

**University of Denver  
Faculty Senate  
March 9, 2007  
Mary Reed Building, Renaissance Room South  
Minutes**

**Senators (or their Proxy) present:** Bill Anderson, Alvaro Arias, Rick Barbour, Arthur Best, Rodney Buxton, Victor Castellani, David Christophel, Bonnie Clark, Ron DeLyser, Sandy Dixon, Sandra Eaton, Margo Espenlaub (Exec. Secretary), James Gilroy, Michele Hanna, John Hill, Michael Karson, Mike Keables, Brian Kiteley, Maciej Kumosa, Gregg Kvistad (Provost), Frank Laird, Walter LaMendola, Rick Leaman, Michael Levine-Clark, Mario Lopez, Seth Masket, Don McCubbrey, Robert Mill, Sarah Morelli, Mia Mulvey, Rahul Nair, Ved Nanda, Paul Novak, Scott Phillips, Cathy Potter (Past President), Charles Reichardt, Susan Sadler, Dean Saitta (President), Nancy Sampson, Gordon von Stroh, Tim Weaver, Todd Wells, Margaret Whitt, and Yavuz Yasar.

**Call to Order**

Dean Saitta, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order at noon and welcomed everyone present. A motion to approve the minutes from February 9, 2007 was seconded and approved.

**Honors Proposal Discussion and Sense of the Senate Vote**

Todd Breyfogle, Director of the University Honors Program, presented a report to the Senate on the history and accomplishments of the Honors Program. The Honors Faculty Advisory Committee has identified four requirements of the Honors Program: (1) explicit public support with funding by the central administration; (2) attention and commitment to honors courses and faculty who are under-resourced; (3) clear authority for the program director; (4) a thoughtful internal and external development strategy. The first two are in place; the latter two are lacking.

Se. Nanda recommended that the report be forwarded to the Senate. Breyfogle will do so.

Sen. Levine-Clark introduced the Provost who spoke about the honors process and how and why it came about.

(1) There have been 15 years of honors programs, and DU has never done a comprehensive program review. In 2000, the current director was hired; at that time Chancellor Ritchie and Provost Zaranka were also interested in developing an Honors College, but the deans had not yet been brought into the discussion. By spring 2002 there was no widespread support for an Honors College, but DU wanted a strong honors program with departments having authority.

(2) There has been a separation between the first two years and second two years of honors study. Departments don't know what goes on between these blocks of study. Training in the first block is first rate. What is missing is the linkage between the first and second two-year blocks.

(3) In spring 2006, an Honors Review Committee was formed to submit recommendations to the Provost. Of the 10 committee members selected by their deans, four also served on the Faculty Senate. The Honors Faculty Advisory Committee is an operational committee intended to produce curricula and ensure faculty availability to teach courses. It is not a review committee

and is a completely different committee than the Honors Review Committee. Under Provost Coombe, \$100,000 flowed into the Honors Program. Although suggested, Honors was not taken up as part of Marisco. The amount of vitriol that the current debate has generated is surprising. Students have been brought into the discussion inappropriately.

Sen. Karson asked if the problem was that the Honors Program had been owned by non-appointed faculty. The Provost said the issue was more complex.

Sen. Levine-Clark said the Academic Planning Committee has met with the director and the Honors Review Committee, reviewing the documents and the director's response to the review committee proposal. Sen. Levine-Clark provided a handout for Senate members in order to discuss the Honors Review Proposal, not the process of review. The Academic Planning Committee supports (1) faculty ownership; (2) a common learning experience in the first two years, (3) a departmental depth component in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years; (4) financial and intellectual support from the administration and (5) the director should be full time and report to the Provost.

Sen. Karson asked if there would be a rotating directorship. Sen. Levine-Clark said yes, every three years. Sen. Nanda said students need to be targeted and identified for named scholarships. Sen. Levine-Clark said this was important for the full time director. Sen. Sampson said students want a consultation role.

Pres. Saitta asked for a motion to accept the proposal. Ballots were distributed for voting on one of the following three choices:

- The Faculty Senate hereby endorses the *Honors Review (HRC) Committee Proposal* as presented.
- The Faculty Senate hereby endorses the *Honors Review HRC Committee Proposal* as presented with the following reservations or concerns: stated in the minutes [and that are captured by the Academic Planning Committee's points 1-5, above].
- The Faculty Senate does not endorse the *Honors Review HRC Committee Proposal*.

Sen. DeLyser asked if a written report would come from the Academic Planning Committee. Sen. Levine-Clark said the committee did not go through every point. Sen. Von Stroh moved and Sen. Eaton seconded the motion to accept the spirit of the Honors Review Committee Proposal.

