

Agenda
University Senate meeting
Wednesday, September 23, 2009

The following senators were present: Umit Akinc, Paul Anderson, Doug Beets, Derrick Boone, Anne Boyle, Carole Browne, Randy Cockerham, James Cotter, Paul Escott, Jacque Fetrow, Mary Friedman, Edward Haponik, Sarah Jones, Judy Kem, Ken Middaugh, Lorna Moore, Patrick Morton, Miles Silman, Nancy Suttentfield, Lynn Sutton, Ahmed Taha, Jill Tiefenthaler, Lynne Wagenknecht, Neal Walls, Ron Wellman and Ronald Zagoria.

The following visitors were present: Allyson Bennett, Roy Hantgen, Jack Meredith, Mark Miller, Charles Morrow, Peter Pierre, Dick Schneider, Alan Townsend and Michael Tytell.

1. Introductions (new members, members and visitors).
2. Approval of the minutes of the April meeting (meetings approved).

[No committee reports today.]

3. Faculty Colloquium. Would we like to continue a Faculty Colloquium at the President's house this year? Thursdays at Starling's seems to have replaced the Colloquium. The general consensus was to discontinue the colloquium.

4. Announcements: The custodial staff is moving to third shift. Some of the custodial staff voluntarily moved to third shift, some were asked to move. Some opportunities for advancement have been created.

The First Response medical team of volunteers will no longer be available to respond to medical emergencies on this campus. EMT-trained students are still active but do not cover daytime hours (8:00-5:00). Questions: Would it be possible to change student hours? Was this a budgetary issue or lack of volunteers? Volunteers were no longer willing to do it without compensation. Should a campus of this size have an emergency response team? It takes the fire department longer to arrive on campus; in the case of heart attack victims, timing is essential. 7 or 8 minutes could save someone's life. We DO need this service and volunteers need to be compensated. How much compensation? Compensation for training and overtime? Another problem: the volunteers on campus were falling behind on their primary jobs, and some recognition would be appreciated. Carole Browne decided that the University Integration Committee should look into this and get back to the Senate.

5. Old business

a. Staff Advisory Council: This independent governing committee has by-laws ready for approval by the President. This would replace staff participation on the Senate.

b. Handbook: All 153 pages of the handbook have been revised mainly to eliminate redundancy and bring it up-to-date. There were no policy changes. The new handbook is

approximately 58 pages long. Each of the deans will look at the chapter pertaining to his/her school and edit them. By the end of this year we will have a new faculty handbook.

6. New business

a. By-laws changes: We will be changing the by-laws this year. The Senate has not been in compliance with all by-laws.

b. Medical School salary cuts and tenure probation: Carole Browne reported that a number of faculty members from the Medical School asked the Senate to take up this matter. Some faculty members have received pay cuts of up to 10% and have received probation letters. Policy as of March 2007: persistent loss of grant support or decline in performance can result in salary reduction and tenure probation. Tenure (limited to five year appointments) is not the same at the Medical School as in the College (Reynolda campus). Performance criteria seem to be directly related to grant support. Medical faculty should be bringing in 60% of their salary through external grants. Some of the faculty felt "blind-sided." People who were tenured under one set of guidelines are being asked to conform to a new set of guidelines. The research criteria were not adequately communicated. Many thought the process was not clear, and the salary cuts were not applied evenly across the faculty. Out of 1,000 faculty only 11 received salary cuts, according to Steve Block, but these figures have been disputed. Only 5 received probation letters. The salary cuts do not represent a significant savings to the Medical School. However, one medical professor said financial issues were the primary reason behind these salary cuts. Carole Browne said that she was told that these were not punitive measures, but intended to "change the behavior" of certain faculty members. Should a committee look into it? Is there not a grievance committee? Yes, for revocation of tenure, but so far no one's tenure has been revoked. Grievance procedures are very limited. According to a medical school professor, the faculty were not included at all in these decisions at the Medical School. Visitors from the Medical School asked that a Senate committee look into it. Carole said that Block told her that the administration knew that this would be a concern and had appointed a committee (at the Medical School) that would report shortly on the situation. Carole: one of the main issues is that the tenure rules seem to have changed, "evolved," during one's career. A medical school professor indicated that no peer review took place, that the chairs were left out of the process or overridden. He added that the model may be applied to other schools, a sort of domino effect. Question: Has anyone's tenure ever been revoked on the Reynolda campus? Provost: No, it has never happened. Another indicated that lack of transparency and arbitrariness of the decisions are major concerns. Question: What is the make-up of the grievance committee? Does it include a representative from the Medical School? One can file a grievance with the University Grievance Committee, but one cannot file a grievance unless tenure is revoked. Medical professors: "We would like to not get to that point." The Medical School has a different Board of Trustees where Dr. Hatch is only a member. The Board of Trustees on the Reynolda campus is not the same. Carole Browne: Steve Block will be at the next Senate meeting. The Senate president will ask for volunteers who are willing to serve on the committee to look into the situation before the next meeting.

c. Faculty Senate. Carole Browne reported that University Senates are fairly rare. A Faculty Senate consists of elected faculty members and non-voting, ex-officio administrative members (usually high-ranking). The reason for the change is that in this way we can strengthen faculty governance. Over many years, faculty have given up more and more of their overseeing of what is going on in the administration. It is really important that we have a Faculty Senate. Faculty must play a role in planning and in the budget process. The faculty's voice has been diluted on the University Senate with staff and a large number of administrators. There needs to be stronger communication between the faculty and the administration. In the Senate newsletter, Carole had ten responses to the idea of a Faculty Senate. Apathy or few senators read the newsletter?

Question: How rare are University Senates? Carole: On large campuses there are two Senates, a University Senate and a Faculty Senate. And where there is only one Senate, it is usually a Faculty Senate. Question: What would be the role? What issues would be discussed? Carole: The Faculty Senate would be able to look into faculty issues. There is no independent faculty voice. Provost: Typically, faculty senates have more power over issues like academic freedom, grievance, etc. Carole Browne asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to investigate the question of a Faculty Senate.

7. Presentation by Lorna Moore, Dean of the Graduate School on the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. She indicated that there are 800 students this year and about 500 faculty, 27 masters or Ph.D. programs, two certificate programs, five joint programs with WFU professional schools, and two joint programs with other institutions and gave a list of programs and descriptions.

She also gave out handouts and outlined the activities and plans of the Graduate School.

a. Handout 1: "2008-09 Activities and 2009-10 Plans"

Goal #1: Promote a culture of collaboration among talented faculty who are passionate about graduate education.

Goal #2: Attract talented, diverse students and build exceptional leaders.

Goal #3: Strengthen connections within WFU and to communities beyond campus.

b. Handout 2: Flowsheet from Master's Task Force and Doctoral Task Force → Grad Program Operation.

Questions: 1) How much instruction is offered by graduate students? About 5%.

2) What about post-doctoral financial support? There are a range of things can be done. Training grants and VA benefits are available, and here are several new grant initiatives and fund-raising plans for post-doctoral students.

- 3) Our graduate student stipends are not competitive. What is being done?
Bowman Gray stipends have been raised, and there have been initiatives that have increased stipends in other departments like Biology.
- 4) The health insurance and conference reimbursements of doctoral students are now taxable. Has there been a change? There have been multiple meetings about this issue. There are differences between the Bowman Gray and Reynolda campuses. There are also differences between grant money and salary. The discussion is not over. "We're learning the tax code."

Carole Browne adjourned the meeting.