Faculty Senate Meeting

January 17, 2019

Mulder Hall, Room 302

Present: Mary Kay Sunderhaus, Christof Stumpf, Missy LaBorde, Kent Lachney, Melissa Park, Chris Stacey, Richard Elder, Jennifer Innerarity, Michelle Riggs, Brendan Walls (student rep)

Melissa Whitley (late)

Guest: Mary Treuting

Meeting convened 2:45 pm

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved electronically.

President’s Report: Dr. Huang requested a meeting with Faculty Senate “leaders,” to be interpreted as President (Whitely) and Vice-President (Sunderhaus)

Dr. Rowan’s update: Dr. Rowan was not present; no report given

Committee Reports: no reports presented

PS 206: no update

PS 252: no update; Senate discussed the need and process for altering MCOs to reflect Bloom’s taxonomy (as recommended by FPPC)—would modified MCOs require C&C approval? Senator Stacey recommended review by the General Education Assessment committee

New Business

*Commencement:* A Faculty asked about the possibility of instituting a rotating schedule for faculty attendance at Commencement? Discussion of the Senate ensued. All agreed that attendance at Commencement is contractual and therefore mandatory, and that faculty attendance provides the opportunity to promote the university, faculty-student involvement, and send the message to attendees of faculty involvement with students’ success. Additionally, many like to be present to see their students receive their hard-won diplomas.

The discussion of attendance segued to the most recent Commencement and the problems and mistakes that happened. There were three main complaints: access to students before the ceremony, the procession was conducted incorrectly, and the alma mater was re-arranged and whole verses were skipped. M. Laborde made the excellent point that no person has assumed ownership of Commencement, resulting in confusion surrounding its implementation. If Administrative Assistants have clear instructions and dates they can assist students to complete all of the requirements for graduation. The entire process needs to be centralized.

*Classroom assignments*: Many Faculty experienced problems with classroom assignments this semester. Some have found that the rooms assigned to them were inadequate to meet the needs of their class, to which the Administrative response was, “we will not accommodate classroom changes out of convenience.” Apparently, a schedule for addressing classroom assignment concerns was created, but many felt it was inadequately distributed. A date of December 21 as deadline for requests for change was set, some felt unfairly since Faculty are no longer on campus past Commencement. It was noted that department chairs were informed, but faculty nonetheless remained unknowing. A Faculty stated that arbitrary deadlines and rules contradicts Administration’s stated appreciation of faculty as well as students. Some classrooms were double and triple booked, while classrooms in Mulder Hall sit empty during prime classtimes. Mulder-dwelling professors have been assigned to classrooms across campus back-to-back with classes held back in Mulder, leaving little time to walk across campus and not time to speak to students after class. The student representative noted that classrooms this semester do not seem to be meeting the needs of the students. Faculty iterated their willingness to work with the Provost but wanted their opinions to be considered.

*Registrar:* The new add/drop forms require signatures of the instructor, advisor, department chair, and the student. Some felt that the process could be improved. Some students are experiencing problems having classes dropped when requested. When the number of students enrolling in classes is incorrect it can lead to classes not being offered. Additionally, departments need to receive graduate verification in a timely manner, and facilities (classrooms) need to be ready and correct on the first day of classes.

Senate discussed the new proposal to the department chairs to switch to a class schedule of MWF classes offered on the hour from 8:00-1:00. Some faculty proposed alternate schedules (M-W, T-TH, F) that did not work for other faculty. Some classes benefit from an hour and fifteen minute run time, but some work better in the fifty minute format.

With no Faculty Senate representative on the Chancellor’s Cabinet perhaps faculty concerns are being overlooked.

A Senator noted that the faculty parking lot behind the library still has no sign informing commuters of the lot’s restriction.

The department shift and subsequent office changes have left some faculty far from their department offices, and from supplies and equipment (copier, printer).

Senator Innerarity noted, once again, problems with online students and classes. They often do not know the graduation application process, and they receive inadequate communication.

Meeting adjourned 4:15 pm

Dutifully submitted,

Michelle Riggs, Secretary