University Faculty Senate Meeting
September 15, 2015

Attendance:

Zed Adams, NSSR
Elaine Abelson, Lang
Charles Allison, NSPE
Banu Bargu, NSSR
Adria Benjamin, Co-Chair, Performing Arts
Julie Boyd, Performing Arts
Erin Cho, Parsons
Josh Furst, Lang
Danielle Goldman, Lang
Richard Harper, Performing Arts
David Lopato, Performing Arts
Frank Nemhauser, Performing Arts
Richard Salcer, Parsons
Barry Salmon, Co-Chair, NSPE
Elaine Savory, Lang, Co-Chair
Candy Schulman, NSPE
Luciana Scrutchen, Parsons
Carlos Teixeira, Parsons
Sven Travis, Co-Chair, Parsons
Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang
Jennifer Wilson, Lang

Not Attending:

Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Ragnar Freidank, Performing Arts
Rachel Heiman, NPSE
Earl Scott, Parsons
Marcus Turner, NSPE
Inessa Zartesky, Performing Arts

1. Welcome

Sven called the meeting to order. He reported that the UFS had hoped to have its first meeting at the end of August but had to cancel it because more than half of the senate members could not attend. Sven asked for a motion to approve the minutes from May’s meeting. A motion was made. It was seconded and then approved.

2. Faculty communications with divisions: discussion of expectation and protocol (regular debrief with divisional deans and reports to divisional faculty)
Sven gave a brief report on deans’ council representation on the UFS. In the past the deans’ council did have some who attended UFS meetings. The UFS made a request to the deans’ council again to have a representative join UFS meetings but nothing ever came of it. But the co-chairs share a concern that it may be inappropriate to have a dean attend UFS meetings since the deans should be talking to UFS representatives in their divisions for information.

Discussion:
Zed wondered if the deans would rather being issued a report at the end of the academic year that summarized all UFS issues. He made a motion to do that. The motion was seconded. Elaine S. said that she didn’t want that to be the only solution. She felt that the deans should come to some portion of the UFS meetings sometimes. Jurgen pointed out that the UFS keeps minutes that are publically posted so deans could look at them. He didn’t feel there was a need for an extra report. Luciana wondered if the deans were seeking information that they were not finding. She felt that would be helpful to know. Luciana suggested that at the end of every semester the UFS could post a consolidated document. Adria said that it’s more a question of if UFs representatives were meeting with their deans to share information about the UFS. The UFS voted on the motion to compile a semester end report that lists all of the motions passed during the semester. The motion was seconded and then approved. Charles wondered who would be responsible for compiling the document. Sven felt that it might be an opportunity to ask the PO for further support.

Sven asked if senators are regularly meeting with their deans/dean’s council.

- Frank said they met once in the last year with dean’s council, sent emails to all faculty, attended meetings with department heads and dean.
- Adria said it’s hard to get faculty to engage with the senate but Sven noted there was a difference between meeting with dean and trying to get faculty interested.
- Elaine S. said that UFS representative don’t meet with the dean. They meet with the Lang faculty council.
- Richard S. said maybe UFS representatives meet with the executive dean once a semester, but never with the school dean.

