weeks of September, followed by a vote at the end of the month. The amendment requires that 50% of the tenured and tenure-track faculty vote (194/387) and that the amendment be approved by at least two-thirds of those voting. It must then be ratified by the President and the Board of Trustees. The aim is to complete the process so that, if the amendment is approved, the Board can take action at its Fall meeting.

6. DOC-I-06-06 Final Honors Category: Senator Biddle introduced the document and the motion for the Academic Policies Committee. He noted that in reviewing issues surrounding August graduates who are allowed to participate in the ceremonies in the previous May, the Committee raised the issue of how Latin honors are designated on a student's final transcript. Currently, the honors listed in the graduation program are based on the student's GPA at the end of the penultimate semester or term. If academic performance in the final semester or term results in a higher honors category, this is noted on the transcript and the appropriate honors key awarded. However, if the academic performance moves a student into a lower category, no change is made on the transcript. This document revises the current policy so that if a student qualifies for or moves into a different category based on the final GPA, the appropriate honor category will be noted on the transcript and permanent record and the appropriate key awarded. The motion was seconded. Senator Doyle asked if this policy applied to August and December graduations as well as May. Senator Biddle affirmed that this is the case. Senator Doyle also asked if the GPA used is for the major or the cumulative. Senator Biddle advised that the cumulative GPA is used to determine honors. The motion was approved with 20 Senators voting yes, no abstentions, and no Senators voting no.

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 (77/387). (See Article III.B. of the Constitution of the Academic Senate)

Senator Biers asked that the agenda be changed to accommodate our guest, Dr. Wilhoit. Dr. Lasley agreed to a change in the order of the consideration of documents.

7. DOC I-06-08 Sense of the Senate Discussion on Evaluating Faculty Teaching for the Purposes of Tenure, Promotion, and Merit: Dr. Wilhoit is serving as chairperson of the Provost Committee that has been charged with developing a policy for using multiple measures in the evaluation of faculty teaching. Use of multiple measures is required by Senate Document I-04-08. He reviewed the current draft of the report that is being developed by this committee. He noted that evaluation of faculty teaching has both administrative and developmental purposes. This report focuses on administrative purposes and, when completed, will make recommendations to the

Academic Senate as to what should be placed in the *Faculty Handbook* regarding this issue. He also noted that this report will not make any recommendations about the instrument that is currently used for gathering student responses. He emphasized that the recommendations will be such as to set minimum expectations, ensure procedural flexibility, and build on what is currently done at UD. He indicated that the current draft uses a teaching paradigm, not a learning paradigm and that evidence of student learning is only one factor to be used in evaluating faculty teaching. He reported that the current draft has been reviewed by the Faculty Development Committee and, after the Senate discussion, will be reviewed in a process of outside consultation. A final report will then be sent to the Academic Senate.

- Senator Poe asked about the relationship of two recommendations, the annual teaching report for merit and the self-evaluation for tenure. Dr. Wilhoit suggested that the former should better enable the faculty member to complete the latter.
- Senator Biers suggested that the timeframe for making merit decisions needs to be examined. Since merit is based on the calendar year and since results from the Fall teaching evaluations are often not available until sometime in January, this places additional work on both individual faculty and the chairpersons at the beginning of the Winter term. He asked if this is really the best investment of time. Do we need to look at how we dispense merit? He suggested that an across-the-board percentage for faculty with merit for only a select few might be a better process.
- Senator Chen indicated that faculty already provide detailed reports in relationship to the merit process and that these recommendations would result in additional time required of faculty to prepare materials for the merit review.
- Senator Conniff agreed with Senator Biers that writing a report on each faculty member would put an additional burden on the chairpersons. He also noted that faculty cannot see the results of the Fall term student responses until after the last day to change grades which is about thirty days after the end of the previous term.
- Senator Doyle asked if there would be training for peer review, since that could be done in an arbitrary manner. Dr. Wilhoit noted that the report recommends a general process that includes use of forms, familiarity with the teaching area, meetings with the faculty member being reviewed, etc. He also indicated that the LTC would provide training.
- Senator Phelps noted that the report needs to be clearer as to whether peer review is required for tenure and promotion or just for tenure. Dr. Wilhoit agreed that that clarification would be helpful, and said that the intention of the Committee was that it be required for both.
- Senator Doyle asked if chairpersons and deans who teach would also have peer reviews. Dr. Wilhoit indicated that would be the case if the person was applying for promotion.
- Senator Gustafson suggested that in the merit recommendations, section 3. B. may be too burdensome and that the word “should” may be too strong. She noted that the requirement for an appendix of materials exhibiting student learning in courses taught by the faculty member would result in a great deal of additional work. She suggested that the annual teaching report might include some, but not necessarily all, of the 10 items listed. She also noted that establishing student learning is very difficult.
- Senator Johnson asked what would be used to provide evidence of student learning. Dr. Wilhoit indicated that the list provided for promotion and tenure would also be used for merit purposes.

