

Minutes

Faculty Assembly Executive Council (EC) Meeting

November 20, 2013, 12:30 pm – 1:25 pm

GWP 320

Present: Katie Baird, Greg Benner, Zhiyan Cao, Sergio Davalos, Linda Dawson, Denise Drevdahl, Rich Furman, JW Harrington, Matt Kelley, Nita McKinley, Janie Miller, Amos Nascimento, Jill Purdy, Huatong Sun, Doug Wills

Absent: Orlando Baiocchi, Kelly Forrest, Debra Friedman, Michelle Garner

1. Class B Legislation – Unit and Degree Program Bylaws

Jill gave an overview of the purpose of the legislation, which is to ensure that all academic units and programs have clear lines of authority and procedure for fulfilling the responsibilities of the faculty. Katie pointed out the distinction between the Faculty Code's requirements and the spirit of the Code on this issue. She noted that the essence of Bylaws is that they convey that there are domains that faculty have responsibility for and we work together with administrators who are responsible for carrying out the faculty's decisions. JW indicated that bylaws need not cover every contingency, and he distinguished between standard operating procedures and bylaws. Underlying bylaws is the need to create a shared vision, thus a substantive discussion is needed to show where the bylaws are intended to go.

Sergio noted that he disliked working on bylaws, but saw their importance. He inquired how faculty members should know how to write bylaws. Jill stated that Faculty Assembly would provide guidance to units and help to engage the faculty in the process. Bylaws could be drafted by an individual or small group, or drawn from examples existing in IAS or Nursing. The process of reviewing and discussing the bylaws is what is important. Katie mentioned that bylaws in most units may not be as difficult as they were in IAS because they lacked clear structures and procedures.

Katie Baird moved to accept the proposed legislation, Doug Wills seconded; the vote was twelve in favor, zero opposed, one abstention. The motion passed and legislation was adopted.

2. VCAA/Chancellor's Report

JW provided concise updates on numerous campus issue and initiatives as follows:

- He noted that work was progressing on the child care center partnership and that the University Y groundbreaking would occur December 2.
- On his current agenda are faculty searches, paid professional leave (sabbatical) requests, and lecturer rehires.
- The Writing Program Administrators visit concluded with a lot of recommendations to work on. Most urgent needs are organization and staffing to be followed by work to develop standards and assessment of writing. JW noted that the campus as a whole needs more local expertise in assessment.
- On the topic of student retention, one-quarter retention rates have been good for new students and transfer students, with percentages in the 90s. The retention of first year

students to second year students, our greatest retention challenge, has improved slightly this autumn (see below). The target rate for first year students is in the mid 80s.

Annual Retention Rates (as of Autumn)	2010	2011	2012
First Year	75.5%	72.6%	77.7%
Transfer	87.5%	87.1%	89.9%

A job announcement has been made seeking a staff person for supporting highest achieving students with attaining scholarships (e.g. Rhodes). Also the TLC needs to be developed substantially. EC members asked for more detail on the reasons why students leave, and JW noted that data is hard to get but a staff person in Student Enrollment is working on it.

- JW shared proposed guidelines for how units at UWT might become schools. He noted that not every academic unit must be a school, that departments and schools can coexist. He also proposed that we maintain all the campus governance systems, noting that it would require the agreement of both the Chancellor and the faculty to change this. Rich Furman noted that a better context is needed to talk across programs. Amos commented that we don't seem to have strategic planning anymore. JW responded that he has concerns about being too centralized in planning but we could use strategic thinking that is not academic only. For example, some existing plans assumed a certain funding model and we need to adjust.

3. Admissions Standards and Pathways to Promise

Jill asked EC members to share responses from colleagues to the Pathways to Promise program and its admissions standards. Sergio noted three areas of concern: (1) the Pathways to Promise criteria, (2) general admissions criteria, and (3) the process by which admissions standards are set. EC members agreed that faculty need to establish a structure for advising admissions and be more involved. Rich mentioned concerns about student progress and wondered if there is a link between retention and admissions standards. He requested an analysis of the specific standards that have been set. Greg inquired about the role of holistic review in admissions. Faculty questioned the language of the Tacoma Pathways MOU which describes "both" sections of the SAT when there are three sections to it, and noted the language is corrected in the description of the Puyallup MOU. Denise wondered whether students with higher GPAs will not be admitted because we've provided this guarantee. Faculty also sought clarification on what a well written admissions letter is. Given the new freshman direct admissions to majors for highly talented students, several faculty expressed concern over a mixed message of whether UW Tacoma is actually a place for high performing students if we accept some with such low standards. An additional question raised was how these standards relate to the standards currently in use for students we are admitting.

The Executive Council agreed that the relationship between admissions standards and student success is vital. EC recommends putting resources into the analysis and Rich suggested that a faculty researcher could engage with the data. JW mentioned that Cindy Snyder, formerly in institutional research at Seattle U is now on our staff, and Jill noted that Karl has requested analysis from the College Board regarding SAT scores and student performance. EC members agreed that bringing faculty expertise to the question of admissions standards would be helpful.

4. Good of the Order

No new business arose.

Meeting Adjourned 1:31 pm