

**UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**November 18, 2005**  
**Mary Reed Building, Renaissance Room South**  
**Minutes**

**Senators (or their Proxy) present:** William Anderson, Elizabeth Anderson, Alvaro Arias, Davor Balzar, Dennis Barrett, Arthur Best, Marian Bussey, David Christophel, Bonnie Clark, Joel Cohen, Jenny Cornish, David Cox, Nick Cutforth, Davy Davis, Ron DeLyser, Andy Divine, Sandy Dixon, Margo Espenlaub, Ronald Fariña, James Gilroy, Deb Grealy, Shannen Hill, Beth Karlsgodt, Mike Keables, Brian Kately, Gregg Kvistad, Walter LaMendola, Corrine Lengsfeld, Michael Levine-Clark, Steve McCarl, Don McCubbrey, Ved Nanda, Cathryn Potter, Catherine Reed, Susan Sadler, Dean Saitta, Roger Salters, Nancy Sampson, Martha Santos, Michael Schulze, Jack Sheinbaum, Audrey Sprenger, Gordon Von Stroh, Diane Waldman, Timothy Weaver, Todd Wells, Margaret Whitt, and Yavuz Yasar.

**Guests:** Dennis Becker (Registrar) and Dick Gartrell (Director, Human Resources).

**Call to order**

Cathryn Potter, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at noon and welcomed everyone present. The minutes were approved as written with the usual caveat that senators contact Jenny Cornish, x14304 or [jcornish@du.edu](mailto:jcornish@du.edu) with any corrections.

**DU Schedule of Classes: Dennis Becker, Registrar**

Dennis Becker distributed the *Policy Guidelines for Class Scheduling and Classroom Assignment (Revised August 2004)* outlining the authority for assignment of space. Due to growth in enrollment and programs, DU has been experiencing a lack of adequate classroom space. A study by the Registrar's Office related to space on campus also revealed that current space is not being fully utilized. To accommodate increasing numbers of classes, beginning in fall quarter 2006, two-hour blocks will be changed to begin at 8:00 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m. Evening classes (beginning at 4:00 p.m. and after) will generally not be changed. Hours required of staff members should also not be changed. Several senators expressed their concerns about the plan since many students at DU may have problems attending class so early in the morning. However, Becker pointed out that it is not currently possible to build more space or to decrease enrollments, so the block plan seems the best alternative at this point. President Potter revealed that the Graduate School of Social Work has already moved to block scheduling starting at 8:00 a.m. and it is working well for their school.

**Benefits Package Planning: Dick Gartrell, Director, Human Resources (HR)**

Dick Gartrell provided the senators with information about possible future changes in the DU employee benefit package. As soon as final decisions are made, further information will be distributed in a timely manner to all units across campus. Gartrell commended Senator Yavuz Yasar for his liaison work between Faculty Senate and DU HR. The Senate Personnel Committee will also address these issues.

- **Health care plans:** DU is committed to maintaining two options for health care plans for employees, but PacifiCare has been considering withdrawing due to a 130% loss ratio. HR has thus recently issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for bids from other insurance carriers. Approximately 2/3 of DU employees are currently insured through Kaiser Permanente. Kaiser might be able to offer several additional options in the future, including the possibility of an attractive, nationwide Preferred Provider Option. Any changes to DU health care plans will not impact current Medicare supplement plans (e.g., Secure Horizons).
- **Tuition exchange program:** HR is considering a budget request for next year in which DU would join a nationwide program that has approximately 600 primarily private colleges and universities as members ([www.tuitionexchange.com](http://www.tuitionexchange.com)) Joining such a consortium would cost approximately \$100,000.00 for the first year, with increasing costs to \$400,000.00 or more, representing a large part of the \$33 million benefits budget. Gartrell explained that the expense of such a program is due to tuition costs. DU would accept up to a certain number of students and would pay tuition for them (capped at a level a bit below our tuition) and in exchange employee dependents could attend other colleges and universities
- **Retirement plan:** Currently, employees can move in and out of the retirement plan if they so choose for various economic reasons. HR is considering changing this so that once employees are in the plan, they would not be able to change out, and thus would be able to utilize a tax code feature that would give them the option of contributing another 4% toward retirement on a pre-tax allowance basis..

