

University of Denver
Faculty Senate
Minutes
April 1, 2011
Renaissance Room South

Senators (or proxies) present: Bill Anderson, Antonia Banducci (proxy for Linda Wang), Larry Berliner (proxy for Keith Miller), Catherine Chauvin (proxy for Annabeth Headrick), J. Michael Daniels, Ralph DiFranco, Sandy Dixon, Judith Fox, Katherine Freeman, Sylvia Hall-Ellis (also proxy for Bruce Uhrmacher), Mike Harris, John Hill (Secretary), Jennifer Hoffman (also proxy for Robert Stencel), Allison Horsley, Tim Hurley (also proxy for Paula Rhodes), Ruth Ann Jebe, Scott Johns, Arthur Jones, Frank Laird, Rick Leaman, Tiffani Lennon, Scott Leutenegger, Michael Levine-Clark, Mario Lopez, Sandra Macke, Mohammad Matin, Don McCubbrey (President), Erin Meyer, Keith Miller, Vi Narapareddy, Alba Newmann-Holmes, Paul Novak, Linda Olson, Tom Quinn, Polina Rikoun, Karen Riley, Nicholas Rockwell, Nancy Sampson, Susan Stakel (proxy for Frederique Chevillot), Matthew Taylor, and Gordon von Stroh.

Call to Order, Approval of Minutes

Don McCubbrey, Senate President, called the meeting to order at noon.

A motion to approve the minutes from March 4, 2011 was seconded and approved.

Don McCubbrey reminded the Senate of the following:

- Faculty Meeting with the Provost, Thursday April 14, 2011, Renaissance Room, 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm
- Faculty Senate Meeting, Friday April 29, 2011, Renaissance Room, 1:30-1:30 pm
- Faculty Club, Thursday May 5, 2011, Ruffatto Hall Commons, 4:00 to 6:00 pm
- Chancellor's Roundtable, Friday May 20, 2011, Renaissance Room, 1:00-2:00 pm
- The Senate calendar and documents are available at <http://www.du.edu/facsen/>

Provost's Report and Questions

Budget

The FY2012 budget is still a work in progress. The major parameters have been set, but adjustments are still being made, e.g., faculty research, English Language Center. The budget will go to the Board of Trustees Finance and Budget committee in May. This is usually a very detailed discussion. The budget is \$345 million. Budget details will be shared with the Senate Finance Committee before it goes to the Trustees.

Enrollments are very good. Winter to spring retention was 97.2 percent, which is the same as last year. Both undergraduate and graduate students are showing up in numbers similar to last year. At first glance, SECS enrollments appear low, but this is merely a registration delay.

Libyan students are virtually all supported by the Libyan government, but the funds are currently in the hands of a broker in Canada. We fully expect these funds to be released. Likewise the students' stipends are also embargoed. We are talking with the State Department to get the funds released, and we are not requiring payment of tuition from these students at this time. This affects over 50 students; most are SECS students. We are also working to find ways to help them immediately with stipends since they need funds for rent, food, etc. for themselves and family members. We are also helping these students stay legal, which is not a small issue.

Under the Higher Education Opportunity Act the Department of Education has increasing concern about the definition of a credit hour. This is driven by the actions of the for-profits which are garnering a very large percentage of \$150 billion in financial aid annually. Thus we will have to become clear about what is a credit hour at DU. At the undergraduate level we have many 4 and 5 hour classes without clear reasons for the credit hour difference. This is less of a concern at the graduate level.

We will need to have conversations about this within and among the units. We will need to clean this up and make it consistent. The federal model is approximately one classroom hour weekly for each credit hour. We will have to work through this, but we do not expect big changes.

The American Council on Education has completely rejected this call from the federal government stating it is a matter for higher education to determine.

Motion to Approve New Grievance Policy (2nd Reading)—Scott Leutenegger

Scott Leutenegger speaking for Chip Reichardt very briefly highlighted the changes in the Grievance Policy. The policy was discussed at the previous Senate meeting.

The Senate approved the policy by a vote of 34 to 0, with 2 abstentions.

HR Update—Amy King and Lynnette Woodbury

Organization

HR has been reorganized into three areas: Total Rewards which includes compensation and benefits; Talent Management which includes organization effectiveness, recruiting, and training and development; and Employee Services which includes hiring, assistance programs, leaves, and grievances.

