

University of Denver
Faculty Senate
Minutes
April 16, 2010
Renaissance Room South

Senators (or proxies) present: Bill Anderson, Jennifer Campbell, Frederique Chevillot, Ralph DiFranco, Sandra Eaton (proxy for Keith Miller), Rachel Epstein, Judith Fox, Stacey Freedenthal, Chris GauthierDickey, Pat Greer (proxy for Paul Novak), John Hill (Secretary), Jennifer Hoffman, Allison Horsley, Laird Hunt, Tim Hurley, Ruth Ann Jebe, Scott Johns, Peggy Keeran, Frank Laird, James LaVita, Rick Leaman, Michael Levine-Clark (President), Mario Lopez, Jeff Ludwig, Sandra Macke, Chris Malloy, Don McCubbrey, Paul Michalec, Robert Mill, Mia Mulvey, Ved Nanda, Vijaya Narapareddy, Linda Olson, Pallab Paul, George Potts, Colleen Reed, Charles Reichardt, Polina Rikoun, Karen Riley, Nicholas Rockwell, Nancy Sampson, Sheila Schroeder, Robert Stencel, Gordon von Stroh, Nancy Wadsworth, Kate Willink, and Wilfried Wilms.

Call to Order

Michael Levine-Clark, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at noon.

A motion to approve the minutes from March 5, 2010 was seconded and approved.

Provost's Report and Questions (Gregg Kvistad)

Enrollments, applications, and deposits look very good for fall 2010; links to the daily reports regarding these matters have been distributed by email to all Senators. Test scores are marginally higher than last year. It appears international students will increase to about 10% of the entering undergraduate class. We are looking at the English Language Center: what it does, how it does it, and whether to increase the use of cohorts.

We are close to completing the FY 2011 budget. The process has taken longer than usual. Next week, budget parameters will be reviewed at the Board of Trustees retreat. The the Finance and Budget Committee will review it in May, and it will go to the full Board in June. There are no surprises in the budget. All faculty searches and additional positions are going ahead. This year's operating margin was \$34 million versus a plan of \$22 million; the increase is due primarily to over-slotting in graduate units due to concerns about fall enrollments. I will share additional information later.

Additional comments in response to questions:

Does Financial Aid increase?—Merit aid remains constant. Need-based aid is recalculated each year; family financial circumstances have been quite volatile over the past few years.

Stacking of Financial Aid—There is a policy change this year. Gift and endowment aid will no longer stack. This is the policy at most universities. Aid for juniors next year will not stack. Even without increased dollars, awards are still recognition for students and are often listed on resumes.

There is a small salary increase in the FY 2011 budget.

Pre-Tenure Review (Gregg Kvistad)

The APT guidelines require a pre-tenure review prior to the fourth year. The APT guidelines state:

A purpose of the pre-tenure review is to provide the faculty member with a progress report and to suggest what the faculty member might need to accomplish in the areas of teaching, scholarly research and/or creative activity, and service before the tenure review. Pre-tenure review may be primarily an internal matter in which no external reviewers are contacted. If written comments from external reviewers are sought, a list of reviewers will be compiled in consultation with the candidate.

Many universities make this a very serious review. The Deans and the Senate President have indicated interest in initiating a conversation about how this review is conducted at the University of Denver.

There are several reasons for raising this issue including: the recent Huntsville Alabama tragedy; a recent Chronicle article describing the deep personal impact of tenure denial; there are very few jobs where a person might work for years, sometimes alone, before such a decision is made; and those denied tenure experience a very difficult time. There are many pros and cons to this. An administrative fiat is not being proposed or intended.

Michael Levine-Clark—This was discussed by the Senate Executive Committee. We thought the concept is worth discussing. The points raised in our discussion include:

- We would like to get views from faculty, departments, and across the entire University.
- For faculty leaving after three years, they would have less time invested and it would be less obvious that they were denied tenure. It is fairer for them to know after three years.
- Departments could benefit from freeing up such positions earlier.
- Potential problems include: 1) faculty working on a book may have only a partial manuscript after three years; 2) it is often not possible to obtain research grants, particularly in the sciences, after only three years; and 3) evidence of success may not be visible or tangible after only three years.
- The policy should be uniform and uniformly applied across the University.

