

**MINUTES OF THE
FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2014
Mason Hall D1, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.**

Senators Present: Jim Bennett, Charlene Douglas, Star Muir, Peter Pober, Joe Scimecca, Suzanne Scott, Peter Stearns, Susan Trencher.

Visitor Present: J.J. Davis, Senior Vice President

I. Approval of Minutes of February 25, 2014: The minutes were approved as distributed..

II. Announcements

President Cabrera will address the Faculty Senate at the April 2nd FS meeting

Budget Update : JJ Davis reported the Governor’s Budget unresolved as of today, with no definitive answers to anything. She provided “Preliminary Analysis of Budget Amendments Impacting Mason,” also to be distributed to Senators at the April 2nd meeting. Lack of clarification makes it hard for us as we look at tuition and fees – BOV tuition action takes place at May meeting. BOV members are also going down to Richmond. State funds comprise our largest donor. The next big time frame at the end of April – contingency planning before BOV meeting depends on what legislators will do.

Mason Hall/University Hall Moves: There are 31 different moves happening in Mason Hall/University Hall. This will free up 24-25K square feet of academic space which does not exist today. In describing particular details of the move, J. J. noted it is worth millions of dollars to consolidate folks to obtain more academic space. There will not be a reduction in the number of employees. Cathy Wolfe will provide a brief update on the moves at the April 2nd meeting.

Updates from Provost Stearns: He noted the new lobbyist is very effective, with a good track record. However this session has been an unusual challenge, such a confusing time. Some institutions are delaying their final BOV meetings.

Discussion on merger of SPP and PIA in final stages to create a new and larger school of Public and International Policy. There will be an open forum April 9th on budget framework. If decision is positive, will take to the BOV at the end of the year. While not a Faculty Senate issue, he wanted us to know about it. The majority of faculty in both units are enthusiastic in principle, but have not approved merger yet, with hesitation on budget issues. There is an MOU to protect CHSS interests.

The Faculty Senate reception for Provost Stearns will take place April 2, 2014, 4:30-6:30 p.m.in the Mason Hall Atrium.

III. Progress reports, business, and agenda items from Senate Standing Committees

A. Academic Policies – Suzanne Scott, Chair

We have no official items. The Faculty Senate approved the summer schedule to condense add period. The Academic Policies Committee felt the summer school schedule for 2014 was fait accompli.

Discussion: A member of the Executive Committee who also serves on the Summer School Advisory Committee believes Cathy Evans (Director, Summer School) made a good faith effort to notify faculty. There does not seem to be specific language in federal documents (requiring 6 week summer term for students eligibility to receive federal financial aid). Problems about the way systems of communication meshed here – not anyone’s fault; the Registrar’s Office also has similar concerns.

Senator Suzanne Slayden reviewed summer school calendars since 1966; class lengths were five weeks. Other area schools also have four and five week summer classes. Charlene and Suzanne will meet with Heidi Granger (Director, Student Financial Aid) and Cathy on April 9th. Provost Stearns noted there is no way to change Summer 2014 schedule and suggested we talk about this for next year. After some discussion, the Executive Committee decided Charlene would make an announcement to look at issue for next summer, dates for this summer are posted. To reconsider issue of length of summer term using information from this summer and to ask schedulers if there are problems.

B. Budget and Resources – Susan Trencher, Chair

We are working on a letter on the nature of growth of administrative salaries among universities across the country – not an action item for the April 2nd meeting.

C. Faculty Matters – Joe Scimecca, Chair

The Faculty Evaluation of Administrators survey just sent out. He has received phone calls from faculty about two major concerns: (1) confidentiality of responses, about this he can reassure faculty; (2) Perception that nothing is done with survey results, so why should faculty participate in survey? The same issues from years ago remain. He asked the committee for advice on how to handle the second group of concerns.

Discussion: When you look at the results over the years, most results were in the middle. Only a few administrators identified as getting very negative responses. It is a public way of gaining assurance that their efforts are worthwhile. All you can say is the administrators to whom the deans report receive the evaluation report. Provost Stearns disagreed with the perception, survey results are included in evaluation of deans and administrators.

D. Nominations – Jim Bennett, Chair

Keith Renshaw (CHSS) and Esther Elstun (CHSS-emerita) are nominated to serve as Faculty Senate Representatives to the Technology Leadership Council.

E. Organization and Operations – Star Muir, Chair

We are reviewing committee responsibilities. Some committees need to be more engaged than they are; lack of will among faculty members to do work on the committee. Hugh Sockett was appointed as chair of Academic Initiatives. Does UPTRAC have any business? Rulings for promotion and tenure decisions will be handed down soon. Star will continue to reach out to them. Suggestion made to appoint a convener if they do not elect a chair of the committee.

