

Minutes of the
SU Faculty Senate Meeting
April 17, 2007
HH 119

Senators present –Curtin, DeRidder, Groth, Hammond, Hopson, Khazeh, Lawler, Morrison, Mullins, Parker, Rieck, Robinson, Scott, Shannon, Shipper

Senators absent – Egan, Ritenour, Talbert

1. Pres. Mullins called the meeting to order at 3:31; a quorum was present.
2. The minutes from April 10 were approved as written.
3. Announcements from Senate President Mullins – none
4. A word from the Administration – Dr. Jones answered questions:
 - a. Sen. Scott asked about the current situation regarding the budget cut for growth institutions. Jones responded that the legislature cut the growth allocation to the USM by 20%; our share of that is \$240,000. However that may not mean that USM will transfer that cut directly to us, they may be able to make some of that up through cuts somewhere else within the system. Greig Mitchell is currently meeting with system administrators on this issue, and although we are currently mandated to increase our enrollment by 150 students that still might be changed.
 - b. Sen. Shannon asked about the Dean's situation. Jones replied that Mike Folkoff has agreed to serve another year as Interim Dean of Henson and Dick Hoffman will be Interim Dean and Debbie Easterling, Assoc. Dean of Perdue. He put out an ad to Fulton faculty for nominations and applications for their Interim Dean; those need to be received by next Monday afternoon. There will be two Dean searches next year (Henson & Fulton) and one (Perdue) the following year.
 - c. Sen. Shipper was concerned about the financial impact of the proposed growth and that the growth is not even between the schools. Jones replied that the 11 additional faculty hired for the fall will help with that and he will work with the Deans to address school specific problems.
5. New Business
 - a. Discussion of First Year Program Proposal - Melanie Perrault (for the Foundations of Excellence Task Force) mentioned that this was really a report from the ad hoc committee, but it did have some proposals within it. She reminded the senate that their committee had been charged by the senate to examine ways to increase the academic component of the First Year Experience. The committee has compared surveys of our students with national surveys, consulted sources for recommendations and best practices and identified topics to review. Discussion included: whether "central authority" means a person or a place (unsure at this point), whether "centralization" means services are physically located together or information regarding resources can be obtained in one location (could be a mix, but more of the latter), concern that there is no one "first year experience" (but there are some common experiences, concerns of first year students), and the difference between the student's of today compared with those of 10 years ago. Sen. Morrison, senate rep on the Faculty Welfare Committee, mentioned that for these reasons and to involve more faculty in this discussion of these issues,

the topic of the Faculty Development Day on Wed., Aug. 22 will be “Who are Our Students?” The topic of the Faculty Development Day for Jan. 2008 will be “Who Are We as Faculty?” Suggestions from senators included: need for courses or sessions on personal finance and on study skills, in particular listening skills, in the first year experience; suggestion that the committee prioritize their recommendations (committee has already done so and started to implement some); suggestion that committee contact specific academic departments that can assist them in their work and that at a Chairs’ workshop, Dr. Jones encourage chairs to encourage their faculty to attend the Faculty Development workshop on Aug. 22. Since this was a committee report no motion was taken; Pres. Mullins commended the committee for their hard work.

- b. Faculty Handbook Language for 1st and 2nd Year Faculty Evaluations – Sen. Khazeh for Faculty Welfare Committee. Senators received proposal as an attachment with agenda. Discussion on change of dates included concerns that it would be an increased burden on chairs & faculty to meet the earlier date for first year faculty, but it gives a faculty member who is not being renewed more time to search for a new position. However, the change in the deadline for faculty in 2nd year to Jan 15 (from Dec. 15) violates BOR regulations. Sen. Scott made a motion that the senate accept FWC’s proposal pending changes to make the second year deadline consistent with BOR regulations. Seconded. More discussion, particularly about addition of mid-semester evaluations for the first three semesters for new assistant professors. Some felt this was excessively burdensome, not only for dept. chairs and tenured faculty, but also for the new faculty members, especially in departments that require faculty to do reflections of their student evaluations. Others thought mid-semester student evaluations are especially helpful for new faculty and, if done on-line, are not excessive. Sen. Robinson mentioned that FWC is also examining the value of student evaluations and some studies show that for them to be effective, they should be given both at mid and end of semesters. Don Whaley questioned whether this issue should be examined by the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee; Mullins felt FWC was just as appropriate. In light of the time and to give senators an opportunity to discuss this with other faculty, Sen Shannon made a motion to table Scott’s motion. Seconded.

Hand vote, 8 in favor, 5 against, motion denied.

Sen. Scott made a motion to call the question. Seconded. Hand vote, 11 in favor. Motion carries.

Hand vote on Sen. Scott’s motion, 8 in favor, 6 against, motion carries.

- c. Proposal for a Senate Finance Committee – Sen Shipper. In light of the time, this topic was postponed until the next senate meeting.
- d. Update on procedure for full faculty meeting on April 24 - Pres. Mullins. The meeting will be held in the HH Auditorium, beginning at 3:30. After much discussion it was decided that Membership & Elections will check on the official number of full time faculty, prepare a sign-in sheet and begin sign-in at 3:15. The meeting will not begin until a quorum is present and if a quorum is not present by 3:45 the meeting will not be held. One of the senators will make the same motion

that was passed in the senate, another will second and that will open up the meeting for discussion. The motion will be projected and, if any amendments are made they will be added to the projected motion. Because the motion may be amended, the prepared ballots will just have "Yes" and "NO". A vote will be taken by 4:30 at the latest. In order to allow a number of faculty to be heard by that time, there will be a limit of 1 min. for each faculty member speaking. For fairness, Mullins will alternately call on faculty presenting pro and con remarks. Mullins will send an e-mail with the specific procedures for the meeting to the full faculty asap. A number of senators expressed concerns about the issue of the meeting - the lack of documentation as to just what UCC passed; whether the full faculty can overturn curricular change of one department or school that has been approved by UCC; since the senate approved the whole package, what would a NO vote mean; would it mean sending it back to UCC; motion should be broken down and all the implications noted.

6. Meeting adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Motion made and passed during the meeting;

A motion that the senate accept Faculty Welfare Committee's proposal for changes to the faculty handbook language for 1st and 2nd Year faculty evaluations pending changes to make the second year deadline consistent with BOR regulations.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Lawler, Secretary