

University of Denver
Faculty Senate
Minutes
April 3, 2015
Anderson Academic Commons

Senators (or proxies) present: Shimelis Assefa, Jenny Bowers, Victor Castellani, Terri Davis, Claude d’Estree, Jared Del Rosso, Ron De Lyser, Maha Foster, Josh Hanan, Cynthia Hazel, Annabeth Headrick, John Hill, Tim Hurley, Scott Johns, Arthur Jones, Beth Karlsgodt, Megan Kelly, Brian Kiteley, Michelle Kruse-Crocker, Rick Leaman, Scott Leutenegger, Seth Masket (Proxy for Joshua Wilson), Laleh Mehran, Erin Meyer, Gloria Miller, Ved Nanda, Pallub Paul, Anne Penner, Amy Phillips, Erika Polson (Proxy for Tony Gault), Rebecca Powell, Martin Quigley, Chip Reichardt, Aimee Reichman-Decker, Lindsay Sacco, Nancy Sampson, Mary Steefl, Billy Stratton, Nick Stubler, Nicole Taylor (Proxy for Jamie Shapiro), John Tiedemann, Robert Urquhart, Michelle Von Merveldt, Petr Vojtěchovsky (Proxy for Frederic Latremoliere), Melanie Witt, and Carol Zak-Dance.

Introduction and Approval of Minutes from February 27th Meeting—Art Jones

Art emphasized the importance of today’s meeting; its principle focus is incorporating Inclusive Excellence Principles into Faculty Hiring.

The April 24th Senate meeting was changed to May 1st to avoid conflicting with the Provost’s Conference. The location of the May 1st meeting will be announced later.

Art also stated that it is time to conduct Senator elections within the units and that he will be sending out an email regarding this. We intend to introduce newly elected Senators at the last Senate meeting of the year on May 22nd.

A motion to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2015 Senate meeting was seconded and approved.

Provost Report—Gregg Kvistad

The Provost stated that over 1200 faculty, staff, and students have attended community feedback sessions on Engaging Community, Shape of Knowledge, and Faculty and Staff Development. He thanked everyone for their engagement and attendance at these sessions, and encouraged further participation by attending feedback sessions or submitting comments by email.

An observation: Faculty are at the heart of many of these topics. When we, as faculty, talk about these matters, we tend to talk about teaching. It think this is because our research, scholarship,

and creative work tend to be very specialized and not easily discussed with general audiences. I encourage you to share and discuss your work.

The new APT has garnered considerable attention within DU as well as national attention. Because some questions have been asked, I want to emphasize that the new APT establishes multiyear contracts. Our intention was to establish some security for non-tenured teachers and researchers. Recall that the Board of Trustees did struggle a bit with the reduced flexibility of the new APT, but nevertheless they did approve it.

Undergraduate applications and enrollments for fall 2015 are very strong. Graduate enrollments are slipping a bit, but it is early. There is possibly a rebound in law applications which are down about 50 percent nationally over the past few years. Business is still a concern. DCB has voted in favor of a very significant overhaul and consolidation of its MBA programs. We expect these changes will make the MBA even more attractive.

Amy King commented that medical insurance increases for next year will be very low and that most Colorado firms are experiencing double digit increases. She also noted that both employees and their partners must both complete the biometric assessment for each to be eligible for the \$300 annual wellness incentive.

Inclusive Excellence Principles in Faculty Hiring: Dr. Debra Mixon-Mitchell

Debra thanked the Senate for inviting her to speak. She is the Director of Diversity Recruiting, and performs work focused on the recruitment and hiring of university employees to fully utilize the resources gained from Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. She is a resource to support and assist search committees to create a more diverse and inclusive faculty.

We are in an increasingly diverse society and we have an obligation to prepare our students for this. Increased diversity in the classroom contributes to a meaningful and relevant education and elevates our standing as an institution. This is an imperative. We cannot do otherwise.

How do we accomplish this?

- We are meeting with all departments across campus to inform about our services and available support for searches.
- We are committed to effectiveness. This means raising awareness of impact on students.
- Seeking knowledge beyond discipline knowledge such as different perspectives, different life experiences, etc. These are critical to our ability to recruit, retain, and support diverse faculty. We seem to be challenged in our ability to retain diverse faculty.
- Examine carefully within each unit the internal process and determine how to engage with us and make use of our services and support.

