

Draft Minutes of the
SU Faculty Senate Meeting
March 14, 2006
HH119

Senators Present: Groth, Hopson, Howard, McKenzie, Morrison, Muller, Mullins, O'Loughlin, Parker, Pereboom, Ritenour, Robeck, Robinson, Shannon, Shipper.

Senators Absent: Diriker, Lawler

1. Maarten Pereboom called the senate to order at 3:31pm.

2. The minutes from March 7th were approved.

3. A Word from the Administration - Bob Tardiff

Tardiff shared that the Provost was very pleased with the Middle States process and outcome. We ended up with 1 recommendation and 20 suggestions from Middle states (many schools get multiple recommendations). The recommendation pertains to how gen ed aligns with our principles and goals. We'll have more information about the recommendation when we get their final report.

4. Jump to two New Business items presented by Bob Tardiff

Evaluation Forms

Evaluation forms for part-time and full-time non-tenure track faculty have been updated and presented for our approval (see attachment). Discussion focused on how the form could be appropriately used by all. For example, Perdue may need to change the numbers to better reflect their expectations. There was agreement on a suggestion to put minimums and change the percentage ranges for the categories of "Research/Scholarship" (from 5-10% to 5-20%) and "Service to Department, School, University and/or Community" (change from 15-20% to 3-20%).

Academic Program Review

Tardiff provided a summary of the history of the process, how it has changed and some recent developments. APR is mandated by USM and was mainly an external process until 2002 when it became internal (consisted of focus groups - what worked, didn't work, etc.). The 05-06 document is still evolving and the Middle States report will likely drive further revisions. Middle states liked our APR 03-05 guidelines as they changed to more of an outcomes focus. All programs now require an outside reviewer, no longer are we required to analyze similar programs, the timeline has been revised (delayed from spring to late August), Academic Affairs gives feedback late September and a linkage

has been established between formal accreditation processes and APR.

4. Committee Reports

Ad hoc Curriculum Change Committee- Susan Muller

Muller reported that the committee is working on the final document. The Middle States review has had somewhat of an impact, since gen ed changes may be recommended. She reasserted that whatever will happen to gen ed will happen independent of this model.

Some senators mentioned not having a true sense of how their constituents feel about the model. Shannon suggested that the report have a cover page with a list of senators and who they represent along with an invitation for people to give feedback to their senators.

Ad hoc Senate Finance Committee – Mike O'Loughlin

The committee will present list of recommendations at the March 28th meeting. O'Loughlin reported that the committee has discussed many issues including discussed salary adjustments and stipends re: winter and summer.

5. No Old Business

6. More New Business

Help Maryland Vote project – Maarten Pereboom

Pereboom discussed a program designed to encourage professors and students to serve as election judges. SU would not monitor participation, but would encourage it. In areas convenient to the volunteer, judges would be trained and prepped for a full day of duty on primary day (September 12) and election day (November 7).

Evaluation of Teaching for Tenure & Promotion

The following motion was introduced by Dave Parker and seconded: "Beginning with the 2006-2007 academic year, faculty members may not include anonymous student evaluations of their teaching in applications for merit, tenure and promotion. Moreover no anonymous student evaluations of faculty teaching may be added to such applications by anyone reviewing these materials." Basically, the motion recommends to quit using anonymous student evaluations beyond the department level.

Parker gave the history of when the use of anonymous student evaluations was first instituted. They were originally intended to only be used by faculty to improve their own teaching. Parker read e-mails forwarded by John Tyvoll, Harry Womack & Rich McKenzie regarding their recollections from the 1970's. Soon after, the administration mandated the use of them for evaluation purposes.

Overall, Parker asserted that anonymous student evaluations are misused beyond the department level and have had a questionable impact on promotion decisions. Faculty members screen who gets heard – for many, only the positive voices are included in materials submitted for T&P review (Parker mentioned one department who by policy, only allows positive recommendations to be included).

O'Loughlin stated that it's fair to question of the validity of the instrument. The faculty have never really collectively spoken to this issue, thus it behooves the Senate to take it up.

During the discussion of the Parker motion, O'Loughlin, having circulated a document with an alternate motion, suggested that the question of appropriate use of student evaluations in the evaluations of teaching warranted further study by the Faculty Welfare Committee. He offered the substance of this motion as a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor, but Parker declined to accept it.

Senate discussion focused on the nature of the "real problem" – is it the evaluations? how they are being used? perceptions by faculty as to how they are going to be used? and/or who is looking at the evaluations? If there are abuses, suggestions were made to deal with those instead of changing the current system.

Some senators indicated that it would be unfair to change our method now since it would impact people going up for tenure and promotion without providing them with a reasonable substitute. Not using anonymous student evaluations could also be perceived as removing the student voice from the tenure and promotion process.

It was noted that the faculty handbook requires a statistical summary of student evaluations from the last 4 years.

Parker called for a roll call vote (seconded, defeated by majority). The question was called, 5 voted in favor, 8 opposed, the motion was defeated.

7. Pereboom adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jody Morrison, Secretary.