Comments from Senators and responses to questions:

The hiring process should also be examined. We should do a better job of avoiding hiring errors.

President Levine-Clark: some units already have a serious three year review. The Executive Committee thought this should be consistent across the University.

Provost Kvistad: We need to protect junior faculty from an overburden of service. Senior faculty need to take the bulk of the service load; this is not happening now.

A senator expressed concern that a three-year policy might impact scholarship. For example, it might lead to easier or shallower research for the first three years.

President Levine-Clark: The senate will have a very strong voice in how any such policy change is accomplished. The APT Guidelines state: "Changes shall be made only after consultation with and approval by the Faculty Senate."

Comment: we would have to think carefully about how to explain this to potential faculty. This is especially important since the first and second years can have a very heavy teaching load.

Question: What is the problem we are trying to solve? Provost Kvistad stated: I am the only person who sees all of the reviews. It is clear that there are a few situations that are not beneficial for anyone. We have denied tenure for bad teaching. Hiring errors are sometimes clear within weeks.

Additional questions and comments:

Is this the equivalent of a three-year contract? President Levine-Clark stated it may just provide a view of what the future holds.

We need to institutionalize mentoring of junior faculty.

The Annual review process would need to be improved and standardized.

How would borderline cases be handled?

President Levine Clark: We will stop the conversation for now and continue it at our next meeting. The Senate Executive Committee will discuss this further and refer it to the Personnel Committee.

Workplace Safety (Paul Chan, Amy King)

Paul Chan:

Employee safety is a matter of high concern. Nationwide, employees annually commit 1.3 million simple assaults, and 300K aggravated assaults (weapon involved). Extrapolated to DU, these data suggest 12 simple assaults per year, and 2-3 aggravated assaults per year. We are experienced with such matters and encourage you to trust your instincts and contact us at the first sign of any concerns.

Amy King:

We have zero tolerance for acts or behaviors that might impact workplace safety. They can be reported to HR, Counsel, or Campus Safety. “Odd” behavior may also be reported to the Employee Assistance Program. Employees may be placed on administrative leave, and student issues are addressed by Student Life.

Upon report of an incident, there is an initial evaluation. If there are any concerns, an incident response team will be formed. Outside expert help is available to these teams.

No weapons are allowed on campus; the recent court decision regarding concealed carry does not apply at DU since we are a private university.

Training presentations and videos are available from Campus Safety.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Benefits (Dick Gartrell)

The benefits options this year are basically the same as last year. We tried very hard to minimize cost increases.

The Kaiser health care premium will increase 8%, and co-pays will also increase.

The Kaiser refund is split equally between employers and employees. The first part was paid in January this year, and the final part will appear in January 2011 pay checks.

We froze enrollments in the PPO plan; there will be no new admits, but those in the plan can remain in it.

The PPO Dental insurance will increase 8%. There is no increase for the direct discount plan.

We are working on a long-term disability buy-up to 75%.

For those with biweekly pay, premiums will now be deducted from each check rather than once per month.

We do not yet know the impacts of the recent healthcare reform law. They do not go into effect until July 2011. We are in the process of evaluating them.

All current benefit selections will rollover automatically.

The first benefits newsletter will be sent out next week.

Revision of Senate Constitution and Bylaws (NCR) (Frederique Chevillot)

The proposed revisions are intended to bring the Constitution and By-laws into conformance with our actual practices. Please discuss these with your constituents and send any questions to Frederique Chevillot and Sylvia Hall-Ellis.

We will vote on these at the May 7, 2010 Senate meeting.

Announcement of Elections (NCR)

Sandra Macke announced that each unit has been, or will be, contacted by an NCR representative to inform and assist the unit with the election of Senator(s) for the unit.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Prepared and submitted by

John Hill
Faculty Senate Secretary