We have created an analyst position (this is not a new FTE) to help us better understand the university workforce and workplace issues.

Benefits

We will conduct a series of benefits seminars during the last half of April and early May. The benefits fair will occur on May 4th; open enrollment is May 1st through May 14th.

Kaiser is increasing our rates by 8.4 percent this year. This is less than the average cost increase for higher education this year; most institutions are experiencing double digit increases. Not all of the increase will be passed on to employees.

There will be no new admissions to the Kaiser PPO or the HSA PPO, but those already enrolled may continue.

All of the core benefits will remain in place with the exception of Bright Horizons which is used by less than 5 percent of the workforce. We are seeking options for employees who have been using Bright Horizons.

Responses to Questions

It is possible that pending changes in Colorado law will require implementation of some changes.

We were unable to get bids from other providers such as Aetna and UHC. Our pool is too small and has relatively high medical costs. Moreover, such firms generally require a guarantee that at least 50 percent of employees will join their plan.

40 percent of our health costs come from 20 percent of participants. We are looking for ways to control these costs.

We plan to develop a wellness program over the next 24 to 36 months. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Several Senators said the plan should include access to the Ritchie Center and this is consistent with the university's mission. Amy King stated this is a common comment.

Committee Reports

Nominations, Credentials, and Rules Committee—Sylvia Hall-Ellis

As required by the governing documents of the Senate, elections will occur over the next two months. Sylvia Hall-Ellis will be contacting the units to initiate elections for Senators from the units.

In addition to electing Senators from the units, the following elections are also required:

- Faculty Review Committee (FRC)—Elect representatives from GSPP, GSSW, Education, and Korbel.
- Faculty Athletic Committee—Elect representatives from SECS, AHUM, and Social Sciences, and representatives from Financial Planning, Academic Planning, and Student Relations.
- FEAC—Elect two representatives by a vote of the full Senate.
- Senator-at-Large—Elect two by a vote of the full Senate
- Faculty Senate President—Elect a President for 2013-2014 by a vote of the full Senate
- Faculty Senate Secretary—Elect a Secretary for 2013-2014 by a vote of the full Senate

Elections will be conducted at the May 27, 2011 Senate meeting.

Nominations for any of these positions, should be submitted to Sylva Hall-Ellis prior to the May 29, 2011 Senate meeting.

Personnel Committee—Scott Leutenegger

Faculty Awards have been selected and forwarded to the Provost.

We are working on revisions to the APT document; there is a long list of items to be addressed. Four subcommittees have been formed. The subcommittees and their chairs are:

- Omissions and Ambiguities, Chip Reichardt and George Potts.
- Criteria, Rick Leaman—this subcommittee will examine criteria for tenure including open access publications, “collegiality,” and community based research.
- Pre-tenure (mid-term) Review, Scott Leutenegger.
- Non-tenure lines, Sylvia Hall-Ellis—The percent of such faculty is increasing every year. The committee will examine issues such as titles, promotions within the series, length of service, etc. Town halls meetings will be scheduled.

Further help is needed and welcome for all subcommittees.

Finance Committee—Rick Leaman

The Finance Committee has two projects:

- Quarterly meetings with the Provost and the Vice-Chancellor for Business and Financial Affairs.
- A study comparing DU to peer institutions in terms of faculty salaries, composition of faculty (tenure track versus non-tenure track), and research grant award trends. Results will be reviewed with the Senate Executive Committee and then posted on the Senate website.

Student Relations Committee—Paul Novak

While the committee meets with the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Academic Programs, and the Executive Director for Alumni Relations, our current principle issue is gifts from students to faculty.

Some students come from a culture of giving where it is respectful to provide gifts to professors to show gratitude. Some students are giving gifts to faculty of a value or at times during the quarter that make the faculty member uncomfortable. Refusing the gift may insult the student.

The Student Relations Committee has examined the gift issue to:

- Determine if there is University policy concerning faculty accepting gifts from students; and
- Provide guidelines for either declining the gift without insulting the student or determine what to do if it is difficult to refuse the gift.

