University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
October 8, 2013

In attendance:

Elaine Abelson, Lang
Emily Barnett, Parsons
Adria Benjamin, Mannes
Carolyn Berman, NSPE
Julie Boyd, Drama
Patrick Boylan, Parsons
Ted Byfield, Parsons
Wendy D’Andrea, NSSR
Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Ragnar Freidank, Drama
Peter Haratonik, NSPE
Marcel Kinsbourne, NSSR
Todd Lambrix, Parsons
David Lopato, Jazz
Frank Nemhauser, Mannes
Richard Salcer, Parsons
Elaine Savory, Lang
Earl Scott, Parsons
Luciana Scrutchen, Parsons
Chris Stover, Jazz
Sven Travis, Parsons
Marcus Turner, NSPE
Val Vinokur, Lang
Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang
Susan Yelavich, Parsons
Inessa Zaretsky, Mannes

Not Attending:

Julia Ott, Lang
Candy Schulman, NSPE
Iddo Tavory, NSSR
Gina Luria Walker, NSPE

I. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Elaine Savory called the meeting to order. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting. A motion was made. It was seconded and then approved.

II. New Business
Elaine asked the UFS if there was any new business to discuss.

**Discussion:**

**Workload, Service and Leave**

Susan shared that she heard at Dean’s council meeting about the green and white paper process and heard that the focus is shifting from leaves to service. Elaine S. said she heard that the leave issue would be postponed until after green and white papers on service were enacted. Elaine A. said that there are a lot of issues that the PO FAC is looking into, including service, and workload. There is a lot on the agenda. The PO FAC would like the UFS to help improve communications in regard to governance. The situation in the spring with the Parsons Faculty Council (PFC) was referenced. The PFC felt that there wasn’t enough communication in regard to the handbook revision process. The PO feels that the UFS should help with better communications. Elaine S. shared that the co-chairs have already spoke with the PO and the president about improving communications. Susan asked if Elaine A is the de facto liaison with the PO FAC. The answer is yes. Carolyn Berman is also serving on the PO FAC. Susan felt that it is just about having a voice from the Senate on FAC. Ted shared that in regard to the fate of the green paper about leaves, nothing specific has been mentioned but there is a shift in emphasis to service load and mentoring as a prime agenda for this year. Elaine A. said the PO FAC talked about what mentoring means and how that changes across the divisions. Susan said she read the Middle States chapter about faculty and learned that the COACHE survey reported that Parsons faculty were overwhelmed with service and that may have caused the shift. Peter said that the PO wants to pay more attention to service because a lot of faculty don’t get acknowledged for it.

There was discussion about leaves and leave policy in the future. David asked if “leave” is synonymous with “sabbatical.” He also wondered if they would happen at a certain calculation. Peter answered that it is not happening consistently. Some people have had it built into their initial contracts. So some people are eligible to take a leave but have to apply and others have it guaranteed. Susan wanted to find out if the term “leave” has officially replaced “sabbatical.” Leaves may in the future require that faculty report on the productive outcome of a leave. Elaine A. shared that divisional leaves have been handled differently. Ted felt that just because leave is a thorny issue doesn’t mean that it should be avoided. And just because there are legacy issues doesn’t mean that it should be avoided. Wendy felt another issue that should be looked at is parental leave.

**III. General Pay Raise**

**Discussion:**

Jurgen felt that the pay raise was nice but that it just reinforces the inequity. He suggested that maybe raises staggered by income strata which could help equalize pay rates (larger at the lower earning level). Another suggestion was to put aside the pool of money for increases and let it to the discretion of the deans in each
division. This opportunity should be used to deal with salary compression issues. Sven shared that there used to be an inclusion of a fund separate from the pay raises for discretionary spending. Peter shared that chairs are no longer given the salary information of their faculty. Chairs (in some divisions) used to get discretionary money and information on their faculty salaries but they don’t anymore. Peter did feel it was nice to get back to cost of living increases. Jurgen felt it would be good to have a background of faculty salary so that equity could be assessed. Ted felt this information could be included as part of the administration’s efforts to increase transparency. Susan pointed out that the PO and the president did take pay cuts so maybe the UFS could frame their concerns by leading with the fact that they are at least mindful of the inequity. Sven shared that salary information is out there.

