University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2014

In Attendance:

1. Elaine Abelson, Lang
2. Emily Barnett, Parsons
3. Adria Benjamin, Mannes
4. Carolyn Berman, NSPE
5. Julie Boyd, Drama
6. Ted Byfield, Parsons
7. Erin Cho, Parsons
8. Wendy D’Andrea, NSSR
9. Margaret Fiore, NSPE
10. Ragnar Freidank, Drama
11. Peter Haratonik, NSPE
12. David Lopato, Jazz
13. Gina Luria Walker, NSPE
14. Frank Nemhauser, Mannes
15. Julia Ott, Lang
16. Richard Salcer, Parsons
17. Elaine Savory, Lang
18. Candy Schulman, NSPE
19. Earl Scott, Parsons
20. Luciana Scrutchen, Parsons
21. Shane Selzer, Parsons
22. Chris Stover, Jazz
23. Sven Travis, Parsons
24. Marcus Turner, NSPE
25. Val Vinokur, Lang
26. Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang
27. Susan Yelavich, Parsons
28. Inessa Zaretsky, Mannes

Not Attending:

29. Marcel Kinsbourne, NSSR
30. TBD, NSSR

I. Minutes

Elaine S. called the meeting to order. She reminded everyone that the President and Provost would be joining the meeting at 9am and that there was a full agenda to get through.
Elaine S. asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. Carolyn pointed out that the resolution text that was passed at the previous meeting was missing the language of “faculty senate.” As it currently appeared it only stated “faculty” and she wanted that to be corrected. A motion was made to approve the minutes with the changed language. The motion was seconded and then approved.

Elaine S. shared that the co-chairs were anxious at the end of last semester about how slow the new committees were to get together. Elaine S. hopes that this semester the UFS could make the new committee and the UFS representation on the PO committees more effective.

II. Reports from Subcommittee Chairs & UFS Representative on PO Committees

Senate Affairs, Susan Yelavich (Chair)

Susan said that since she didn’t give the committees report at the last meeting she has more or less the same to report. The SA committee has been working on drafting a UFS brand for communication purposed. She handed around a draft flyer to get feedback. The flyer has a board that makes use of the Orozco murals. The text could be interchangeable. Susan also shared that she felt it might be beneficial to hang out note cards to faculty prior to another UFS Town Hall so they can write down their concerns in advance and so the UFS can document how many faculty attend.

Discussion:
Sven said that even though there aren’t really any hot button issues at the moment the Town Hall might be a good way to take the faculty’s temperature and see how everyone is doing. Elaine S. said that maybe the next UFS town hall could take place right after spring break. Susan said that the design the UFS flyer was by Lucille Tenazas.

Learning Environments, Peter Haratonik (Chair)

Peter reported that the committee has not met yet but have concerns about the new spaces around the university. There have been a lot of big changes and lots of big moves. Peter also said the committee still lacks a clear direction.

Discussion:
Sven said that maybe the focus should be on drawing these issues out more for a town hall discussion and to help figure out a way to agenda-ize the next town hall. Elaine S. shared that faculty member Cecilia Rubino discovered through the theater teaching she does that the new auditorium is a mess and is not designed for the kind of theater she does. David L. suggested that maybe the committee try to have a Skype session.
Faculty Affairs, Elaine Abelson (Chair)

Elaine A. said that the PO FAC is working on a green paper now about service, which will be reviewed soon. Elaine A. said that service varies greatly from division to division. The PO wants to see if/how it can be stabilized and equalized. Elaine A. said that Parsons and NSPE seem to be overburdened.

Discussion:

Elaine S wondered if service will count more in reviews. Elaine A. said she thought it really would depend. Carolyn clarified that the green paper is not a draft policy, it is a discussion point. She will share the green paper with the co-chairs. The UFS should discuss it. The green paper should also be brought to divisional faculty meetings. Elaine A. said it is in the process of being finalized now. Ted shared that after the no confidence vote about the process of the handbook revisions last spring he has been trying to come up with a better system from which to gather feedback. Ted said that right now the consultive contrast just mimics the administrative structure so he created a prototype system that he felt was an improvement. Bryna has been coming around to the idea and he hoped that the system would be in place in about two weeks.

Scholarly Communications, Chris Stover (Chair)

Chris reported that the committee still had not met. He said he was still trying to sort out what exactly the committee should be focusing on.

Discussion:

Carolyn attended the Research Council meeting and said that the council wanted to create a faculty culture of research at university and not just pedagogically. They want to gather information about what faculty are doing so that they can better support their efforts. Carolyn said that former NSSR dean Michael Schober was hired to do this kind of work in the PO when he returns from his leave.

Academic Affairs, Jurgen Von Mahs (Chair)

Jurgen reported that the committee met briefly and intends on doing a survey about workload issues. He said that the committee had a sense of how they wanted to go about it and wants to get a handle on more than just committee work. He said he was also curious to see how faculty think of themselves so the survey would be more of a pulse, and not statistically driven. The committee is interested in differentiating between FTF, PTF, admin, employment categories, rank, divisions, and gender. Jurgen said he will circulate the draft survey to the UFS when it is ready, then hopes to administer the survey during March.
Discussion:
Margaret volunteered to serve on the Curriculum Committee but it meets when she is teaching so she can’t go. The UFS needs another volunteer to serve on this committee. Jurgen said that the Academic Affairs committee needs a new member because Ido Tavory (NSSR) is on leave. Ted felt that producing data was a lot of work and wondered if they should ask the administration if it could provide financial support. Richard shared that he attended the University Facilities Committee and said he would email around the schedule of capital projects.