Questions and Discussion:

Comment: Often we do not have much diversity in an applicant pool. Sometimes conversations shift in uncomfortable ways. Response: We can help broaden your unit's perspectives on these.

There are significant numbers of very qualified potential applicants who may not come from elite institutions. These candidates are often not sought and are therefore easily overlooked. We can assist with recruiting applicants who can both increase diversity and create great work. We can help you formulate processes and criteria that will reduce or prevent uncomfortable conversations and avoid implicit bias.

Comment: We need to do more than just advertise in the usual places. Response: Yes, we need to “broaden the lane.” We need to rewrite the narrative for DU. The community and DU are not convinced we are serious about this.

Art Jones added: We often assume that applicants will know where to look, but those on the fringe may not have been coached adequately regarding this. All of us know people and organizations. We all need to be active recruiters.

Question: What is the retention problem? Response: I encourage you to look into this within your units. Exit interviews can easily be “politically correct” unless very significant trust has been established. These situations can be especially overwhelming for tenure-track faculty. You can help by asking questions and offering assistance often.

Question: When interviewing applications it seems like there are areas we are not supposed to ask questions about, how do we handle this? Response: This is where a job description that meets the unit’s needs and a rubric can be very helpful. We can assist with preparing these. We have to calibrate ourselves in advance.

Comment: The administration does a great deal to burden faculty of color with committee assignments, task force appointments, etc. Because there are so few, this is particularly burdensome. Response: We need to identify all areas that might impede progress toward tenure or otherwise burden faculty of color and implement proactive procedural and policy changes.

Question: Could you speak to other areas such as student orientations? Response: We are seeing increasingly diverse incoming classes. We have race and gender data about them, but we do not know many other things such as ways of learning or preferences. We do know these incoming students expect something different from DU; they expect diversity of all kinds. The DU culture is 150 years in the making, patient and persistence are needed.

Ved Nanda thanked Debra for her presentation. He added that we are trying to do this, but not succeeding yet. We will not give up.

There was applause for Debra.

Executive Committee Resolution on Faculty Hiring–Presentation and Discussion

Scott Leutenegger introduced the following proposed resolution from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee:

The Faculty Senate advances the following public resolution:

1. The “preferred qualifications” of all faculty job announcements will include the following statement: “Preference will be given for candidates who have demonstrated experience working in or with culturally and racially diverse environments.”
2. In all faculty searches, the interview process will include at least one question that asks candidates about their demonstrated accomplishments and experience as they relate to diversity and inclusive excellence.
3. Before any finalists are invited to the campus for interviews, the campus interview pools should include at least one candidate who broadens compositional diversity for the hiring discipline involved.
4. The Faculty Senate goes on record as advocating for the creation of a clear and defined process of training, support and accountability for deans and faculty search committees to establish the above three steps as an institutional norm for faculty searches at the University of Denver, marshaling the resources and expertise of Human Resources; the Diversity Council; the Office of the Senior Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence; and the strong leadership and support of the Provost and Chancellor.

Scott explained that the resolution is intended as a step to put into practice our commitment to diversity. The Chancellor and Provost strongly support this concept. We will discuss this today and vote at our next Senate meeting. We encourage you to share this and discuss it within your units.

Question: Item 3 is troublesome, and it is not clear what it means. What does “should” mean?”
What is the force of this?: Response: Scott noted that some units are already doing this, and some units are not. The Executive Committee felt the words “must” or ”shall” are too strong and limiting, but this is something that we want to accomplish, hence the word “should.”

Art Jones added we are anticipating structures not yet in place, and referred Senators to the position description for the new Senior Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence and Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Diversity and External Relations. This is aspirational and we seek to establish a new norm. It is not intended to box in units.

Comment: “Should” seems to strike the right balance.

Question: Who will decide if the pool is diverse enough? We expect the administration to make sure we are doing this; particularly the Provost and the new Senior Associate Provost for Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Excellence and Senior Advisor to the Chancellor for Diversity and External Relations.

Art asked if there were any objections to sharing this proposed resolution with the deans. No objections were voiced.

Art also asked that Senators share and discuss the proposed resolution with their respective units and bring comments and suggestions to the next senate meetings.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Prepared and submitted by

John Hill
Faculty Senate Secretary