University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 18, 2014

Attending:

Zed Adams, NSSR
Elaine Abelson, Lang
Anthony Anemone, NSPE
Banu Bargu, NSSR
Adia Benjamin, Mannes
Erin Cho, Parsons
Erica Fae, Drama
Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Josh Furst, Lang
Danielle Goldman, Lang
Richard Harper, Jazz
Rachel Heiman, NSPE
Nicolas Langlitz, NSSR
David Lopato, Jazz
Frank Nemhauser, Mannes, Co-Chair
Richard Salcer, Parsons
Elaine Savory, Lang, Co-Chair
Candy Schulman, NSPE
Earl Scott, Parsons
Luciana Scrutchen, Parsons
Shane Selzer, Parsons
Carlos Teixeira, Parsons
Sven Travis, Parsons, Co-Chair
Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang

Not attending:

Ragnar Freidank, Drama
Peter Haratonik, NSPE
Marcus Turner, NSPE
Inessa Zaretsky, Mannes

Frank called the meeting to order.

First order of business was to discuss keeping individual names in the comments of the UFS meeting minutes. After discussion a vote was taken with seven UFS representatives voting to remove the names and ten voting to keep the names or remove name voluntarily. Moving forward individual names will be kept in the minutes unless requested otherwise.
Frank then asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the October meeting. A motion was made and then seconded. The motion was approved.

I. Salary Increase Memo

The main topic of discussion was the email from the President’s Office in regard to raises and the fact that they were to be more in line merit and achievements this year. The co-chairs met with Tim, David, Bryna, and Tokumbo. At the meeting the administration acknowledged that the wording of the email was troublesome. This communication pertained to FTF and full-time admins, not PTF. The administration asked the co-chairs if they should send out a clarifying email but the co-chairs suggested waiting until the UFS met before doing so. The administration clarified that it is a very small amount of money in question and another other option might include across the board increases, though that would not address pay inequity, which is something the university would like to address.

Sven stated that with standard across the board raises people making more money get a bigger raise. The knee jerk reaction to the communication about merit raises is that it means some people will get raises and some will not but the PO and president thought it should imply that all people get raises but only to different degrees, despite the fact that the memo didn’t really say anything in great detail.

Elaine S. pointed out to the administration that the memo wasn’t that good and they agreed. The word “supervisor” was problematic. It was also hard to discern between who they are talking to, faculty or staff. The real point is that there be consultation with the UFS and it is a good thing that they have asked the UFS to weigh in.

Discussion:

David was concerned with the UFS taking up this issue. He pointed out that the majority of faculty at the university are PTF and he worried that these increase were at the expense of the PTF since it might impact what the university can give to PTF making union negotiations harder since there may be less money. Sven said that the amount of money in discussion is a drop in the bucket. If FTF were to renounce raises entirely it would have very little impact on PTF negotiations. David said he felt that the FTF should get raises but that just not sure if here is the place to discuss it. Adria wonder if PTF and FTF separate line items. Sven answered yes. Then Sven clarified and said it actually wasn’t that distinct. The university is running the red. The memo also applied to staff. Elaine A. thought it was an ill-advised memo. Zed asked what the actual proposal is and didn’t want to get caught up in the language. He wanted to know what it means to be judged on “merit”? Sven said there aren’t any parameters set up. Elaine S. said that the deans would determine how the chunk of money would get parsed out. It’s up to the deans’ discretion. The question was what the UFS felt should happen: across the board raises, merit, or equity? Frank said that the administration expects everyone to get a raise based on the merit proposal. Anthony said that the problem with merit based raises is that the system of review at TNS doesn’t really get into merit. There is no rating system.
At NSPE a memo from dean stated that NSPE planned to use the money to address salary inequity. It was stated that the FTF already received the information about health care increases and maybe the raise will balance it out. Frank said the university is absorbing about half of the health insurance increase. Carlos felt that FTF were not well informed and don’t have the right engagement to be able to decide which method of distribution the UFS should support. He wanted to know more about the faculty bands since it seemed like the decision was based on that. Why not disclose that information? He felt there was a real lack of transparency and engagement. And further, what would happen next year? It was troublesome that the deans get to make the decisions. The whole thing seemed extremely political. Sven stated that there have been equity raises almost every year. There have always been merit raises. It is built into the budget of university. There has just been a freeze on these sorts of raises for the last few years. The question was how to move forward with new procedure. Banu said she had no idea what the small amount of money in question was and because of that felt it was almost futile to have a discussion about how to break it up. Sven said he requested these figures. Transparency should be one the elements that are emphasized if the UFS sends a memo. Another question was what was the timeframe for this merit? One year? Three years? That is something that should also be discussed. The way in which merit is defined and also the scope of it should also be defined. Anthony said to keep separate salary negotiations separate since it is a different issue. Anthony also pointed out that a big problem is that there is no mapped out procedure. Erin said she would like to see greater transparency and wanted to know what percentage an across the board increase would be. Frank said 2.5%. Erin said she would like to propose an across the board raise and then the issue of equity could be discussed. Elaine S. shared that the president is going to invite UFS members to have breakfast with him at his house. He has already been doing this with junior level administrators and has found it is a good way to hear their concerns. Frank said that if the UFS could reach a consensus then the co-chairs could relay their views to the president and the PO. It was pointed out that there is a difference between having a voice and helping with process and procedure. There should be a policy on the books about how these things are done so that it is transparent and consistent. David L. said that he hasn’t seen and transparency in regard to the PTF negotiations. Carlos said that the issue of FTF salary increases is different than negotiations. Sven said that a bigger issue was how this decision was made. It should be suggested that the UFS be a part of these decisions. Luciana said that whatever the UFS decided should be brought back to the local faculty councils. Elaine S. said that every UFS member should be regularly reporting to their local faculty council. And then they should report the UFS about their local faculty council issues. More work should to be done to clarify local council and UFS communications. Richard H. stated that it is always the issues of procedures that are the problem. Procedures should be transparent so the administration can be held accountable for them. Anthony suggested that the UFS move to take a vote, not on the specifics of salary distribution, but instead on urging the administration to consult with the UFS before making a decision. Erin said that if merit raises come at the expense of the across the board increases then she has an issue. Frank suggested rather than decide upon a specific procedure that the UFS should report back to PO and president that the UFS should be consulted in these decisions. Luciana said that she did not support moving forward with a non-policy. Anthony suggested for a statement that
the UFS urge the administration to consult with the UFS further before implementing a final version of salary increases and create a policy whereby administration discuss and consults with this body. Sven pointed out that they could not resolve it all now so maybe instead a call for proposed approaches to be voted on at the next meeting. It was felt that something needed to come out of this meeting. Sven suggested calling a special meeting for further discussion. Frank wondered if this could be handled via Google docs, or try quickly to refine a statement now. Elaine S. felt that whatever came out of the meeting should be deliberate. Richard S. made a motion for a special meeting on the subject. The motion was then seconded and approved. Potential special meeting date would be Tuesday, December 2.

