

Senate Meeting 12/9/08

Senators attending: Wood, Curtin, Clarke, Welsh, Rieck, Khazeh, Gilkey, Weaver, Walton, Scott, Shannon, O'Loughlin, Ludwick, DeWitt, Street, McDermott, Zaprowski

Senators absent: Roebeck.

I. President O'Loughlin calls to order at 3.32. A Quorum was present

Announcements: Last meeting of semester, will send out Spring schedule next week. Will have a heavy schedule in February particularly - especially notes the changes of the Sabbatical policy that the Provost has suggested that we make. Sen Khazeh notes that the committee would like to see the proposal once more. O'Loughlin notes that the Senate has passed the document so that the document itself will be discussed by the Senate after the officers discuss the changes suggested by the Provost and then will bring it back to the Senate with amendments to approved version.

II. Tom Jones Speaks

Good Afternoon. Much time has been on budget situation lately, but he will discuss that more later. We are working on an email to campus right now that we hope to send out by the end of the day. Last Friday there was a conference call from Chancellor to System Presidents (with Tom Jones & Betty Crockett) - no new news then, but today at 11am, there was a conference call discussing where we are today. Bottom line of today is that a resolution is being put together (not finished) that will be put to the Board of Regents this Fri about the budget situation that will discuss issues (including furloughs, questions of unions, et al) Hard to move forward until we know the status of the union pieces within this. Chancellor sent out notice to Presidents saying that all should resist urge to send out information too often as it is changing on a daily basis. Much is hanging in the balance at the moment. Jones continues to do his job and be involved with groups around campus re: initiatives, quality, building et al and then has to balance priorities with the need to cut budgets - wants to cut without damaging. Try to keep a positive attitude. There is still some money coming in. We've been looking for sources for funding initiatives, including summer/winter sessions etc. We can hopefully still do some initiatives, just have to be more picky. The institution itself is sound.

One final thing - this is a hierarchy of damage control to the university. To this point, the majority of the cuts have come from non-personnel places. That is our first option. With financial group we've been working out scenarios based on different options once we get the full details of budget. The biggest impact to people so far has been re: freezes. Next issue is that of furloughs. After furloughs would be layoffs, but we will do everything to avoid those. We may have to slow down on construction or other areas, but all is still up in the air.

III. Motion to Approve the Minutes from 25 November.

Motion approved, seconded.

Minutes postponed til next meeting, as the wrong draft was sent to Senate.

Motion withdrawn

IV. Committee Reports.

No Committee reports

V. New Business:

Elizabeth Curtin and the Finance Committee - met with A. Seltzer. Has sent the report to the Senate. All changes regularly

1. Preservation of jobs is the primary desire
2. Want budget items that are cut to be seen as temporary cuts
3. Question on discretionary funds
4. With A. Seltzer discussion - discussion on Travel funds seems to be a bad place to change money
5. Furlough days - discussed a graduated furlough pattern. A bottom threshold salary in which no furloughs would be given & a higher one. Question over whether furlough days would affect classes, general consensus (with some dissent) was that they should not.

Question on Furlough days - possibility that 2 January will be a furlough day. Jan term will be starting on the Monday with this in mind.

Question re: next year: hiring freeze, look at travel budget, raise/Cola, etc.

Motion to accept the recommendations of the Financial Affairs Committee listed in their report sent to the Senate.

MOTIONED To accept the report and the recommendations contained therein
Seconded.

Khazeh: Not sure if the state has considered the impact of length of tenure when crafting the furlough day formula. Wondered if the formula amounts to age discrimination"

Discussion.

Friendly amendment to strike the state formula (5)

General discussion follows concerning: graduated furloughs, teaching on furlough days, desire to keep from firing people, question of paycut for faculty versus unpaid vacation for staff, desire to make sure that administration does not make changes permanent in response to economic crisis (as had been done in past with travel budget cuts), question on faculty who live paycheck to paycheck & effect of furloughs on them, discussion on whether we should discuss the problems, how we should know the full extent of the crisis before making decisions. Also: get knowledge of the reactions and actions of other campuses in the system, possibility of calling a special meeting when more information is known, and whether there should be a difference in furlough days for 10 month vs. 12 month contracts. In general, consensus that preservation of jobs of existing personnel is paramount.

Sen Shannon proposes that she would like an agreement on principles today at a "legitimate" meeting. She also asked that we amend the proposal to state that: "That the faculty's primary concern is to maintain the integrity of the academic programs, and as our sense of community is integral to our success, an almost equally compelling concern is the preservation of the jobs of existing university personnel." Rather than the original statement which was that our primary concern was to save jobs.

Sen. Shannon asks for a motion on the above, Sen. Scott says this needs a motion

Motioned and seconded.

Discussion follows: 3 important issues to the faculty: preserving the academic mission, saving jobs, and avoiding furloughs. Of these, it is most important to preserve the academic mission and jobs. Question on cutting travel (qualms stated on the possibility of cutting travel money if one has already paid for part of trip), defer maintenance.

Discussion continues on the document and the amendment - should document be moved forward with language protecting academic integrity?

The Question is Called.

All in favor on bringing discussion to end on Senator Shannon's amendment

Brief additional discussion, then:

The question is called.

All in favor on bringing discussion to an end on Sen. Shannon's amendment.

Ayes carry.

All in favor of the amendment to replace 3: the faculty's primary concern is to maintain the academic integrity...

12 in favor, 1 opposed, 4 abstain

Amendment passes.

Full document returned:

Sen. Shannon - asks for another amendment to add a new 5 under furlough days stating that: the administration be sensitive to the fact that faculty are on 10 month over 12 month contracts. (the previous 5 was amended out). Friendly amendment accepted. So amended.

O'Loughlin draws to closure: Is the Senate comfortable with voting on this today versus postponing this to when we have more information?

Sen. Scott calls the Question. Ayes carry.

Vote on the document as amended.
11 in favor, 4 opposed, 2 abstained.

Motion passed.

V. Welcomes President of the SGA to the Senate

SGA President Lilli Afkhami: parking is a major issue for the students. She is here with a plea kindly asks that faculty and staff with red permits - to please utilize spaces when available. Some red permit holders say that they park in wrong color solely because they are closer. Please fill the red spaces first. Says as early as 7am there are ample red spaces but cars with red permits are in the white spaces.

Discussion follows: on whether those in Guerreri white spots are even faculty, on the fact that students also park regularly in faculty spots, on suggestion of getting Chief Lashley to send an email to the university to remind everyone to park in their own spaces.

Motion that the Senate recommend the Chief of Police send an email addressing the campus on the issue of parking in the correct spot. (To Clarify the rules on parking and remind the faculty as to these rules).

Seconded.

Discussion follows: no desire to change around the spots - but to let those who park in the wrong place know that they are not parking correctly. Question over extent of the problem & whether a reminder would be sufficient. Some Senators admit to parking in white spaces, but say that it is because parking is so limited. The parking problem is long standing and has been recommended in the past, but with few results. A pitch is made for local public transport and using bikes instead of cars.

Question called.

Ayes pass.

All in favor of the motion as stated above.

Ayes carry. Motion as stated above is Passed.

VII. O'Loughlin gavels the meeting adjourned.