University Faculty Senate Meeting
October 16, 2012

In Attendance:

Susan Yelavich, Parsons
Chris Stover, Jazz
Nargis Virani, NSPE
Gary Vena, Drama
Earl Scott, Parsons
Emily Barnett, Parsons
Teresa Ghilarducci, NSSR
Ted Byfield, Parsons
Frank Nemhauser, Mannes
Diane Walsh, Mannes
Erin Cho, Parsons
Elaine Savory, Lang
Aleksandra Wagner, NSPE
Jurgen Von Mohs, Lang
Steve Kennedy, Parsons
Elaine Abelson, Lang
Peter Haratonik, NSPE
Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Chris Roselli, Drama
Cecilia Rubino, Lang
Katarzyna Gruda, Parsons

Not Attending:

Wendy D’Andrea, NSSR
David Lopato, Jazz
JY Song, Mannes
Warren Spielberg, NSPE

I. Chairs’ Update

James called the meeting to order and reminded everyone that a presentation would be given during the second half of the meeting by Paul Gorski about the Social Climate Assessment that will be happening at The New School. James then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Elaine Savory wanted to clarify a portion on the minutes regarding the upcoming Cluster Research funding event sponsored by the Research Council: since it is too short a time to put forward full proposals for projects, the Council is only soliciting descriptions of what one hopes to work on in the future. A motion was made, seconded, and then approved. James then asked for a volunteer to serve on the Faculty Advisory Committee. The committee is only
scheduled to have one meeting that will discuss Campus Security issues. Peter Haratonik volunteered.

Since the last UFS meeting the co-chairs of the UFS and the UFS subcommittee chairs have all met. The co-chairs collected a list of issues that they plan to discuss with the PO and DVZ this academic year. Most of the issues center around the financial problems the university is experiencing due to the fall in enrollment. The PO and DVZ reaffirmed at the last UFS meeting that the school’s financial issues cannot be addressed though cuts alone. They also shared that they don’t believe that the university can grow out of it either. So instead they are hoping that a possible restructuring could alleviate some of the financial stress.

The university has hired a new VP for Enrollment; James suggested that the UFS might want to invite this person to a UFS meeting to give a talk and answer questions. Another issue that was brought up by the subcommittee chairs was about fundraising, but the PO and DVZ are skeptical that this will lead to short term financial improvement. Alumni giving at the university is still very young and won’t really mature for a while. Ted Byfield and Teresa Ghilarducci are serving as Budget Liaisons for the UFS. Their first meeting is on Friday at 10am. James recommended that everyone go to the Town Hall scheduled for Wednesday to get some idea of further issues Ted and Teresa should bring to the meeting. Ideas should be emailed before Friday.

Discussion:

Susan shared with the UFS an idea about how the work of UFS Budget Liaisons might be used to consider future scenarios for the University: namely, that if people want to work with Ted and Teresa on these issues, they could form an ad hoc committee to do so. Since the co-chairs will be speaking at the Town Hall it was decided that it would be good to announce who is serving as Budget Liaisons. The co-chairs of the UFS are not officially liaisons to the BoT yet, but some relationship should be official soon.

The PO also plans to release a “vision” document soon. Tim and Bryna have agreed to come to an open meeting upon the invitation of the UFS to discuss PO related issues. Ted remarked that all these steps are positive, but that it is important for the university to engage everyone. The university is not in a good position for the long term and everyone should be engaged to think strategically about ways to improve the situation. James notes that part of the weakness of the UFS is that it isn’t connected enough to the faculty across the university. The UFS needs to better represent itself among other faculty.

Another major issue discussed with DVZ and Tim occurring at the university has to do with PFT. It appears that PTF may be being let go in an arbitrary manner from their positions before they become annualized. It is alleged that this is happening for fiscal reasons: so that the university doesn’t become financially liable for them. Elaine Abelson was curious if this is really true. Elaine Savory said that she has
heard of this happening. Emily pointed out that this is a contractual issue. The school has no obligation to reappoint people until after their 10th semester. In the 11th semester PTF receive a base load, which makes PTF jobs more secure. This was agreed upon by the PTF union and the university. Jurgen felt there was a real issue with cutting courses and having to turn to faculty who are already at the university. This is a problem when trying to work out complex details of successful curriculum. Steve asked if this was official policy: if people around the university are under pressure to let PTF go before they are annualized, then who is putting them under pressure? James argued that this is a union issue, but it is also an issue for FTF who are interested in their programs working the best they can. In short this issue affects everyone. Nargis wondered if there was a way to ensure that more than one person is making the hiring decision and offered that maybe having a FTF help make the decision with the chair it would take away some of the arbitrariness. James replied that there is always more than one person involved with making such decisions. Emily pointed out the FTF have priority in getting courses and that it is important not to upend the seniority that the PTF has fought for. Peter noted that sometimes classes have to be cut and that the luxury of faculty teaching what they wanted to teach is going away. Principal faculty will now be assigned classes that they don’t want to teach and are not necessarily qualified to teach. Katarzyna has noticed PTF being cut before they become annual, even when they are considered top-notch teachers. She feels that this practice would have decimated departments if it had been adhered to. Katarzyna couldn’t abide by the practice and resigned from her position as director of a department because she was so upset by this practice. She noted that the union did not stand up for these people and suggested that the union is better at retaining and aiding PTF who are already annual.