#### **Provost's Report: Gregg Kvistad, Interim Provost**

Gregg Kvistad shared information from the Provost's Office:

- **Classroom space:** Most of the new buildings on campus do not include enough space for teaching. This is understood by Chancellor Bob Coombe who has responded in a positive way to various reports and recommendations from the Registrar. Kvistad thanked the senators for their tolerance of the new block scheduling plan.
- **Budget development process:** The budget development process is beginning even earlier this year than previously, with primary involvement from deans and directors. The Provost's Office meets with every academic unit starting in October to discuss needs, desires, and expectations for the following year. The enrollment for undergraduate students is expected to remain stable at 4500, while the graduate programs, particularly professional schools with master's programs, may still experience some growth. Programmatic costs include Cherrington Global Scholars (total investment to almost \$8 million), University Advancement (\$1.2 million to get fundraising program activated), branding and web initiative (\$1.5 million), and Marsico (\$1.5 million for adding to the base budget to hire 40 faculty members associated with the writing program). So the overall budgetary

picture is becoming more constrained. The Board of Trustees is supportive of long term solutions including a focus on increased endowment. Kvistad concluded his report by assuring senators that Chancellor Coombe is a wonderful messenger to the Board and well able to work on increasing the endowment and advocating for academic excellence.

#### **Senate Discussion: Recommendations from the Teaching Task Force**

President Potter explained that a work group of 18 faculty members and a few strategic staff members produced the *Teaching Task Force Report (June, 2005)* that was distributed to senators earlier via electronic mail. The Teaching Task Force (TTF) included Senators Ron DeLyser, Catherine Reed, Dean Saitta, and herself. The charge to the TTF was to make recommendations for the development, support, and reward for teaching at DU. Senator Reed indicated her concern that implementation guidelines appear to be lacking in the document indicating a potential mismatch between the TTF and university deans. Senator DeLyser added that recommendations were meant to be based on the culture of individual units, rather than across campus. Kvistad stated that the university administration hopes for a university-wide discussion about “a different way of doing what we’re all doing.” Potter clarified that when Chancellor Coombe was the Provost, he charged the Teaching Task Force to come up with some sort of framework for describing teaching in merit and promotion documents that would work across units. However, some deans like uniformity, while others do not. Several senators spoke to the time consuming aspect of recommendations for changing tenure review, arguing that this would reduce precious faculty time allotted to teaching even more. Senator Roger Salter emphasized the importance of a unique and individualized approach to teaching. Kvistad wondered whether more authority given to the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) would be useful and Senator Bill Anderson recommended that departments seek consultation from the CTL as this has been quite helpful to him. Senator Margaret Whitt emphasized that the perception at DU is that teaching is not as important as research, but if the document leads to more open discussions about teaching, that would be beneficial in and of itself. Several senators stated that the document seemed overwhelming and should include prioritization of issues. Kvistad concluded by saying that he would like to see a resolution on this by the end of the academic year.

#### **Senate Discussion: Future of the University Planning and Advisory Council (UPAC)**

President Potter led the senators in discussing the future of UPAC, a group created several years ago when DU was engaged in strategic planning. The next planning phase at DU emphasizes supporting and increasing academic quality at the university and beginning an endowment campaign to that end. The original mission (to create vision, value, mission, and goals) was done quickly and well, and the university has invested resources accordingly. The Board of Trustees wants the focus of UPAC to remain advisory, rather than on planning or setting policy; and the deans agree with this approach. Chancellor Coombe wants a reinvigorated UPAC. Suggestions from senators included linking UPAC with the G-9 group, and also with the branding initiative. Kvistad suggested inviting the Chancellor to Faculty Senate to discuss these issues.

**Academic Committee Report: David Christophel, Chair**

Senator Christophel reported that the Academic Planning Committee has been sought out by influential people across campus including Thomas Willoughby (Vice Chancellor for Admissions), Sheila Summers Thompson (Assistant Provost, Institutional Research and Assessment, and new Chair of the Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes Project), and Carol Farnsworth (Vice Chancellor for Communications and Marketing).

Christophel requested that a senator from one of the SOCS departments (preferably female) join the sub-committee on Admissions. Willoughby has indicated that faculty will have significant future input into the Hyde interview process. Christophel distributed the *Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes Draft (October 19, 2005)* and requested that senators contact him with their suggestions. Finally, he assured senators that Farnsworth is keenly seeking faculty advice for the branding initiative, and such advice may be forwarded to her via him at [dcristo@du.edu](mailto:dcristo@du.edu).

**Action Items**

Senator Whitt proposed a Senate-sponsored campus-wide meeting in January to discuss the proposed tuition exchange program, in order to reach the larger target audience. This motion was passed unanimously by the senators. Senator Andy Devine suggested that the focus of that meeting should be on benefits in general, not just tuition exchange.

**New Business**

Senator Nancy Sampson reminded senators that the largest U.S. gathering of Nobel Peace Prize winners is scheduled to meet from September 15 – 17, 2006 on the DU campus during PeaceJam. She pointed out that this represents a unique opportunity for faculty and students alike.

**Adjournment**

President Potter adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m. and thanked everyone for their participation.

**Respectfully submitted by:**

J. Cornish, Faculty Senate Executive Secretary