Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
October 14, 2014

Attending:

Elaine Abelson, Lang
Anthony Anemone, NSPE
Banu Bargu, NSSR
Adria Benjamin, Mannes
Ragnar Freidank, Drama
Peter Haratonik, NSPE
Richard Harper, Jazz
Rachel Heiman, NSPE
Nicolas Langlitz, NSSR
David Lopato, Jazz
Madge McKeithen, NSPE
Frank Nemhauser, Mannes, Co-Chair
Richard Salcer, Parsons
Elaine Savory, Lang, Co-Chair
Earl Scott, Parsons
Luciana Scrutchen, Parsons
Carlos Teixeira, Parsons
Sven Travis, Parsons, Co-Chair
Marcus Turner, NSPE
Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang

Not attending:

Zed Adams, NSSR
Erin Cho, Parsons
Erica Fae, Drama
Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Candy Schulman, NSPE
Shane Selzer, Parsons
Val Vinokur, Lang
Inessa Zaretsky, Mannes

I. Minutes

Elaine S. called the meeting to order and asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and then approved.

II. Committee Reports

A. Provost Office Committee Representatives

Elaine A. - PO FAC
Sven - Budget Committee
Adria - Budget Committee (if schedule works)
Richard and Peter - Facilities Committee
Ragnar - Curriculum Committee
Banu - Research Council (if schedule works)

Discussion:
Peter wondered what the role of faculty is on these sorts of committees. Richard is concerned about faculty office space. Faculty need a more private space, not a shared space. Elaine S agreed this was still an issue and that the UFS needed to gather evidence to present to the PO about this. Luciana wondered if the point of faculty serving on these committees was more for information sharing than anything else, since their presence doesn’t seem to influence decisions. Jurgen said that while the administration hasn’t solicited input from faculty about rooms and facilities they have solicited input on things like the green paper. Elaine S said the PO has created links with these committees and that overall the UFS should try to be less passive. Sven said that it varied from committee to committee and is part of what the UFS needs to evaluate. Banu suggested that the UFS focus more on substantive proposals instead of on abstract terms. Peter said that he would like to have a calendar of all the university committee meetings each academic year.

B. Committee Reports

Elaine A. reported on the PO FAC. She said that the green paper got a lot of responses from the divisions and through the new reporting system. The PO is also working on implementing new software (Lyterati) this year. The PO and the divisions are identifying a beta test group. The software will help the administration and the divisions understand better what faculty are doing across the university. Committee service is not an accurate gauge of what faculty are doing. TNS wants a more qualitative assessment of what faculty are doing and this information will come together in the white paper. Some divisions want a point system for what their faculty do but TNS is trying to stay away from a ranking system like that. The point is that just listing what you do isn’t sufficient. The university needs to have a tracking system that people trust before it can get a better handle on what “service” is.

Discussion:
Sven said he has heard this discussion about the point system and why the administration doesn’t want to do use it because according to them it makes service too granular. But Sven also said that he didn’t understand how all of this could be evaluated without some sort of ranking. Elaine A. said that point system existed at Princeton and she enjoyed it. Jurgen said he was happy about some of the developments, but upset about the reluctance toward quantification. Marcus said that some type of accountability had to be dealt with in regard to service. He felt this could lead to retention problems among faculty, which is what outside consultants suggested when they evaluated NSPE. Carlos said that if service was scored the leadership would have to be more accountable and that that’s why they don’t want to do it. Elaine S. asked if the co-chairs could assign these topics to the UFS FAC subcommittee to talk about in a smaller group and then subsequently produce
something that could be presented to the PO and the president. It was felt that this was something that should be put on the UFS list because when the administration “right-sizes” programs they neglect to think about additional service needs. They only think about courses, students, and the level of student needs. Not what the students actually get. Elaine S. said she would put together some sort of time table document that will go to the PO.

C. University Town Hall Report

Luciana felt like the Town Hall was good for information sharing but wondered where or when conversation was encouraged to take place. She didn’t feel like there was a lot of detail discussed so opening up difference channels of engagement was imperative. Richard S. said there was a lot of talk about right-sizing. Ragnar noted that the room was set up in a vertical way but that they were encouraging more horizontal conversation, but when he brought this up to the president and the PO they were receptive to him. Frank noted that in regard to the right-sizing issue, the current administration was trying to correct the aggressive and unsustainable growth from the previous administration. He said it felt like the current administration was just trying to plan better. Sven felt that the overall vibe he got from the Town Hall was a weird combination of everything is great but we are still in the mud. Peter asked about salary increases. Sven said that there is a merit pool this year, which is a chunk of money set aside to deal with out of scale raises. Anthony said that there is a difference between merit pools and salary equity. Sven replied that that is how the merit pool has historically been used at TNS.

III. Planning for Senate Town Hall

Elaine S. reminded the UFS that the agenda for the first UFS Town Hall was really open but she isn’t sure that they should do that again. She asked for suggestions.

Discussion:
It was suggested that the UFS could get people to come with hot button issues and that they should pick one or two issues to put on the fliers. Elaine S. restated topics that have already come up: right-sizing, office space, role of senate, service. Frank felt that it should be limited to two to three topics and that they should not discuss the role of the senate. Ragnar noted that Town Halls are generally used to hear from the people, instead of speaking at them. Elaine S. suggested combining the open vibe with planned topics. Elaine S. said she would put together some draft text and will circulate to the UFS. David said that he felt irrelevant as an adjunct and that right-sizing effects class size and affects adjuncts.

IV. Planning for USS visit in November

Elaine S. reported that the co-chairs from the University Student Senate will be attending the open portion of the UFS meeting in November and will serve as a meet and greet. The UFS co-chairs hope to be able to establish a collaborative relationship with the USS.

V. Issues:
Elaine notes that the issue of faculty offices already came up and will likely be discussed at the Town Hall.

Elaine reported former UFS member Julia Ott’s concern about child care. Julia had a hard time get to the UFS meetings because she didn’t have child care. Julia wanted to know if others would be interested in pursuing the request for the university supply child care for young children for faculty who are on the UFS. Jurgen felt it was a good idea but there would be a lot of FERPA issues. Anthony wondered what was the difference between the UFS and another committees that faculty serve on. He felt that the child care would have to be offered to everyone. Luciana suggested that either child care is offered for all university wide committees or that faculty could be reimbursed for the costs. Sven asked what it took to run the senate? Child care, refreshments, location? Sven felt that the UFS should be supported and should do a lot, like the USS who has a budget.

Sven wanted to follow up about the recent centralization of advising and the new student success team. He wondered if the UFS would like to invite them to give a presentation. Marcus said that what they say in public is not what is happening in private and that there was a difference between faculty advising and administrative advising. Sven asked again if there was consensus to at least invite them. It was said they came to NSPE and that they didn’t answer questions. It was said that it felt like a waste of time. Sven wondered again if the UFS wasn’t willing to engage. Anthony said it might be more appropriate on the divisional level as opposed to the UFS. Earl noted that the PTF contract is currently in negotiations. Sven mentioned that the UFS might miss out on having influence on this if the UFS thinks it is just divisional. Jurgen suggested that the UFS send them questions ahead of time so they are on the table.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and then approved.