Sen. Karson asked for graduate student input in honors proposal. Sen. Christophel said this was possible since the proposal is a working document. Pres. Saitta asked about line item modifications. Sen. Keables said Academic Planning has endorsed the proposal. Sen. DeLyser said the Review Committee has not specified how an advisory committee comes about and other items.

Sen. Potter asked for a specified set of concerns before voting. Sen. Levine-Clark read the ballot with recommendations that:

- (1) faculty ownership be established
- (2) there be a common experience
- (3) there be a depth component with discussion and planning in each unit

- (4) there be support from central administration, both financial and intellectual
- (5) the director should be full time and report to the Provost.

Ballots were completed and collected. Results: 10 endorse the proposal; 16 endorse with reservations or concerns; 5 reject the proposal. The Faculty Senate thus endorses the Honors Review Committee Proposal with the reservations and concerns identified in the Senate minutes.

### **Other Committee Business**

Sen. Sadler, as proxy for Deb Grealy (NCR), pointed out an action item: to elect someone to replace Ron DeLyser as a representative to Graduate Council.

NCR: Administrator Emeritus Notice of Motion was handed out to the Senate. The Board of Trustees wants a working recommendation. There was motion, second, and discussion. Two friendly amendments were offered. "Retirement" is defined as "career retirement". "Or resignation from the position of academic leadership" is added back. Motion was approved. The Senate recommendation will next go to FEAC for further discussion.

### **Chancellor's Roundtable with Senators**

Chancellor Coombe asked what the Senate was thinking and that such discussions should take place on a regular basis. Sen. Leaman asked how fundraising was going. The Chancellor responded that this was going well; DU will hit 70 million this year and will need 8 years with the same growth. Half is in endowment. A question was asked about Chancellor's roundtable discussions with students. The Chancellor said he has come away from these sessions being impressed by the bright people interested in academic issues. There is enterprise at DU. One student group is pushing for a plan to move us toward climate neutrality. Denver and other cities have signed on to this independent of the U.S.

Sen. Mill asked if 47% of the student body majoring in business is a problem. The Chancellor has questions if this is an extreme or is cyclical. He said the caliber of students has gone straight up, and DU is getting far more capable students. DU does better at attracting students because of its high standards. A senators asked about first year students. The Chancellor responded that via an ad hoc poll students were taking the first year seminar outside their area of major intentionally. It will take some years to see the impact. Sen. Christophel asked about grade inflation. Chancellor Coombe shared the impression that it is not as bad for DU as for other schools. This is something to be well aware of, and the Senate is the place for that discussion. Grade control is enforced in the law school where a curve is imposed, but Chancellor Coombe is not sure he would want to go to the extreme of having something imposed across the board.

DU's applications trend has been up and this has to do with the caliber of students and the selectivity process. Sen. Whitt asked about looking at sophomore and junior years. Coombe said so many good things are going on academically and programmatically but there are still concerns with financial aid. Need-based aid has been increased and helped by the Provost's office.

Sen. Castellani asked what has been done to recruit international students. This is difficult because federal and state aid is not available. Numbers have gone up – undergrads have gone

up, but need institutional aid. Coombe worries that we will hit the financial wall because of financial aid. There is a 250 million dollar endowment today with a 313 million operating budget. Three years ago the GPA was 3.12, now 3.65; SAT scores 1160, now 1215. DU is now in a different gall game but does not have the financial resources. There are 45% in-state and 55% out-of-state students. DU's best students are from Colorado since that is where our reputation is, but we are getting more and more out-of-state applications.

Sen. McCubbrey asked what responses were to the roundtable discussions with alumnae. The Chancellor said alumnae were interested in issues of academic quality. He also stressed the need to engage alumnae and that this will take a lot of work. Getting people to know us better is important. He is far more optimistic in raising money from alumni than six years ago with more people that 15 years ago; this path will require persistence.

Sen. Nanda said international visitors that come to DU are impressed with our communication and website. A point was also raised about world ranking of universities and why DU was not on that list. Chancellor Coombe responded that our reputation falls off in that others don't know who we are. Most undergrads go to school within 200 miles from home. We do invest in scholarship because this is part of DU's mission. A lot of reputation is related to resources. If successful at the capital campaign our resources will double and will continue to draw better and better students and faculty each year. DU is aggressively pushing international relationships and this time with broadening faculty positions. Sen. Nanda asked about the Cherrington Global Scholars program and if this was paying off. The program has been praised by students. Coombe responded that the students are less interested in it than the parents who see the added value. When first started, the objective was 60% and we will get there next year. The issues ahead are how we provide broader distribution of students.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was seconded and passed. President Saitta adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m. and thanked everyone for their participation today.

### **Respectfully submitted by**

Margo Espenlaub, Faculty Senate Executive Secretary