- Senator Hardie asked why guidelines were being developed for evaluating teaching but not for evaluating research and service. Senator Biers said that the focus was on teaching because of the previous Senate mandate to use multiple measures in assessing teaching. He also indicated that it might be important to develop guidelines for all three areas.
- Prof. Untener suggested that the emphasis was on teaching because UD wants to move away from the model we have used in the past which relied almost exclusively on student responses.
- Senator Lasley suggested that the goal was to conduct more substantive evaluations and that there were ways of doing evaluations that mitigate reductionism and are not overly burdensome.
- Senator Thimmes compared the assessment of student learning to the development of departmental assessment plans. She suggested that the latter had not been very effective and required time and effort that could be used in better ways.
- Senator Doyle asked if the Committee had reviewed other university practices and tools for assessment. Dr. Wilhoit said there was a bibliography available. He indicated that he was not sure how student learning would be assessed, but that the Committee had been looking at best practices at other institutions as well as at UD.
- Prof. Untener said that final recommendations should be integrated into the *Faculty Handbook* and into the procedures of the College and the Schools. Dr. Wilhoit indicated that this process should also include looking at overlap with other processes and procedures. This would be the responsibility of the Academic Senate in finalizing any policy on the evaluation of teaching.
- Senator Gustafson suggested that gathering materials related to student learning for every course every year would be excessive. Senator Biers suggested that this might not be required by the current recommendations, but Senator Gustafson suggested that they could be interpreted as requiring this.
- Senator Morton suggested that evaluation for development towards tenure and promotion was different in type and function from annual evaluation for merit. Identifying the function and process for each type of evaluation is important.
- Senator Singer suggested that evaluations need to compare things that are similar if we are to really learn something from them. Different types of classes are not easily compared. Moreover, student learning cannot be measured until several years after graduation. We need to develop a method that will provide us with meaningful information.
- Senator Turk asked how important student evaluations are in the assessment of faculty. Senator DeMarco replied that they are very important.
- Senator Doyle suggested that it is difficult to judge learning based on test results and homework and asked how this information would be used.
- Senator DeMarco reported that he had received excellent mentoring in how to develop materials guided by purposeful selection that would give a picture of student learning in his classes. He found the process was not an undue burden, although he recognizes that the mentoring he received is not received by all faculty.
- Senator Lasley suggested that current directions in political legislative bodies are moving towards measuring the value of attending a specific institution. Standardized tests are proposed as one way of measuring this. The Ohio Board of Regents is looking at processes that would have institutions demonstrate and post this information themselves.

- Senator Conniff suggested that contributions to curricular development might be added to the list of considerations.

Senator Biers thanked Dr. Wilhoit and the Committee for their work. Dr. Wilhoit indicated that additional suggestions should be sent to him. The Committee plans to consult outside the University and then send final recommendations to the Academic Senate.

8. DOC I-06-07 Sense of the Senate Discussion on a University-wide Promotion and Tenure

Committee: Senator Lasley introduced the discussion by distributing a new version of the draft document. This version, dated 4/19/06, will be posted to the Senate website to replace the earlier version that had been distributed. Senator Lasley reviewed the process that has resulted in the current draft. The issue relates to the role of the Board of Trustees in making tenure and promotion decisions, and the potential for them to be required to make judgments without the necessary expertise. Work on the recommendations began with a small group that had representation from faculty with a number of years at UD and with experience at other institutions. The Committee was then expanded to include greater representation of all units, including the Library. The Committee has reviewed current guidelines for promotion and tenure in the various units and notes that there needs to be better alignment. For example, UD has units that do tenure without promotion and others that tie the two together. The Committee has also noted unevenness between units in relationship to processes for appeals. The Committee has worked on two major issues, how to ensure that units have substantive criteria for tenure and promotion and how to align timing for tenure and promotion across the units. The composition of a University-wide committee is also under discussion.

