

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
Faculty Senate
April 7, 2006
Mary Reed Building, Renaissance Room South
Minutes

Senators (or their Proxy) present: Bill Anderson, Alvaro Arias, Davor Balzar, Dennis Barrett, David Christophel, Bonnie Clark, Joel Cohen, Jenny Cornish, Davy Davis, Ronald DeLyser, Andy Divine, Sandra Lee Dixon, Margo Espenlaub, James Gilroy, Deb Grealy, Michele Hanna, John Hill, Mike Keables, Brian Kiteley, Maciej Kumosa, Gregg Kvistad, Walter LaMendola, Corinne Lengsfeld, Michael Levine-Clark, Seth Masket, Don McCubbrey, Lily Mendoza, Rahul Nair, Cathryn Potter, Catherine Reed, Dean Saitta, Roger Salters, Nancy Sampson, Jack Sheinbaum, Gordon Von Stroh, Diane Waldman, Tim Weaver, Todd Wells, Margaret Whitt, and Yavuz Yasar

Call to order

President Potter called the meeting to order at noon and welcomed everyone present. Christophel moved to approve the minutes from March 10, 2006, with the usual caveat that senators contact Cornish with necessary edits (jcornish@du.edu or x14737). This motion was seconded by Saitta and **passed unanimously**.

Health Insurance Options: Gartrell

Dick Gartrell, Director of Human Resources, explained that PacifiCare declined to bid this year since the plan was losing money. All DU employees who are PacifiCare members have been notified that PacifiCare will no longer be participating in 2006. Kaiser Permanente (currently covering 70% of DU employees) will offer 5 plans for 2006 with the following monthly amounts paid by employees:

- Health Maintenance Organization Basic Plan/Health Savings Plan:
\$0 for individual, \$68.25 for employee +1, \$132.24 for family
- Health Maintenance Organization:
\$44.25 for individual, \$177.00 for employee +1, \$298.40 for family
- Preferred Provider Organization/Health Savings Account/PHCS network:
\$124.75 for individual, \$337.98 for employee +1, \$531.03 for family
- Triple Option Point of Service Plan:
\$154.90 for individual, \$396.80 for employee +1, \$616.80 for family
- Preferred Provider Organization/Traditional/PHCS network:
\$194.65 for individual, \$477.78 for employee +1, \$733.04 for family

Gartrell noted that the university's contribution will increase by about 10.3%, the same as the increase to the base program. He explained that deductible amounts for the HSA plans are set by federal law. Open enrollment will start on April 17 and end on May 12 and the annual Benefits Fair is April 16 all day in the Driscoll Ballroom. The plan year is tied to the DU fiscal year and cannot be changed to a calendar year because of budgeting complexities. All information about health insurance is now posted on the DU HR website at http://www.du.edu/hr/benefits/benefits_summary.html#health The Flexible Spending Plan and the Health Savings Accounts are separate savings vehicles but can be coordinated to some extent. Several senators spoke about their excellent experiences

using Kaiser Permanente while others shared some problems. Gartrell concluded by encouraging faculty members to contact him with additional questions at gartrell@du.edu or x17420. He also reminded senators that tonight is Faculty/Staff Appreciation night with a reception at 6:30 in the Gottesfeld room and a lacrosse game at 7:30 p.m.

Teaching Task Force (TTF) Update

- Interim Provost Kvistad discussed his two-page response to the lengthy report of the TTF. He distributed his work, entitled “Teaching Task Force Report: Opportunities for enhancement of teaching at DU.” He reminded senators that Chancellor Coombe originally requested the TTF as a response to the lack of uniformity in teaching evaluations among different campus units; an alternative response would be to institute a campus-wide Tenure and Promotion Committee. The TTF included both administrators and faculty and conducted an enormous amount of work. Recommendations were presented to the deans and to the Faculty Senate in fall of 2005, and the deans considered it in four subsequent meetings. Although the TTF members emphasized inclusiveness, both deans and senators have since responded in ways that would indicate their desire to partially or completely rewrite the report, but this would be impractical at present. Kvistad stressed that his response, expressing a consensus of discussions in Deans Council, represents a starting point only, and that work on teaching at the university is definitely planned on an ongoing basis.
- Christophel, Chair of the Faculty Senate Academic Planning Committee brought for first reading four Senate responses to the report just presented by the Provost. These had been proposed by the Senate Executive Committee and modified and approved by Academic Planning.
 1. “A primary goal of the University in seeking greatness should be the pursuit of academic excellence and rigor. Any evaluation mechanism developed by units should be designed without potential penalty for either rigor or innovation.”
 2. “Senate endorses point #2 of the *TTF: Opportunities*, recommending that teaching development activities remain distinct from teaching evaluation activities. On that basis we object to point #5 of the *TTF: Opportunities*, which appears to involve the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in “refining our teaching evaluation ... mechanisms,” and we object to the Timeline in section #2 of the *TTF: Opportunities*, with “expanded role for the CTL in ... evaluation of teaching ...” Senate opposes any expansion of the CTL charge to include evaluation, and recommends that the responsibility for evaluation of teaching remain with the academic units, aided by resources and consultation provided by the duly constituted Office of Assessment.” Barrett moved to accept this wording; this was seconded by Christophel. A lively discussion regarding CTL ensued, and in particular, concern was expressed by some senators that since the CTL Director is married to the DU Chancellor, this could be problematic in terms of evaluation of teaching. Provost Kvistad clarified that it was not the intention of Deans’ Council that CTL should conduct teaching assessment, but rather that CTL, instead of the Office of Assessment,

