Minutes of the
SU Faculty Senate Meeting
Oct. 24, 2006
HH 119

Senators present : Curtin, DeRidder, Egan, Groth, Hammond, Hopson, Howard, Khazeh, Lawler, Mullins, Parker, Rieck, Ritenour, Robinson, Scott, Shannon, Shipper

Senators absent: Morrison

1. Pres. Mullins called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM. A quorum was present.

2. The minutes were approved as distributed.

3. Announcements from Pres. Mullins

- Changes to the Faculty Handbook and SU Catalog will be sent to appropriate senate committees for their review and approval. Faculty Welfare Committee will receive 2 sections from the new Faculty Handbook regarding 1) family member employment and 2) additional faculty ranks available within the system that SU has not used before. Academic Policies Committee will receive new language from the catalog regarding the grades of WP, WF and F.
- Congratulations to Senator Natalie Hopson for being named Psychology Teacher of 2006 by the Maryland Psychological Association. A hearty round of applause.
- Update – the Provost's Office is looking into two issues from earlier senate meetings this fall, the deadline for chair's evaluation of faculty and stipends for adjuncts and overloads.

4. A word form the Administration – Provost Tom Jones

- The proposal to make SATs optional was presented at the System Provosts' Council meeting last Wednesday and given approval to go forward. A full proposal must reach the system office by Oct. 31 in order to be presented at the BOR Education Policy meeting on Nov. 14. If approved there, it will be presented at the BOR meeting on Dec. 1. We will then know whether we can make this change in our admission policy. Dave Parker requested that a copy of the proposal be distributed to the senate.
- From the Higher Education Governance Meeting – the "door is open" for a distance pod at the Hagerstown Higher Education Center that would allow us to offer our Social Work program there. Contrasting with the Higher Ed Centers at Chesapeake College and Cecil Community College, there are actually funds available at Hagerstown that would pay for the first 3 years of the program there. Looks like a win-win situation.

- We will make our case for 300 (rather then 400) additional students next fall at the system staff meeting on Nov. 3.

5. New Business –

a). Reclassification of Academic Department Program Assistants – an issue of concern brought to Pres. Mullin by a number of senators. Mullins summarized the procedure for reclassifications and the areas of concern: 1) that in the recent round of staff reclassifications, none of the Academic Administrative Assistants II (AAA II) were reclassified (despite 19 reclassifications granted across campus) and 2) that the role of the department chair in this process seems minimal. Additional concerns brought up during the senate discussion: 1) Inconsistency between the different schools – in Henson, the dean was considered the "dept. head" and the chair, the "supervisor", in Fulton, the chair was considered both. 2) That the written descriptions of the duties in the applications were compared to the PI (job description) of the AAA II position that was rewritten about 1.5 years ago. The previous job description had been written 10 prior to that and the position (& description) had changed dramatically during those intervening years. Many felt reclassifications should have been made then (they were not) and that the comparison used, did not represent how dramatically the AAA II position has changed since the last reclassification. One senator questioned whether it could have been a clerical error that the appropriate comparison was not made. 3) That supervisors were supposed to be officially notified in writing, but received only an e-mail message which did not include any rationale for the decision. In one case, a department is searching for a new AAA II and this makes that more difficult. Another asked, Just what is it appropriate to ask an administrative assistant do? 3) The concern, not just for those currently in AAA II positions but also for the future. We may be deep trouble when need to fill positions as current assistants retire. 4) Questions of who did the evaluations – answer a combination of HR and a consulting firm (brought in because of the large number of applications). 5) Concerns that HR does not understand what the academic AA's do and whether the consultants that were brought in had appropriate academic experience (for instance has the input of an academic chair from another university). 6) Although, in discussions with Mullin's, HR Director Donna Keener said chairs were directly involved in the process, some thought that involvement was not significant enough and mentioned there was no place for a recommendation letter from the chair or a full description of the job's duties in the application.

Kathleen Shannon made a motion that "that we formally ask HR to provide us with a list of staff positions that they consider academic and their classifications and the rationale for the differences in classification between and among those positions."

Linda Abresch added a friendly amendment "that we request a list of all the Program Management Specialist positions on campus."

After some discussion regarding what we will do with this information, and whether we are getting ahead of ourselves and should wait for one or more appeals to the union, a motion was made and carried to call the question.

Vote on Dr. Shannon's motion with the amendment.
16 yes, motion carries.

b). Dual Employment Process Relative to Teaching – concerns that a person who works full time on campus in a staff position and also teaches a course now has to fill out a time card for the number of hours they work on that course each week. Also, that the AAA II in the academic department has to determine this time in advance for the dual employment form and has to now do a contingent I contract rather than a faculty overload contract for that PT faculty member. This makes it more difficult to incorporate that data in the PT/Overload summary sheet for the semester. Provost Jones thinks that there is confusion regarding the dual employment form and that it is really the administrative department, and not the academic department, that needs to fill it out. He and his office will look further in to this issue and get back to us.

c). New Student Reader Program Update and Proposal – Diane Davis.
Evaluations of this year's program (previously distributed to senators) were generally favorable; the number of student reading the book increased; the only problems cited were logistical ones – especially room problems. Last spring, the Senate approved the program for five years, so it makes sense to formalize procedures and the structure of the New Student Reader Committee. The current committee is proposing a timeline of program duties and events, assignment of various duties, future directions for the program, formally establishing the makeup of the committee and the election of members. The current committee would like to see the reader program become a campus wide experience with tie-ins to cultural affairs events, freshmen courses, etc. They are not proposing that this committee be a committee of the senate, but would like input from us regarding the committee makeup and request that the Membership and Elections Committee run the election. One senator suggested that as an academic program, the majority of committee members should be faculty. However, the inclusion of staff on such as committee, may show new students that as an academic institution both faculty & staff work are concerned with their education. And a large percentage of the discussion leaders are staff. The suggestion was made that not every person involved with the program (especially performing routine tasks) need be on the committee. A suggestion that 7 faculty out of 13 members (one rep from each school and 2 at-large) would still give a simple majority and have staff participation. But with larger committees scheduling meetings becomes difficult. Alice Bahr will discuss their involvement with the librarians to determine whether they are able to have a committee member. Davis stated that at this point they would like feedback and permission to have Membership & Elections conduct the election. She will also discuss with the Staff Senate and SGA and then return with a more formal proposal.

Kathleen Shannon made a motion that we direct the Membership and Elections Committee to run the election of faculty members of the New Student Reader Committee once the present committee has decided how they want to proceed.

Vote on motion.
16 yes, motion carries.

d). The SAT as an Option for Admission to Salisbury University – Although the Admissions and Readmissions Committee proposal was tabled at the last meeting because the decision on whether to do this is considered to be an administrative one, Pres. Mullins would like us to think about, discuss and share with the administration our concerns about this initiative. One senator asked whether we planned to draft a document on this. Ellen Neufeldt mentioned that she will be here at most meetings and will take notes on our discussions. Dave Parker said that he had reported on this at the last CUSF meeting and that led to an interesting discussion and letters to the editors of newspapers statewide. Mullins thinks it is important for us to weigh in on this; the administrators can decide how they will use our input.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Lawler, Secretary