Sven felt there should be regular meetings (even if once a semester) with UFS representative and their deans. Sven said that this issue related to the question about budget submission. The budget committee wondered if the deans are meeting with UFS representatives before submitting their budgets for approval in order to explain what is happening with the budget but it is clear that these sorts of meetings don’t happen. Julie shared that UFS representatives attended only two meetings a semester where they get five minutes to say something about the UFS. Their faculty did try to confront an issue with the administration and put together a petition but the administration never responded. Sven made a motion to put a structure in place that required divisional UFS representatives have a minimum of one meeting a semester with their divisional deans. David L. said that he does report at the Jazz executive committee meetings about the UFS but it’s normally very brief. He felt that if he has something more substantial to report
than he would. He felt that the UFS spent too much time talking about making procedures and never really gets anything done. He called attention to the outstanding issue of FTF and PTF remuneration. PTF are not paid extra for their time so there is little incentive to attend or schedule extra meetings. Sven agreed that the UFS can’t establish itself further on the charity of its members and that remuneration was an on-going issue. Zed felt that they needed positive initiatives to bring to deans, concrete thing, and until then did not feel that there was a need for regular meetings. He was against the motion. Frank felt that they should expect there to be at least one meeting a semester, even if it was short and there wasn’t much to report. Sven said that if UFS representatives didn’t think it was important to meet with their deans about budget issues then they can vote against the motion. The proposal was a suggestion from the budget committee. They felt that before the deans submit their budget proposals they should meet with UFS representatives. That said, Sven felt that adding the word “budget” to the motion was restrictive since there are other equally important issues that deans should share with UFS representatives. Carlos felt that they should think carefully about when the meetings are schedule and what their agendas are. Jennifer said that we didn’t really care if the motion passed. She felt the conversation was enough to get these sorts of discussions on their radar. Elaine S. asked when the budget was formulated. November? Sven said that he had to go to a meeting on Friday to report the UFS’s feeling about embracing this process. Barry liked the idea of tying the regular meetings to budget concern, since it is so important. Richard H. suggested language like “regular meeting on budget and other matters.” He felt that the specificity was important. Sven doesn’t want the UFS representatives to report to the dean, he wants the deans to report to the senators. Banu agreed that the word “budget” should remain in the motion. She felt it made the motion more serious and might hold them more accountable.

A motion was made to modify the language for the budget committee motion, saying that deans are required to meet with UFS representatives at least once a semester to discuss budget proposal and other issues. The motion was seconded and then approved.

3. UFS committee makeup and charges (report from recent survey)

Sven asked the UFS to fill out the survey for subcommittees they received via email. The co-chairs will make assignments by next week. He expressed that there was nearly a unanimous sentiment that the UFS should be more influential.

4. Faculty salaries: status and process moving forward

- UFS participation
- Banding data
- Maternity/paternity leave

Sven reported that the UFS has sent a clear message to the administration that they needed to be involved with discussions about raises for FTF. The FTF Affairs Committee on the UFS will be the primary engaging body in these discussions. Sven reported that the co-chairs spoke a lot about banding and banding data with the
administration and they received a promise from the PO to make available some portion of the banding information moving forward. There will be raises this year. This decision was made by the Budget Committee. Raises will occur in January. The co-chairs will share any information about FTF raises as received.

Barry pointed out that the complaint wasn’t so much about how much the raise was, but rather, the flow of information. That was the complaint. And he felt this to be true for many issues.

Sven reported on the issue of maternity/paternity leave. He said that the university made a commitment to review its policy. The PO’s view is that the divisions have been setting their own policies and that it's a broken approach, which is why it is under review.

Jennifer wanted to know about a GWI policy, or if there was an appeals policy or merit increases? Sven says everything was on the table for discussion.

5. Compensation for UFS service

Sven reported that this topic was still in discussion with the administration.

6. University Budget Committee report (Sven)

Sven reported that 95% of TNS budget is static, and includes salaries and building maintenance. Any extra money comes from meeting enrollment targets. The Budget Committee was created specifically to make decisions on how flexible money is spent each year. Last year the flexible money was 5 million dollars. In the future it could be more. Sven felt it was important to get the UFS involved. Though it is an advisory body, all their recommendations were accepted last year, and some of those recommendations had to do with raises. Sven noted that this was how conversations came up about if senators meet with deans regularly. Sven hoped to at least make UFS members aware of how and what budget decisions are made. The purpose of the committee is not to originate requests but to evaluate requests.

7. University Ombudsperson, Janis Schonauer: 9:30am

Janis reported that she started her work with the university last spring and that there is a strong commitment on the part of the PO and the president to make this successful at TNS. Janis said that she is allowed to deal with all faculty and staff as long as the issue in question isn’t dealt with specifically in a contract. Her role is to provide a safe, confidential, and impartial space. She also said she was available to do trainings or facilitate group meetings. Janis said that she will be on site once a month and will be available electronically the rest of the time. Once the Ombuds office is up and running there will be a recruitment done for an official appointment. She reported that it is too soon to really characterize her findings at TNS. She did say that she has found a lot of support for it though. Ombuds is an informal way for people to raise issues that
otherwise might not get raised since the only other option would be to go through Human Resources. She can be reached at 646.830.0530.

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