

**University of Denver
Faculty Senate
October 20, 2006
Mary Reed Building, Renaissance Room South
Minutes**

Senators (or their Proxy) present: Bill Anderson, John Burnett (proxy for Elizabeth Anderson), Alvaro Arias, Davor Balzar, Rick Barbour, Rodney Buxton, Victor Castellani, Jim Hagler (proxy for David Christophel), Bonnie Clark, Nick Cutforth, Ron DeLyser, Sandy Dixon, Jack Donnelly, Margo Espenlaub (Exec. Secretary), Ronald Fariña, James Gilroy, Deb Grealy, John Hill, Michael Karson, Maciej Kumosa, Greg Kvistad (Provost), Walter LaMendola, Rick Leaman, Michael Levine-Clark, Mario Lopez, Seth Masket, Don McCubbrey, Lily Mendoza, Sarah Morelli, Mia Mulvey, Rahul Nair, Paul Novak, Scott Phillips, Cathryn Potter (Past-President), Catherine Reed, Susan Sadler, Dean Saitta (President), Nancy Sampson, Jack Sheinbaum, Gordon Von Stroh, Tim Weaver, Todd Wells, Margaret Whitt, and Yavuz Yasar.

Call to Order

Dean Saitta, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at noon and welcomed everyone present. Past-President Potter moved to approve the minutes from September 15, 2006. This motion was seconded by Sen. Castellani and approved.

Notice of Upcoming Events

- Oct. 27, Provost's Conference, *The University of Denver and the City*, 8:30-2:00, School of HRTM.
- Nov. 2: Provost's Lecture and Luncheon, *Understanding the Consequences of Violence*, Anne P. DePrince, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Driscoll.
- Nov. 3 Chancellor's Roundtable Discussion, Driscoll Commerce Room, 1:00-2:00.
- Nov. 9: Public Good Lunch and Lecture Series: David Cooper, Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures, Michigan State University, *Can Civic Engagement Save the Humanities?*, 12:00-2:00, Craig Hall Community Room.

Provost's Report and Questions

Dean Searches

Provost Kvistad presented an update on the dean searches for Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Graduate School of Social Work, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and The Women's College. Search committee chairs have been selected: Nancy Allen (AHSS), Peter Buirski (GSSW), John Kice (NSM), and Ginger Maloney (TWC). Guidelines for the dean selection process was modified in FEAC and adopted by the University Board of Trustees. The guidelines include the following. The scope of a dean search (national, regional, or internal) is determined by the Chancellor. The search committee is composed of faculty, staff, student, a community member, and a trustee of the University. Faculty make up ¼ to ½ of the committee. The search committees make recommendations by majority vote. The Chancellor can solicit feedback from the trustee committee member, but the Board of Trustees does not have direct involvement as with the Provost search. The Chancellor is the ultimate decider in choosing deans, and deans serve at the pleasure of the chancellor. The reporting line of the deans, however, is to the provost.

Faculty Salary Issues

The Faculty Senate has focused the attention of central administration on the faculty salary issue. Some years ago a study was done on comparable institutions. DU's position on salaries was not on a par with these institutions. Human Resources offered to work with the administration to build a data base on salary differentials within departments as determined by comparisons with eight different institutions. The data base is problematic in terms of comparison schools. Chancellor Coombe has made it a point to address the salary issue by extracting funds from the university operating budget. However, we require a new revenue stream that we currently don't have. Salary problems are variable across individual units, so any solution would not involve across-the-board increases. Increases will be linked to performance. The Provost will work with the deans in moving the salary issue forward.

The Provost reported that the merit increase approved by the Board of Trustees is 3.6%; 3% goes to academic units; .6% will be centrally held in the Provost's Office.

Past-President Potter thanked the Provost for his work on the faculty salary issue. The Provost in turn thanked Potter for making this issue a priority as President of the Senate, and that this has allowed the administration to effectively present the issue to the Board of Trustees.

Sen. Cutforth asked about the status of the budget report. The Provost responded that the report will next be presented to the academic deans.

Sen. Dixon asked if anecdotal evidence from faculty would be helpful for salary discussions. The Provost affirmed that it would be permissible to submit personal statements.

Pres. Saitta thanked Provost Kvistad for his report to the Faculty Senate.

Discussion: Mini-Minor Proposal

Sen. Levine-Clark reported on feedback regarding the Mini-Minor Proposal. Highlights from this informal inquiry included the following questions and concerns:

- can we talk about this without looking at whole programs;
- what about management issues, mixing courses and advising students;
- how does this effect people who teach the Thematic Core;
- there would be a strain on advising and with students choosing courses ahead of time;
- would students have to write proposals for a mini-minor;
- more popular departments could be overburdened;
- not all depts. offer the same requirements;
- where would the writing program fit in;
- the Mini-Minor is multi-disciplinary not interdisciplinary; this would be a radical departure from the Thematic Core;
- Mini-minor could allow students more depth in a subject;
- it would be good to have flexibility;
- it would change the culture of the classroom for majors
- discuss proposal without doing away with the Core

Sen. Reed commented that she would like to see the problems that NSM has with Core articulated more fully. Sen. Wells said the mini-minor was meant only as an option for NSM students and is not meant to replace the Core. Sen. Arias asked how many units responded to the informal inquiry. Sen. Levine-Clark said 16 depts. plus several individuals responded, and all divisions responded. Sen. Arias suggested proposals be prepared from each department. Sen. Mendoza said her dept. (HCOM) was open to all ideas but worried that the Mini-Minor would override the purpose of the Core.

Sen. Dixon said her dept. (Religious Studies) discussed the proposal and would like further consideration of it, but they are resisting the mini-minor being a requirement. Sen. DeLyser suggested the mini-minor be limited to NSM. Sen. Hagler said we should focus on whether the proposal allows us to provide a better education for more students. Sen. Levine-Clark agreed.