would provide expertise in helping units to design assessment tools. This measure was referred back to committee, with the suggestion that it might better be split into two motions, and brought back for **vote at the next Senate meeting**.

3. “Senate endorses the founding of unit-level teaching task forces, with the expectation that they will revisit the report of the TTF in search of measures that found no shared support among the deans but may well benefit individual units.” Following discussion, **motion was deferred for vote until next Senate meeting**.
4. “Senate recommends that the operations of the CTL be subject to evaluation just as all other teaching and learning activities at the University are subject to evaluation, including evaluation by its academic clients.” Lengsfeld pointed out the inconsistency in senators requesting that students not evaluate teachers, yet suggesting that faculty should evaluate the CTL. Several senators responded that the TTF documents calls for faculty to be evaluated not just by students, but also by peers and others, and that just such a broad evaluation process should be followed by the CTL as well. **Motion was deferred for vote until next Senate meeting**.
 - Other parts of the *TTF: Opportunities* report by the Provost had not provoked response by the Executive Committee nor the Academic Planning Committee, and senators had nothing to add from the floor.
 - Dixon requested a moratorium on teaching initiatives in general; several other senators supported this suggestion.

Inauguration Update

Potter reminded the senators that Chancellor Coombe will be formally inaugurated on April 20; Faculty Senate will march as a group.

Professional Research Opportunities for Faculty (PROF) Update

Potter reported that the university-wide PROF committee met this morning; letters will be distributed early next week.

Old Business

- Grealy reported on behalf of the Faculty Senate Nominations, Credentials and Rules Committee (NCR) regarding the Senate’s request to review the nomination of Bill Zaranka as Provost Emeritus. She stated that NCR research related to higher education practices revealed that at peer and aspirational institutions, academic positions are generally considered for emeritus status only after retirement. Therefore, to be consistent, Zaranka should not receive this status until after retirement from the university. Grealy further stressed that this finding is in no way related to everyone’s high esteem for Zaranka. Kvistad clarified that at DU, it has been the practice at the dean level to confer emeritus status upon retirement from the job, not retirement from the university. Salter moved to follow DU’s practice in this instance; motion was seconded by Saitta. Since this

was considered a first reading, **motion was deferred for vote until next Senate meeting.**

- Christophel reported that the Academic Planning Committee is still working on the Molecular Life Science Initiative but hopes to have more information by next week.

New Business

- Barrett, speaking for NCR, mentioned the 20 senators (Senators Barrett, Ciochetti, Cohen, Cornish, Davis, Divine, Hill, LaMendola, Miccio, Nair, Phillips, Sailer, Szyliowicz, Torre, Tripp, Wald, Waldman, and Wyrick and senators at large Christophel and Lengsfeld) and several officers (Barrett, Christophel, Cornish, DeLyser, Gilroy, Grealy, Wells, and Whitt) who are up for replacement or re-election in May. He asked that he be contacted at dbarrett@du.edu or x14423 should any of this information be questioned.
- Whitt reported seeing former DU President Mark Holtzman on campus yesterday having his picture taken, apparently as part of his campaign for Colorado governor. Potter replied that the university has been clear regarding boundaries around this issue, but that she would make sure that the administration was aware of yesterday's photo opportunity.

Adjournment

Divine moved to adjourn; this was seconded by Barrett, and **passed unanimously**, thus President Potter adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m., and thanked everyone for their helpful participation.

Respectfully submitted:

Jenny Cornish, Senate Secretary