IV. New Senate Committees and Interim Chair Appointments

New Committee Names and Charges
Elaine S. said that she is hoping all the committees will be interwoven in a more helpful way. The co-chairs would like communication with committee chairs every week. Also the co-chairs wanted to restructure the committees to make them more flexible and interactive.

Elaine shared that there was a lot of push back from a group of Senators with regard to the title “Professional Affairs” and the co-chairs felt they were right. The co-chairs thought that the title of the committee should now be “Full-Time Faculty Affairs.”

Discussion:
Ted pointed out that excluding PTF from the committee was making a bigger statement than it was intended to. Emily still objected to the exclusion of PTF from the committee. Earl stated that include that an exclusive rule would create a precedence of division between PTF and FTF on the UFS. It was pointed out that the PO favored removing barriers between FTF and PTF. Frank said that one of the reasons to set the committee up in this way was to allow the FTF a forum for presenting issues. The PTF has representation from the union. Peter felt that PTF who served on the committee could contribute to the understanding of the FTF issues and help give more context. Emily felt that the exclusionary rule should be dropped. Elaine A. asked if it was because the PO didn’t want to discuss union issues. Ted answered that that was partly true because the administration can’t do direct talks with PTF about contractual issues. Ted shared that the goal within the UFS is not to embrace exclusivity but rather to set up a forum where discussion for FTF issues can take place. Ragnar wondered if creating a structure based on a legal set up that people may or may not agree with was a good idea. He asked if it was only for practical reasons. Elaine S. shared that it was simply practical.

After this discussion, Elaine S. suggested that the case was made to change the rule of exclusivity regarding the FTFA Committee and asked if there was a motion to strike the rule. Earl made a motion to strike the exclusionary rule. The motion was
seconded. A vote was taken in favor of striking the rule with three abstentions. The name of the committee will be “Full-Time Faculty Affairs.”

With regard to the relation between the Provost’s FAC and the Senate FAC, (not FTF Affairs) Val shared that the UFS had a FAC first. Then the PO formed a PO FAC. He felt that the implications were that the UFS FAC wasn’t good enough and set up something adversarial. He wondered it would make sense if the UFS was adversarial in nature to the PO. He asked if excluding the PTF from the committee would in some way help out the PO. Elaine A. shared that the PO FAC is a very different kind of committee and is surprised to hear the word “adversarial” being used.

B. Interim (and Elected) Chairs’ Reports.
Ted reiterated something Val said at the previous meeting which was to think of these committees more as working groups instead. This will take the pressure off the work members are expected to do. The purpose of the interim chair is to get the process going.

1. Susan Yelavich, Senate Affairs Committee, Elected Chair

Susan made a technical point: maybe the bylaws needed to be revised in reference to the new committees since it explicitly states the former three standing committees by name. She felt that the bylaws should reflect reality. Elaine S. said that she would bring it to the PO’s and president’s attention. Susan suggested that maybe the co-chairs could just make the new committee names match so it doesn’t have to be re-approved by the BOT. Chris pointed out that individual changes don’t need to be approved right away and can wait to be approved by the BOT after multiple changes accumulate.

Susan stated that the goal of the SA was to improve the communication between the UFS and the leadership and to be attentive to the bylaws. Members of the SA are: Susan, Adria, Emily, and Patrick. The SA would like to find out how senators are liaising with their divisions, which body they report to, and how often they meet, because they would like to put together a flow chart to understand better how communication works. The SA would like this information from the UFS by Monday, October 28. Susan suggested that it might be useful for senators from each division to get together and talk this through. She also felt that it might be advisable for representatives to write a summary of meetings they attend. Ted suggested weekly emails to the co-chairs as a way of checking in. Susan wondered if there was a way to make regular communications from the university more visually engaging and thought maybe the UFS should have some kind of unique logo or image to represent it. Margaret asked if Susan would send around the questions she would love to have answered via email.

