University Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2014 [Updated 11/18/14]

Attending:

Elaine Abelson, Lang
Zed Adams, NSSR
Banu Bargu, NSSR
Adria Benjamin, Mannes
Erin Cho, Parsons
Margaret Fiore, NSPE
Ragnar Freidank, Drama
Peter Haratonik, NSPE
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
Marcus Turner, NSPE
Val Vinokur, Lang
Jurgen Von Mahs, Lang
Inessa Zaretsky, Mannes

Not attending:

Anthony Anemone, NSPE
Erica Fae, Drama

I. Welcome

Sven began the meeting by welcoming everyone. The co-chairs and the UFS members introduced themselves. Sven introduced the USS co-chairs and invited them to come back to another UFS meeting in the future.

II. Approval of Minutes from Final 13-14 UFS Meeting (May 6)

Sven asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made, then seconded and approved.
III. Report on results from Senator Committee Preference survey (proposed makeup of UFS Committees)

Sven thanked everyone for filling out the online form but that the form did not capture names/emails addressed. Sven handed around a print out of the survey for the UFS members to indicate their preferences.

Sven said that one challenge from last year was that it took a long time to get the committees formed and he and the other co-chairs would like to avoid that this year. An explanation of the charge for each committed was circulated via email. Committees meet outside the UFS about once a month, but it varies. Sven said that chairs for each of the committees will need to be identified.

Discussion:
Elaine S. said that she would like to see a lot of committee action this year and that the UFS needs to do more than show up to a monthly meeting. She hopes the UFS can further engage the faculty this year.

Sven said that the committees have changed a lot over the last few years and that they have changed in regard to the concerns faculty have for the university. He also said that the co-chairs will do their best to integrate faculty concerns into committee work this year, and noted that faculty who would like to play a larger role in the UFS and beyond should speak up and make themselves known. One of the biggest concerns of the co-chairs is that the UFS become more relevant, since as it stands it tends to be a more reactive body, which was good during a certain time in TNS history but should evolve and become better at being proactive.

IV. Report on results from “Important Issues” survey

Not discussed

V. Dates of UFS Town Hall update

Not discussed.

VI. Other Business

Frank reminded the UFS that the co-chairs have monthly meetings with the president and the provost and are able to expression faculty concerns in those meetings.

Sven said that he would take it upon himself to get coffee and tea for the UFS meetings or he will commit to bring it himself.

Sven also said the co-chairs were considering using the faculty lounge in the new UC for senate meetings. If the location is changed the UFS will be notified.
Elaine S. said she felt like it was symbolically interesting to occupy space in a new building that is allocated specifically for faculty.

Sven shared that there are still two UFS seat open for Parsons and that he is working on a new election. Lang still needs one UFS member to replace a faculty who is on leave. Sven, any questions for PO and president?

Elaine A. reported briefly on the PO FAC meeting. She said some of their focused issues this year are changes in the grievance committee procedures, service issues, and mentoring.

Sven reminded the UFS that the PO asks for UFS representatives are a number of university-wide committees. Sven said that the co-chairs are going to swiftly identify UFS reps for these committees.

Jurgen said that he is still concerned about the topography of committee structures around the university and felt it would be helpful to know so that work is not duplicated. He said he would like a clear description of standing committees. Sven said that he is going to work on putting a list together and will circulate it. Sven also noted that the co-chairs will try to balance the divisional representation on the subcommittees, as well as the FTF/PTF ratio. Even though the FTF FAC subcommittee will deal solely with FTF affairs it is still open to all senators.

Shane asked if there had been an update about the divestment issue. Sven said that he had not received any updated information but will follow up.

Peter pointed out that there are other committees around the university aside from just the PO ones and said that he would like a master list of these committees, when they meet, and if faculty are expected to be represented.

Elaine S. volunteered to put together a road map of university committees.