IV. Other Committees/Faculty Representatives

Faculty Handbook Committee - pending inclusion of revisions to Preface for Apr. 2nd agenda

Some members of the Executive Committee suggested ad hoc committee appointed every two years. . Concerns included significant, annual changes call into question how strong or forceful is the document (Handbook) itself. Others feel the need for updates in terminology; often not the same used by Human Resources. Changes to the Faculty Handbook must be approved by the BOV; would the BOV leave it alone if committee was not convened? As the Faculty Handbook Committee was duly approved by the Faculty Senate, this would involve bringing a motion to the floor by the Organization and Operations Committee to vote to eliminate it. Charlene suggested the Faculty Handbook Committee continue to meet and work during the summer. Some members of the Executive Committee expressed stronger case to eliminate committees which have been inactive for several years.

Mason Core Committee – Capstone Experience to replace Synthesis Requirement will be presented at April 23rd FS Meeting.

V. New Business, Updates, and Discussion

- Carnegie Institution Community Engagement classification Task Force – J. Muir requests five minutes to brief Faculty Senate.
- Minority and Diversity Issues committee discussion in which some minority female faculty members are being challenged in the classroom, not overtly, but in more subtle ways. The chair invited Dennis Webster (Director, Special Diversity Initiatives, University Life) to find out what is available – programs are student-focused. . How do we as concerned faculty build a support system to help faculty? After some discussion, suggested resources included the Center for Teaching Excellence, department chairs; you have to learn ways to handle it with appropriate demeanor as part of your job.
- Admissions Committee: Some questioned the need for an Admissions Committee. A former chair of the committee recalled the committee met once or twice a semester, and asked many questions and provided much input at a time there was no director of Admissions. Several years ago effort to lower TOEFL scores for admission successfully opposed by the Admissions Committee. Sees role of Admissions Committee as oversight responsibility, for all faculty will have to deal with admitted students. Need to change policy in which students transferring from NOVA who take English 101 and 102 in lieu of TOEFL score, much larger issue than TOEFL or INTO.

VI. Agenda Items for April 2, 2014 FS Meeting

- Draft FS Minutes March 5, 2014
- President Cabrera (Announcements)
- Provost Stearns (Announcements)
- Budget Update (Announcements)
- Brief Update on Mason Hall/University Hall Move – Cathy Wolfe (Announcements)
- Keith Renshaw (CHSS) and Esther Elstun (CHSS-emerita) are nominated to serve as Faculty Representatives to the Technology Leadership Council (Nominations)
- Annual Faculty Senate Evaluation of the President and Provost by Faculty Senate Standing Committees, University Standing Committees (Executive Committee) Attachment A
- Faculty Handbook Revisions (Faculty Handbook Committee)
- Carnegie Institution Community Engagement classification Task Force – J Muir (Mason Core Committee)

VII. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

ATTACHMENT A

President/Provost Survey Responses Received as of March 24, 2014 8:00 PM.

- **Evaluation of the President and Provost by Faculty Senate Standing Committees, University Standing Committees, and Ad Hoc Committees AY 2013-14**
 - responses compiled February-March, 2014Note that some committees did not provide responses to each question.

1. During the past calendar year has the President or Provost announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President or Provost in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?

Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

Academic Policies: Our committee did not have occasion to interact with either the President or the Provost, but we did interact with Associate Provosts. The Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education communicated regularly with our committee about the upcoming changes in General Education. The Associate Provost for Graduate Education has agreed to attend AP meetings whenever we discuss graduate matters. There was an issue early in AY 2013-14 because of policies about time limits for PhD students, which were not brought to the AP committee. The Associate Provost met with the Chair of AP and the chair of O&O, and we were satisfied that there would be ways to avoid such problems in the future by having an AP representative on the Graduate Committee and by having the Associate Provost attend our AP meetings.

Budget and Resources:

Faculty Matters:

Nominations: The Nominations Committee regrets that President Cabrera waited until the Summer to request that Faculty Representatives be elected to the Provost Search Committee. Many Faculty are away during the Summer, and numerous complaints were received about the conduct of the election solely because of the President's inaction. In addition, after the election was rushed to accommodate the President, he took no action to convene the Search Committee until Fall, so this election could easily have been postponed until the start of classes when Faculty had returned. And, indeed, the election could even have been held prior to the end of the Spring semester had President Cabrera informed the Nominations Committee of the number to be elected and had asked for the election to occur. By failing to consult the Nominations Committee about the election, President Cabrera made the Nominations Committee's work difficult and needlessly annoyed many Faculty.

Organization and Operations:

Responses from the University Standing Committees:

Athletic Council: No, no initiatives or goals for the Athletic Council were initiated by the President or the Provost. We did not have any issues under my charge with either the President or the Provost.