2. Elaine Abelson, Full-Time Faculty Affairs Committee, Interim Chair
Elaine A. reported that the FA had not met yet and did not elect a chair yet. She had planned to hold the elections via email. Members of the FA are: Elaine A., Carolyn, Todd, Marcus, Val, and Wendy.

3. Jurgen Von Mahs, Academic Affairs Committee, Interim Chair

Jurgen reported that the AA had not met yet and did not elect a chair yet. He hopes that someone will step up to the role. Members of the AA are: Julie, Candy, Luciana, Iddo, and Gina. Jurgen also reports that the AA has not spent much determining its charge.

Discussion:

4. Chris Stover, Scholarly Communications Committee, Elected Chair

Chris reported the SC will be doing some brainstorming to figure out the charge of the committee will be and what it will be working on. Perhaps there is a link to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC). Elaine A. was not sure what the SC was intended to do. Ted answered that the measure of academic success has shifted and isn’t all about publishing books. The goal of the committee is to be more speculative about the measure of success. Ted shared that he was working on a project that was funded by a grant called Open Syllabus Project. The project aims to look at what is being taught in different fields and figure out alternative metrics for that environment. Ted said that he is happy to work with the group.

Discussion:

Jurgen wondered if mapping out communications patterns includes the way the committees interact with one another. Susan wondered if the URC would be a better match with the SC committee instead of the UCC. The UCC would be a better fit for the AA. Elaine S. said that as soon as she got clarification on the university committees she would share the information. The co-chairs would like to move away from having committee chairs give reports at UFS meetings.

5. Peter Haratonik, Learning Environments Committee, Interim Chair

Peter reported that the AA had not met yet and did not elect a chair yet. Members of the committee are: Peter, David, Julia, Richard, and Sven.

Elaine reported that the Senate needs to provide a formal representative to each PO committee and we need to let the PO office know as soon as possible who will be that connection for us to each committee.

V. Senate Town Hall Postponement

Elaine shared that the UFS Town Hall was postponed. The new date is Monday, November 11 from 5pm-7pm. Frank drafted some text that pertains to the event for the website. The town hall will be opportunity to talk about the role of the UFS and
what is on the dockets for the UFS this academic year. It will also be an opportunity to listen to concerns of faculty not on the UFS. Elaine S. thanked the former IFS co-chairs for setting the town hall in motion. Wendy asked the UFS members could have buttons so other faculty know who is actually on the UFS.

The co-chairs reiterated that the UFS Town Hall is open to everyone and asked that the UFS be in touch if they have issues they would like to have discussed.

The PO and the president will likely attend the town hall briefly as a gesture and then leave. Susan asked if they were formally on the agenda. Luciana thought they might be able to answer questions as they come up if they are in attendance. Ted reinforced that it is a faculty meeting. David wondered if they should be there at all. Ted felt the best approach was to be open.

VI. Middle States Update

Elaine shared that the UFS is invited to attend the site-visit conducted by Dr. Fruend on Wednesday, November 20 at 8.15am. The co-chairs request RSVPs. The location is to be determined. Ted shared that if you plan to attend it will be presumed that you have read the Middle-States Self Study.

VII. Issue for this Semester

Elaine S. shared that the co-chairs are concerned to make the UFS’s relationship with the Dean’s council more productive. There is a Deans’ liaison who is supposed to attend the open meetings with the PO and the president and that liaison hasn’t always been in attendance.

Discussion:
Sven said that it was worth noting that the structure of the Dean’s Council has changed.

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