Sven reported that in regard to the green paper about service that Ted went to great lengths to establish electronic commenting process but that there was a lack of clarity about what would happen with the comments. The co-chairs had assumed that the comments would go to PO. But it turns out that the UFS has to be an intermediary for the PO. Overall it is a great system but process isn’t really sorted out. The UFS should be involved with setting up the rules. Elaine S. also noted that the comments on the system were really low – not a lot of faculty participated. She said that there are likely many reasons for this but overall need to figure out a way to boost faculty morale.

Luciana shared that at Parsons groups of faculty met and came up with comments for the green paper but that only one person when in and made the comments so it looks like way less people participated in the process. Val didn’t think the faculty should be so hard on themselves. He said he talked to other faculty about it and overall most faculty felt like it was an uninspiring document and didn’t have much confidence that it would amount to anything.
It was said a call to engage with this on the divisional level was felt.

VII. President and Provost

David Van Zandt, Tim Marshall, Bryna Sanger join the meeting.

David thanked the co-chairs for their service and felt like a good line of communication has been established. He also reported that through the Middle States review the university got a lot of good feedback about faculty governance, but that there still is a lot of work to do. David said that he wanted to have a good partnership with the UF's since it is the place to discuss significant issues and is not just representative of local concerns/ideas.

Accomplishments/Priorities

-Middle States reaccreditation
-Excellent management team
-Completed strategic plan
-Opening the University Center, despite damage from water main break
-Lots of moves, trying to consolidate space, both Fashion and Mannes buildings have been sold
-Creating Student Service Hub, 72 5th Ave., one stop shop for students, open by the end of the fall semester
-Parsons Equipment Center on the 2nd floor of Parsons building
-Jazz, Mannes, Drama will all be 55 West 13th specialized building
-6 East 16th, Graduate Student Hub
-Parsons Paris opened this year, launched partnership in Dubai and Shanghi
-Raised 26 million dollars last year
-Increased endowments, took proceeds from building sales
-Launched a new branding/marketing approach, did lots of research
-Financially stable but still vulnerable
-Work to do on improving systems around the university
-Right sizing, current work of the university, need faculty help with this
-Student success initiative, admissions through career services
-Build non-degree revenue
-Increase fundraising
-Improving the market, what people know about us and what people could know about us, are attractive once we are known about

Report from Tim

-A bunch of new minor options are being rolled-out
-Combination of skills/new programs re: Journalism and Design
-Long term want to reconcile about academic self and our financial self
-Want to approve decision making more horizontally, need the faculty perspective
Build strength of research support for faculty, still have a long way to go but trying to put efforts there

Rationalizing workload and service commitments for faculty, another big effort

Report from Bryna

- Michael Schober in PO half time to lead effort in research support, more workshops, more effort to build faculty from across the university together, more mentoring of junior faculty
- Service loads, learned a lot from the COACHE survey: concerned about clarity and expectations about reappointment reviews, faculty didn’t feel well mentored
- Simone Douglas, helping to develop better mentoring procedures, former chairs of UPRC
- Green paper (option papers) on service, looking forward to aggregated comments and move onto a white paper (policy paper) which will be shared with the faculty before it is approved, then update handbook to reflect that
- Handbook calls for each division to have a supplement, how certain things are handled locally, most divisions already have drafts, university task force is working in these supplements
- Strategic plan is calling for more horizontal type of work and collaboration, task force will pay attention to this
- Annual Faculty Self-Report, home-grown system has been suspended for the year, since University is closing contract with outside system Lyterati, easy to use, with a faculty database, asking for volunteers to try it out, be the beta group

David recommend that faculty or groups of faculty take initiative to think about how they can further contribute to the UFS and the university and asked that faculty come forward if they have an opinion.

Discussion:
Carlos asked what the administration’s strategic plan for the faculty was and was curious about the five to ten year plan for hiring and retention, since the PO’s recent emphasis has been programmatic and student centered. Sven pointed out that this would be interesting to know for all faculty, not just FTF.

David shared that an invitation will be forthcoming to attend breakfast at his home. The UFS will all be invited over the course of several dates.

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