Elaine S. asked that each committee chair send full report or suggestions to the co-chairs. She also formally welcomed Shane Selzer (Parsons) to the UFS.

III. Open Meeting

Joined by Bryna Sanger, David Scobey, Tim Marshall, and David Van Zandt

David Van Zandt

David began by giving full details of damage the new University Center sustain after the water main break. He said that they lost bottom floors of building where there were classrooms, a fitness center, a laundry center, and study/practice rooms. He also said that there may be some damage to the auditorium but that they need to look into that further. The basements in the Welcome Center and the Parsons building flooded and the boiler in the Parsons building was ruined. Parsons also lost some workshops and student lockets. Luckily the university was able to make accommodations. The ceramic classes were outsourced to another location. Damage won’t be fully restored until the end of the semester. On the bright side, David said they would have an opportunity to redesign the way that space was configured to better serve TNS community. Overall it is about $20-$30 million dollar damage, all of which was covered by insurance. In other news, David boasted about the great food in the new cafeteria. The cafeterias in 55 West 13th and at Lang have cut back on their services to the grab-n-go variety. David also reminded the UFS that there is a Faculty Resource Center in the new building that they should take advantage of. The café on the 7th floor of the new building is not open yet. There is also a staff and faculty area there. David said he is proud of all of the great events that have taken place so far in the new building. He said that there are still some small issues cropping up here and there but overall he has received a lot of positive feedback.

Discussion:

Richard thought that some of the counters by the new cafeteria were too high. David L. asked about any issues residents on 13th street have experienced. He said he knew of someone who was poorly affected. David said to have them call the President’s Office with complaints. Elaine S. asked about plans for the old
Tishman. David said he was aware of the issues with the new space and was in the process of trying to figure out how to handle them. Sven was curious what reactions have been to having Fashion downtown. Luciana said that most of the reactions have been positive. She said that while the spaces are a little smaller than they were uptown the community aspect is excellent and makes it easier to better participate.

Tim Marshall

Tim reported that there have been changes in work the PO is doing. Tim hoped to give a more full presentation at the next open meeting. Basically the PO is working on a frame for the strategic plan. The PO wants to enhance academic quality and balance the academic programs better. The university does not want to keep growing. Right now the PO is looking at the graduate programs the university offers to see if they are based on more credits then are required and if so why it is done that way.

Discussion:
Ragnar wondered if faculty could be a part of this conversation, particularly the PTF. Tim replied that this assessment is program-based, and is not sure what the feedback mechanism will be just yet. Tim reiterated that he hopes to have a more full discussion at the next UFS open meeting. Margaret wondered if the projects had names. Tim answered that at the moment they are calling it “Right-Sizing" but admitted they needed to come up with a better word. Luciana said that fashion students now feel like they are getting what they are paying for since the new building opened. Val wondered how one “Right-Sized” PhD programs. David said that the university needs to evaluate its capacity and come up with a way to better support its students. Wendy asked about faculty research support. Tim said that the PO has been pre-occupied with the new handbook and Middle States and now that all of that is coming to an end the PO is looking to shift and expand its faculty development and research support.

Bryna Sanger

Bryna said that the PO is focusing on identifying what areas it currently provides with faculty support and is figuring out ways it needs to improve or evolve altogether. The PO wants to make investments in areas they think they are weak in. The areas where the PO is looking to development support faculty support are: 1) research and creative practice, development of grants and grants writing, seed support, and grant programs; 2) pedagogy, teaching, and learning since the PO has not been as systematic about this as it would like in identifying pedagogical support for curriculum and syllabi, use of e-technology, social justice, and service learning; 3) mentoring and professional development, the PO does do some of that for dossier preparation but other areas are needed, career planning, strategies for creative practice, work-life balance, the PO has been doing small mentoring grants but thinks it can do better; 4) leadership
development, from the COACHE survey the PO learned that faculty do a lot of service and the PO hasn't provided support or help in regard to leadership roles that faculty are asked to step in to.

Bryna said that former NSSR dean Michael Schober will be Associate Provost for Research in the fall. He will be here half time. She hopes to consolidate operations for faculty research and streamline administrative processes and the life cycle of grants.

Discussion:
Sven said it sounded like the focus was on more generic research grant processes for more traditional research. He wondered about out of the box facilitation of non-traditional scholarship. Bryna said it was something that the PO was thinking about.

Ted shared that the BoT invited the UFS to participate in a conversation about whether the university should divest itself from fossil fuels investments. There has since been vigorous debate on the matter. The UFS should make a recommendation about this, though there is no rush to make a decision. David said that the university was going to hold an educational session for the community about this since it is a complex issue and is a great way to practice critical thinking across the university.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and then approve. Meeting adjourned.