The committee determined:

- There are University policies dealing with gifts from vendors but nothing specifically about receiving gifts from students.
- Most gifts from students are simply a show of gratitude and there is no appearance of impropriety. The faculty members appreciate the gesture and the student is able to show respect. Faculty members are not required to either accept or decline any gift from students. It is completely the decision of the faculty member.

However the committee has outlined some possible guidelines for situations where there may be some ambiguity or the situation presents an appearance of impropriety:

1. Add a statement to the syllabus concerning your policy toward the giving and receiving of gifts.
 - a. E.g. Daniels College of Business—"Because of possible perceptions of undue influence, it is not appropriate for a student to give a gift to a faculty member while the student is still enrolled in the faculty member's class, including through the grading period. As a general rule, Daniels discourages the giving of gifts between students and faculty."
2. Add a statement to the honor code to the effect of: the DU Honor Code expects the student to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity in all phases of their time at DU, including when offering gifts or other items outside of the day to day class experience.
 - a. This idea has been presented to a member of the honor code committee and will be discussed by the committee.
3. Suggest that the student wait to present a gift after the quarter is over if possible.
4. Speak with a supervisor regarding any departmental policies that may address gifts from students.
5. If a gift is accepted but the faculty member feels there may ambiguity or an appearance of impropriety report the gift to a supervisor or discuss the reasons for the ambiguity with someone who can provide reasonable advice.

Current University policies regarding gifts are available at:

- http://www.du.edu/bfa/policy/Gifts_and_Gratuities.pdf
- http://www.du.edu/bfa/policy/Conflicts_interest.pdf

Questions and Comments

Frank Laird encouraged the committee to issue a strong statement. This would help faculty stave off the issue. Several Senators agreed with Frank and further noted that while such gifts may be the norm in other situations and cultures, they don't fit well at DU.

The Office of Internationalization should talk with students and make suggestions for appropriate ways to express gratitude in the United States and at DU.

It is very difficult to draw a line between appropriate and inappropriate. Small gifts are a tradition in some artistic fields. Refusing a small gift could damage relationships with students.

Make a teaching moment out of an uncomfortable gift situation.

Make all students, not just international students, more aware about gift giving.

Examine and perhaps apply the federal guidelines.

An important consideration is how a faculty member feels about it at the time of the gift.

Gifts may appear to outsiders as bribes, regardless of intent.

Paul Novak stated the committee would consider and discuss the Senate's comments and report back to the Senate.

Academic Planning Committee—Linda Olson

Based on the excellent work of the 2005 Teaching Task Force (TTF), APC has been working on ways to support a culture of teaching excellence at DU. Four Areas for recommendations are being worked on currently:

1. Distinguished Teaching Departments
2. Ensuring Excellence in Teaching for New Faculty
3. Teaching Fellows and Associates Program
4. Peer interactions and Feedback Tools and Processes

During the Senate meeting, Linda asked groups of 5 to 8 Senators to provide written responses to the following questions:

1. What are you doing personally or department-wide that is supporting improvement of teaching?
2. Where do you see gaps either personally or department-wide that impede continuous improvements in teaching? What cautions would you give in addressing these?
3. What further ideas would you suggest be considered in the ongoing work of APC around this initiative of enriching our culture of teaching throughout faculty?

The committee will use the responses to further refine its efforts and recommendations.

Some preliminary comments included:

- Consider team teaching.
- Consider hybrid courses.
- Offer workshops on practical items, e.g., using Smartboard, incorporating video.
- Offer peer interactions and feedback tools.
- There is too much time on how to make technology work, and not enough emphasis on how to use it to teach.

Linda emphasized this is about improving excellence, not identifying bad teachers. It will not be a part of evaluations.

Announcements, Open Discussion

The Provost emphasized the importance of teaching quality: “this is a real issue.” The Provost further stated that he and the Chancellor just met with students from the Graduate Students Association. The students talked primarily about inclusive excellence and teaching quality. One student stated she was not sufficiently challenged and recommended to her friend that she not attend DU.

Gordon von Stroh reminded everyone that commencement is coming and asked Senators to remind faculty in their units to respond affirmatively when asked to help with commencement ceremonies.

Scott Leutenegger commended the administration for its handling of the Libyan student situation; this comment was followed by applause from the Senate.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Prepared and submitted by

John Hill
Faculty Senate Secretary