II. Committee Reports

**Faculty Affairs: Elaine Savory, Chair**

Elaine reported that subcommittees have been organized within the FAC in order to handle four important issues that the FAC has identified to be addressed this academic year. The first issue is the grievance committee. The committee hopes to approve and submit language about structures and protocols for the grievance committee for the FTF handbook in the next couple of weeks. The committee has also made the recommendation that there be more people on the grievance committee. The second issue that the committee hopes to address has to do with course evaluations. Since the evaluations became electronic, they have not been completed by the students with the same efficiency. The tie-in for students receiving their grades without opting out of doing the evaluation will not be in place until the spring semester. The PO recommended that faculty ask their students to bring in electronic devices to class, and faculty can set aside class time for the students to fill out the evaluations, similar to the way the paper evaluations were conducted. The third issue under review by FAC is the Annual Faculty Self-Report; it needs to be made more user-friendly. And the fourth issue concerns PTF hiring
practices, which affect pedagogy. People’s lives are important, and inappropriate hiring practices also damage the university.

**Discussion:**
Katarzyna noted that a lot of the PTF who were let go also lost their health insurance immediately upon termination. Elaine shared that Bryna will sometimes be in attendance for parts of the UFS FAC meetings when there are important updates to report. At their next meeting, the UFS FAC will be reviewing promotion review outcome data.

**Governance: Nargis Virani, Chair**

Nargis reported that the Governance Committee hasn’t met yet but is aware that one of its first issues is to understand the UFS representation numbers per division. The committee plans to meet next week.

**Infrastructure: Ted Byfield, Chair**

Ted reported that he has been in touch with AT to ask about having an informational presentation (not a discussion) about what’s happening with the new building. The General Counsel was copied on the response he received. Ted is concerned that AT might feel that any type of discussion that involved engagement with faculty or students has to be monitored. Ted suggested that he could be persistent about his request but only if the UFS also feels that it is important. He doesn’t want there to be a perception that the Infrastructure Committee is stirring up issues unnecessarily. Ted pointed out that the University is becoming more and more IT-ified and he feels strongly about engaging the UFS in these matters.

**Discussion:**
Cecilia mentioned that faculty are routinely not consulted about space issues here at the University and thinks Ted is doing the right thing in trying to have discussions about these issues. Susan wondered if they could find out who is in charge of the space allocations in the new University Center. Nargis shared that a public presentation about the new building would be welcomed.

**Social Justice Presentation: Campus Climate Assessment, Paul Gorski**

The UFS was joined by Provost Tim Marshall, Interim Coordinator of Social Justice Sydney Kopp-Richardson, and Campus Climate Assessment representative Paul Gorski. Introductions were made.

Paul began his presentation.

The goal of conducting a Campus Climate Assessment is to collect information that can effect positive changes at the university toward equity and social justice. The assessment will be conducted by people who have expertise in the mechanics of
doing assessments and the content that is being assessed. Different diversity assessment models are used at different institutions. Surface-level models are used but it is also important to learn the implicit culture and curriculum of the institution in question. The assessment does not rely on quantitative surveys alone because they don’t address everything. Certain findings are fairly consistent from institution to institution: men tend to think there is a lot less sexism, white people tend to think institutions are doing well in regard to racism, etc. The idea is to engage faculty, staff, and students and connect findings to positive institutional change.

Methods Used:

Electronic surveys
Focus groups,
Observations, campus visits
Interviews
Policy analysis
Curriculum review

None of the instruments employed are canned instruments. All surveys are tailored to constituents (faculty/staff/students).

Timeline:

Academic Year 2012-2013
Winter 2012: Policy and document analysis
February 27- March 2, 2013: Site Visit
June 2013: Formative report

Academic Year 2013-2014
October 2013: Electronic surveys
Winter 2013: Data analysis
Spring 2014: Final report

Discussion:
Katarzyna pointed out that age discrimination was missing from discrimination list. Susan wondered if the assessment team would identify themselves around the university. Paul answered yes. There will be a committee here at TNS who will help the assessment team identify individuals they should speak with. Jurgen wondered how the focus groups are determined. He pointed out that it would be challenging since the University is so diverse. Paul said that the assessment team will rely heavily on the committee to help figure that out. Elaine wondered if the committee was interested in the history of social justice at the University. Katarzyna wondered if they plan to approach the individual divisions of the University separately, since it is so diverse and separate on the whole. Paul replied that there will be invitations that go out to everyone around the University so they are aware that the assessment team will be on campus. Katayoun Chamany, representative of the Social Justice
Committee, joined the UFS meeting. Emily wondered if the assessment committee would welcome written suggestions from faculty/staff in case the suggestion is not something they feel comfortable sharing openly. Paul replied that the assessment team will be available for individual consultation. Nargis asked how the assessment team is able to interpret that data of groups within groups, within groups. Paul replied that the team does not get bogged down in the hierarchy of oppression. Cecilia wanted to know the cost of the assessment and how the team will assess the differences between PTF and FTF accurately. Tim shared that money for this assessment comes from the Social Justice Committee budget but that he does not have exact figures right now. This is a far more holistic assessment than the COACHE survey. Earl encouraged the assessment team to do the appropriate leg-work to be sure to get the response that is wanted and needed.

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