

Minutes of the  
SU Faculty Senate Meeting  
Dec. 6, 2007  
HH 117

Senators present –Clarke, Curtin, Diriker, Gilkey, Hammond, Hopson, Lawler, Ludwick, Mullins, O'Loughlin, Rieck, Robinson, Shannon and Shipper

Senators absent – Khazeh, Ritenour, Scott, and Zaprowski

1. Pres. Curtin called the meeting to order at 3:35; a quorum was present.
2. Change to the minutes from the Nov. 27 meeting - corrected misspelling of Jerry Waldron's name. The minutes were accepted as amended.
3. Announcement from Pres. Curtin
  - a. At the SU Forum meeting on Tues., Dec. 4, a number of students brought up the issue of increased violence against students. This will be addressed as s a future agenda item for the senate.
4. Discussion of Proposal for Academic Achievement Center

Senator Hammond, chair of the ad hoc committee, had presented the committee's interim report at the Nov. 13 senate meeting and their proposal was circulated to the senators with the meeting agenda. Provost Jones said he would like the senate's endorsement as the center has an academic focus and he would like the endorsement soon due to logistics and the current timeline. Money for a staff position (director) has already been allocated from enhancement money. The site needs to be renovated; that money will come from money left over after renovation of GUC facilities.

Questions/Concerns and Responses (R)

- Question about costs, initial and on-going – R, main cost is in personnel, about \$200,000/yr plus about \$30-50K operating expenses, but not sure. No plans to use Writing center fees for any of this.
- Concern that this is taking funds away from our central mission, wouldn't it be more valuable to hire more TT faculty and decrease class size – R, a few new lines may help in one area, but this should be more effective, it can help across campus. There is evidence that centers of this sort are effective in improving students' success, retention rates and closing the achievement gap. It may also decrease the number of repeats, thereby opening up more seats for students.
- No mention regarding assessment – R, committee discussed, but didn't address issue in detail.
- Concern that the decision has already been made and process already started – R, Jones asked for a slowdown, until the senate endorsed. The money for the director position has already been allocated and there is a window of opportunity for getting renovations done and having the area ready when the director is hired in Sp 2008. Goal is to have the Center

ready to open in F08. Also, some of the goals of this proposal address mandates from the Chancellor – to improve the achievement gap, graduation and time-to-degree rates. The center came from the First Year Experience committee as something that could be used to address these concerns.

- Concern about the Writing Center being moved – R, it does not have to move by Dec. 17 as suggested before. It makes sense for it to be located close to (across the hall from) this Center; it will be very visible & all the support services will be centrally located.
- Concern that the move decreases the space for the Writing Center just as it is becoming busier and needs more room. Also, will there be space for the ESOL tutors, and they are being used increasingly. John Kalb, who supervises these, has been assured space for two tutors, but only until through this academic year – R, the committee did not want to infringe on the Writing Center, ESOL tutors, counseling center, etc. The space issue was not part of the committee's charge.
- Should Writing Center be part of this center? – R, Writing Center doesn't want this, and on other campuses, the two are separate and distinct entities, but they work together.
- Concern that the goals for this center are quite large relative to the proposed staff and space in GUC – R, Not all services will be available when the center opens in F08, plus some of the services will be virtual (using software packages or web-based, such as the "clearing house" aspect) and some of the services are already available (just not well advertised). Space was not part of the committee's charge and space is at a premium. Students are willing to give up space from the center that their fee money has paid for and supports. Perhaps the center will eventually be located in the new library (an "academic commons") – this proposal may help to keep the new library in its current position in the USM cue. (A couple senators expressed support for this idea).
- Concern that there are few specifics in the report - no specific timeline or goals for the next year, no description of how the space will be used, or specifics on the qualifications for the director – R, once the director is hired he/she will help determine some of the specifics, including priorities and timeline. Regarding center set-up, Dean Cowell mentioned that there will be an office for the director, some cubicles and computer work stations and tables. As for the requirements for the director, Jones stated that the specifics include – Ph.D. preferred in a discipline related to Academic Support Programs.

Sen. Diriker made a motion that "The faculty senate endorses the Center for Academic Achievement proposal in concept and looks forward to learning more about the development and operational plans for the center (timeline, budget, operational action steps, etc.), no later than the second meeting of the Faculty Senate in the spring semester of 2008".

More discussion –

- Senators stressed the need for more specifics by that meeting – including timeline and specific goals for coming year, assessment plan.

- Would like to see the job description for the director before it's sent out – R, Cowell mentioned that there is a narrow window of opportunity for advertizing (Jan. 15- Feb. 15) to attract the best candidates. Pres. Curtin suggested that once it is written, it could be reviewed by the senate officers.
- Would the director have the tec skills to set up and maintain the web site? - R, Jones expects the second in command would be the one in charge of that.
- Suggestion that the release time for a faculty rep from each school be changed from "one course" to a certain number of credits – R, Jones will re-examine and rewrite that section.

Question called – hand vote, 12 in favor, 1 opposed. Motion carries

5. Adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Motion made and passed at the meeting –

Motion that the faculty senate endorses the Center for Academic Achievement proposal in concept and looks forward to learning more about the development and operational plans for the center (timeline, budget, operational action steps, etc.), no later than the second meeting of the Faculty Senate in the spring semester of 2008

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Lawler, Secretary