Pres. Saitta summarized the philosophical and practical arguments against the mini-minor: there has not yet been systematic assessment of the Core; the Mini-Minor is not a philosophically comparable substitute for the interdisciplinary Core; we have not completed the Marsico Learning Outcomes discussion and thus lack a shared understanding of what it is we hope to achieve with undergraduate education; the UPAC mission and goals task force is currently refining university goals and this will likely have implications for what we teach in Core. He suggested that we wait for the Marsico and UPAC processes to be completed before tinkering with Core. He then motioned to forward the Mini-Minor Proposal to a carefully selected Faculty Senate task force for discussion. The motion was seconded by Sen. Castellani and Sen. Levine-Clark.

Discussion continued with Sen. Sadler suggesting that we work with the deans and the Office of Assessment to see how the Core is being satisfied by study abroad courses. She pointed out that faculty are stretched in multiple ways, with writing requirements the latest pressure. We need assessment of programs first before reshaping them.

The Provost reported that 3,600 seats of Core planned each year, and 89% of Core courses are taught by AHSS. Not all units are participating. He said the Mini-Minor was presented to the deans in an informal way and was not well received. It is seen not as general education but rather as a sequential disciplinary course of study. There are other issues with implementation.

Sen. Hagler remarked that some Core courses originating from NSM were turned down because they had prerequisites. Sen. Arias reiterated that we cannot have a science course without prerequisites. Sen. Whitt recommended that discussion of Core be added to the task force guidelines. Sen. Reed suggested that more needs to be known about how Core is working in general.

Pres. Saitta informed the Senate that the history of the Core process is posted on the senate website in the January 2000 issue of the *Faculty Forum*. Sen. Wells said the proposal should not circumvent the usual University channels for making curriculum reform, and also defended the Senate's place in initiating curriculum change. Pres. Saitta agreed that it is perfectly appropriate for the Senate to originate curriculum reform, but that in this case it is best that we evaluate Core before proposing alternatives to it.

Sen. Dixon asked what the motion is, and Pres. Saitta re-stated it. Past Pres. Potter called the question. Pres. Saitta asked for the vote for creating a task force to further develop the Mini-Minor Proposal in the context of the larger concerns that have been articulated in the discussion: 21 Senators voted in favor; 6 were opposed. The Senate Executive Committee will develop a charge for the task force and suggest a way for its members to be selected.

Writing Program Update: Doug Hesse, Writing Program Director

Prof. Hesse provided a handout, "Snapshots of the University of Denver Writing Program," and reported that 19 new lecturers with terminal degrees have been hired for the Writing Program. He has organized its faculty into two project teams for fall 2007. Ten are serving as Writing center Consultants and nine are serving as Faculty Consultants, each working directly with faculty colleagues across campus, primarily in the First Year Seminars. Hesse has been conducting nine hours per week of formal meetings to develop curricula and courses. Currently, the Writing Center in Penrose Library is at 70% capacity. He plans that it will be at 100% by the end of the quarter. Hesse has worked with the Core Curriculum Committee and has funds for working with faculty to identify what kinds of writing are important for their students. The Writing Program has developed first year writing courses for winter and spring quarters, it has provided seven workshops open to the entire campus, and it has consulted with deans and many chairs, directors, and lead faculty-- a total of over 60 individual conversations.

The program is establishing writing-intensive Core courses and is identifying individual departments and programs in which to develop intensive plans for writing in the majors. The program is planning a longitudinal study of undergraduate writing at DU, tracing a cohort of students for four years. The Writing Program is developing ways to feature excellent undergraduate writing and will have a grand opening November 2-3.

Sen. Clark asked if there were ESL consultants in the Writing Center. Hesse responded that there were, and the Writing Program will work to identify these consultants for faculty, particularly since one-fourth to one-half are graduate or and international students. Sen. Donnelly reported positively about the Writing Center's work with international studies students. Prof. Hesse said the goals of the Writing Program and the Writing Center are to develop sophistication across fields in their writing. Sen. McCubbrey asked about digital media expertise. Hesse confirmed that this field also was another that was being addressed by the Writing Program.

Pres. Saitta thanked Doug Hesse for his presentation to the Faculty Senate.

Senate Initiatives Update

- March 1-2, 2007: Michael Berube, Paterno Family Professor of Literature, Department of English, Penn State University (co-sponsored with Honors and Writing Programs)
- *Faculty Forum* Weblog

The Weblog is up and running and is now available for faculty commentary. The *Forum* is open for commentary on issues around academic quality and the Core Curriculum. Faculty can submit other blog ideas to Sen. Whitt, editor of the *Faculty Forum*.

New Business

Sen. Clark asked when the Professional Research Opportunities for Faculty (PROF) will be coming up. Pres. Saitta said this will be announced soon. Sen. Yasar presented findings from the Benefit Advisory Committee. The DU Credit Union still exists and has merged with the Public Service Credit Union. The branch office is located between Evans and Asbury Avenues and provides typical bank services.

A new benefit for DU faculty and staff initiated by the Childcare Task Force and supported by DU's administration is the back-up care plan for children, elders, and pets. DU pays \$70,000 per year to fund this emergency service at a cost to faculty and staff of \$2.75 per hour with no additional cost. The plan is intended for emergency use only; a list of drop-in centers will be made available. Princeton University now has such a service and other universities are adopting the idea.

Adjournment

Sen. McCubbrey moved to adjourn: this was seconded by Sen. Wells, and passed unanimously. President Saitta adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. and thanked everyone for their participation today.

Respectfully submitted by

Margo Espenlaub, Faculty Senate Executive Secretary