II. Visit from USS Co-Chairs Nico Galvan and Bryce Geyer

Nico is a BAFA student at Jazz and Lang. Bryce is a graduate student at NSSR.

Nico reported that currently the USS is fighting for student representation on the BoT. The USS co-chairs have been meeting with BoT members to address some issues that have come up like the issue of confidentiality, how many students would serve as representatives, and how those student will be selected. The USS will decide internally who gets to serve and initially asked for five representatives. The USS is currently in negotiations about this, with the end result likely being two representative total: one undergraduate and one graduate. Nico said that they originally wanted one year, staggered terms. But since it is likely to be a big learning curve the term will likely be two years.

**Discussion:**

Elaine A. wondered how many universities have student representation on the BoT. Nico replied that many do. Frank wondered how the representatives for the USS were determined. Nico answered that it is by percentage. Bryce shared that the Graduate Student Faculty Senate exists and is alive and well but that the administration is shifting attention to the USS as being representative of all TNS students. Another big issue for the USS is tuition. There is also a call for more connectedness among the students so that students feel more like they are part of the university as a whole. Nico noted that USS BoT representative will have voting rights. Elaine A. asked if students should be able to vote on financial issues. Bryce said it would be a case by case issue when there is a conflict of interest. It was decided that sending student representative to the BoT without voting power wouldn’t send a good message. Carlos asked what the USS will bring to the table and what were the USS’s goals? Bryce replied that while there is yet a specific agenda students will be able to bring information from the ground level of the university. Nico shared that he wanted to specifically get involved with some BoT subcommittees. Richard S. asked if the USS was concerned about class size. Nico and Bryce said that this topic has come up in relation to the merging of the performing arts schools but that there has not been any particular stand or statement. Jurgen shared that a big issue for faculty is the issue of centralization of advising and other service around campus and he wanted to know what the USS felt about that. While no members of the USS are on any PO committees, the president wanted to have individuals from the USS work one on one
with administrators in particular areas but it is difficult to get long term commitments from students. Members from the USS are currently serving on the Honorary Degree Committee and the Student Disciplinary Committee. Earl wondered what the USS thought about student debt. Nico said that they haven’t talked about it that much but that they do lose senators every year because students can’t afford to keep come to TNS. Frank wondered how pervasive it was that students take some of their classes at other universities. The USS co-chairs said if the UFS provided specific questions that the USS can do an informal poll. Margaret asked if there was a possibility for independent study credits as an incentive for students to serve on the USS. Nico said the students would love to be compensated in some way since they don’t have too many people who want to run for the USS and they have low voter turnout. Earl mentioned that it is hard to find places to meet with students and he wondered if the USS ever discussed setting aside spaces to meet with faculty. The USS co-chairs said that this is not something the USS has discussed but there have been rumblings about this issue. For a while at NSSR advisors were meeting with their students in quasi-public places but that has been changed. Students would support more private spaces. Elaine S. pointed out that the USS and UFS have a lot of overlapping issues and she wondered how these two bodies could talk more. The USS co-chairs invited members of the UFS to attend their meetings. They also mentioned that all divisions except NSPE have an internal student council. David L. asked for a list of the USS so that UFS representative can see who from their division is also serving. Elaine S. asked how the number of USS representatives will change after the performing arts consolidation happened. Nico said he would write up a short document of initiatives and will share it with the UFS. Elaine S. suggested that all former co-chairs of the UFS contribute to a document of institutional memory.

III. Other business

Richard S. reported on the Learning Environments committee, who are set to meet after Thanksgiving. Some members from the LE committee are also planning to meet with IT to talk about new developments. Richard S. also won the contest to rename the IT office. It is now called IT Central.

Luciana reported that she attended a meeting about the UC being open 24 hours but she hasn’t heard a final determination yet. If approved, it would be a pilot for the spring 2015 semester.

Banu reported about the University Research Council. The university research office is in operation but she feels like faculty are not aware that there is support. Banu said that she would be happy to convey faculty thoughts to the council. Two issues that the council are discussing are course buyouts from external grants and intellectual property.

Erin reported on the University Curriculum Council. The UCC are currently reviewing a new master level programs in Jazz and NSPE but they are both still in the very early stages.
Jurgen reported on the Academic Affairs committee. He said that they might make a subcommittee for PTF faculty affairs so the PTF feel like that can use the senate to discuss issue more specific to them. Shane noted that this is important since other PTF in her division want to know what the UFS stance would be on a possible PTF strike.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded and approved. Meeting adjourned.