Effective Teaching Committee: NO.

Faculty Handbook Committee: The Provost's office has changes it would like to see implemented in the FH and the Provost's representative has brought these issues to the committee for joint discussion.

Grievance Committee: No.

Mason Core Committee: Any initiatives suggested by the President would be related to the Strategic Plan and were vetted by many different committees, with input from leadership familiar with the Mason Core.

The Provost is continually made aware of work that the Mason Core committee is doing and has provided useful input regarding specific changes the committee has encouraged.

Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee: No, no initiatives or goals fell under the charge of this committee in the past calendar year.

Technology Policy Committee: The Technology Policy committee has interacted with the administration on a regular basis. The committee regularly meets with the University's CIO. The CIO always responds to our questions and frequently brings members of her senior staff to respond to our concerns and brainstorm with us on solutions to technology issues affecting faculty.

Writing Across the Curriculum Committee: The WAC committee had little interaction with any administrators other than the ex officio member of the committee, the director of writing across the curriculum admission.

However, the committee feels free to ask for input from the administration and has always received it openly and freely.

2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President or Provost or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?

Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

Academic Policies: See Above.

Budget and Resources:

Faculty Matters:

Nominations: The Nominations Committee thanks Provost Stearns for his cooperative and timely response in making appointments to fill vacancies on committees with a Provost's representative. In every instance, the Provost was prompt and helpful.

Organization and Operations:

Responses from the University Standing Committees:

Athletic Council: No, the committee did not seek specific information from the President or the Provost. I meet with the President annually to provide information on the external oversight of the Intercollegiate Athletic Programs and submit a report on my work as the Faculty Athletic Representative.

Effective Teaching Committee: YES and YES.

Faculty Handbook Committee: Yes. The FH committee regularly meets with a representative from the Provost's office to discuss FH issues of interest to both. All responses were adequate and timely.

Grievance Committee: Yes, The Grievance Committee sought input from both the President and the Provost, and both responded in a timely and complete manner.

Mason Core Committee: The committee continually seeks information from relevant parties in the Provost office. For example, information on course-taking patterns and academic success is garnered from representatives of the Registrar's Office and IRR. The Assessment Office regularly provides data about Mason Core categories and student learning outcomes.

The President's office has been helpful in providing time on the President's calendar to discuss issues related to global understanding and other core competency areas.

Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee: No, the committee did not seek information or input from the president or provost. Our understanding was that this committee has not met for several years and was likely to be dissolved, it is on the list of committees being considered for elimination.

3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.

Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

Academic Policies: Make sure Faculty Senate is informed of upcoming issues that affect faculty across the university so that those issues can be directed to the appropriate committees and forwarded to the Senate for information and/or vote.

Budget and Resources:

Faculty Matters:

Organization and Operations:

Responses from the University Standing Committees:

Athletic Council: No recommendations. We have established effective interaction and communication. Senior administrators who report to the President, and senior administrators who report to the Provost serve as members of the Athletic Council. They attend regularly and serve on the council's sub-committees.

Effective Teaching Committee: INSTALL A FULL-TIME COMMITTEE MEMBER ON THIS COMMITTEE WHO IS ON THE STAFF OF THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE (A MEMBER FROM THAT CENTER HAS SERVED ON THIS COMMITTEE IN THE PAST).

Faculty Handbook Committee: No suggestions for improvement.

Grievance Committee: The Committee feels that the current interactions are effective.

Mason Core Committee: No suggestions.

Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee: I think this committee should be dissolved and another standing committee should be created to address issues related to executive education, professional development, and competency-base education (both for credit and non-credit, across disciplines and trans-disciplinary).

4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President or Provost or their staff.

Responses from Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

Budget and Resources:

Faculty Matters:

Organization and Operations:

Responses from the University Standing Committees:

Athletic Council: I am comfortable taking any issue or situation to the President or Provost with regard to student-athlete well being or academic performance. I continue to receive the support necessary to continue in my role as Faculty Athletic Representative and Chair of the Athletic Council.

Effective Teaching Committee: KIM EBY (ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT) AND KRIS SMITH (ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH & REPORTING) ATTENDED OUR DECEMBER MEETING AND PROVIDED FEEDBACK ON QUESTIONS REGARDING A PROCESS FOR REVISING THE COURSE EVALUATION FORM.

Faculty Handbook Committee: The FH Committee finds the administrative representatives who meet with the committee to be dedicated and knowledgeable in their areas. They have spent many hours in committee meetings this semester and their efforts have resulted in a much improved Faculty Handbook.

Grievance Committee: No other information is available.

Mason Core Committee: Anyone that we have worked with from the Provost's Office has been helpful, immediately responsive and relevant to our discussions.

Non-Traditional, Interdisciplinary, and Adult Learning Committee: None.