- Senator Morton questioned the appropriateness of a deadline of September 1 for submission of materials to the dean or chairperson of a P & T committee. This would give departments very little time to carry out their processes. She also asked if chairpersons would be allowed to serve on the University-wide committee since this could result in a conflict of interest.
- Senator Biers also suggested that the September 1 date would not give departments sufficient time to carry out their work and allow for appeal processes at the departmental level. In addition, the earlier date could result in less evidence being able to be provided by the faculty member. If materials had to be submitted in the previous Spring in order to meet the September deadline, work of an entire Summer could not be considered.
- Senator Johnson asked if the Committee had considered the role of the current committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure. If a new committee is to be constituted, it should either clearly replace or clearly not conflict with the mandate of the current committee. She noted that chairpersons may not serve on the current committee.
- Senator Doyle asked about the authority of the proposed committee. Would it be able to overrule a unit? If so, what would be the source of the committee's authority? Senator Lasley indicated that on most issues the committee would be advisory, but that on certain issues alignment would be required.
- Senator Thimmes expressed concern that the timeline would push departmental processes into the previous academic year and so actually shorten the period available for tenure review.
- Senator Gustafson also expressed concern about the timeline and the difficulty of providing external reviewers with materials. Most reviewers are not available over the summer, so this would push the process even further back into the previous term.

- Senator Duncan agreed with this concern, but indicated that he still liked the general direction of the proposal.
- Senator Seielstad asked if the intent of this committee was to replace the Board of Trustees in the decision process. Senator Lasley indicated that this was not the case. Rather, the intent is to create a fairer system for faculty and to ensure that the Board would not be placed in a situation of deliberating without clarity of the processes used. Senator Seielstad indicated that the appeal process was already clear and asked how such a committee would better protect faculty. She wondered if the purpose is to correct a problem or to develop a new set of procedures. She suggested that there needed to be greater clarity about the role of such a committee and asked why there was concern about the role of the Board. Senator Lasley said that faculty would be better served by a group of their peers than by those who do not have the expertise and that this would also better serve the Board.
- Senator O’Gorman reiterated the concern that the role of the current committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure needs to be considered. Senator Lasley acknowledged that this proposal would require changes in other committee structures.
- Senator Gustafson asked about the advisory nature of the committee. Could a unit vote on and approve a policy and process and then have this committee reject that decision. Senator Lasley indicated that some issues would be “strong” advice and others suggestions.
- Senator Singer suggested that if the purpose of this committee is alignment and advising, then the title of the proposed committee might be changed to more appropriately reflect its role.
- Senator Duncan expressed support for an elected committee, but stressed the need to elect people for whom we have respect and trust.
- Senator Morton asked that the submission of materials be clarified. The current proposal suggests that they go to the dean or the chairperson of a P&T committee. This should be clarified. She also asked that it be clarified that it is the dean’s recommendations that is due to the candidate by November 15. She suggested that units with more faculty going up for tenure and promotion will have more difficulty meeting all of the deadlines. Perhaps the promotion to full professor could be moved to the Spring meeting of the Board.
- Senator Courte suggested that appeals might also be based on permissible criteria being ignored and that this should be included.

Senator Biers thanked Senator Lasley and the Committee for their work and for the continuation of that work.

9. Standing Committee Reports:

Faculty Affairs Committee:

Senator Phelps reported for the Committee. The committee is 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. The Committee is also beginning discussions of the various types of actions (legislative, legislative concurrence, and consultation) that are assigned to the Academic Senate. They will review an index of past actions in order to have a better sense of how past actions have been classified.

Academic Policies Committee:

Senator Biddle reported for the Committee. They have reviewed the proposal developed by SAPAS on an honor pledge and have suggested that it is important to have broad student engagement around the issue of honesty, rather than a focus on dishonesty. They are discussing processes for holding faculty forums and discussion on the recommendations that are coming forward to the Senate that could result in significant changes in the professional culture for the faculty. They want to provide ample opportunity for faculty input. Senator Doyle asked if these would be carried out before any votes in the Academic Senate. Senator Biddle affirmed this.

Student Academic Policies Committee:

Senator Courte reported for the Committee. They will move forward, in the Fall, with discussions about an honor code.

10. Adjournment: Moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Johnson