

UNO Faculty Senate Meeting, October 29, 2014

Innsbruck Rooms – UC 211 A-B

1. Call to Order and Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 PM by Faculty Senate President Dr. Pamela Jenkins, who welcomed everyone and thanked everyone again for all of the work that people have done this semester.

2. Roll Call

Current roster of Faculty Senators:

Administration	Merrill	Johnson	(14-15)	Present
Staff Council	Brian	McDonald	(14-15)	Present
SG President	David	Teagle	(14-15)	Absent
Alumni Assoc.	Dinah	Payne	(14-15)	Present
Adjunct	Michelle	Esposito	(14-15)	Present
Business	Dinah	Payne (SE)	(13-16)	Present
Business	James	Logan	(12-15)	Present
Business	Matt	Zingoni	(12-15)	Absent
Business	Cherie	Trumbach	(14-17)	Present
Business	Mark	Reid	(13-16)	Absent
Business	Christy	Corey	(13-16)	Present
Business	Ivan	Miestchovich	(13-16)	Excused
Education	Richard	Speaker (SE)	(13-16)	Excused
Education	Zarus	Watson	(12-15)	Excused
Education	Lena	Nuccio-Lee	(13-16)	Present
Education	Ivan	Gill	(14-17)	Present
Education	Matt	Lyons	(14-17)	Excused
Engineering	Edit	Bourgeois (SE)	(14-17)	Excused
Engineering	Malay Ghose	Hajra	(12-15)	Excused
Engineering	Nikolaos	Xiros	(12-15)	Excused
Engineering	Dimitrios	Charalampidis	(13-16)	Absent
Liberal Arts	Nancy	Easterlin (SE)	(14-17)	Excused
Liberal Arts	David	Beriss	(14-17)	Present
Liberal Arts	James	Mokhiber	(14-17)	Absent
Liberal Arts	Chris	Day	(14-17)	Excused
Liberal Arts	Elaine	Brooks	(12-15)	Present
Liberal Arts	Peter	Yaukey	(12-15)	Excused
Liberal Arts	James	Lowry	(12-15)	Present
Liberal Arts	Marla	Nelson	(12-15)	Excused

Liberal Arts	Vern	Baxter	(12-15)	Present
Liberal Arts	Beth	Blankenship	(12-15)	Present
Liberal Arts	Peter	Schock	(14-17)	Present
Liberal Arts	Steve	Striffler	(14-17)	Present
Liberal Arts	Pam	Jenkins	(14-17)	Present
Liberal Arts	Renia	Ehrenfeucht	(13-16)	Excused
Liberal Arts	Laszlo	Fulop	(13-16)	Present
Sciences	Jairo	Santanilla (SE)	(12-15)	Present
Sciences	Elliott	Beaton	(14-17)	Present
Sciences	Greg	Seab	(14-17)	Present
Sciences	Wendy	Schluchter	(14-17)	Present
Sciences	Joel Andrew	Webb	(14-17)	Present
Sciences	Leonard	Spinu	(12-15)	Excused
Sciences	Vassil	Roussev	(12-15)	Absent
Sciences	Nicola	Anthony	(13-16)	Excused
Sciences	Steve	Rick	(13-16)	Present
Sciences	Shengru	Tu	(13-16)	Present
Library	Connie	Phelps (SE)	(12-15)	Present
Library	Marie	Morgan	(13-16)	Present

3. Approval of the Minutes from the 9/30/14 Meeting

Ms. Blankenship moved and Dr. Logan seconded to approve the minutes of the 9/30/14 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. [Please note that the minutes were approved after the Faculty Welfare Committee report.]

4. Senate Committee Reports

Faculty Welfare Committee (Dr. Striffler) [The secretary thanks Dr. Striffler for providing the following extensive notes after the meeting]:

1) The first issue involves the temperature of classrooms late in the day. They contacted Warren Davis in Facility Services, and here is his response: If there is a class or function in a building after hours needing AC, then a phone call should be made to the Facility Services Service Center at x6675 to provide the building and room numbers; the Service Center staff will then create a work order and send it to Central Utility Plant (CUP) staff operations; the CUP operator will make the necessary changes to the current schedule to provide the AC service; during the week, most buildings are online until about 9:00 or 10:00pm and start up again at 5:00 or 6:00am; the weekend schedules are a little different with some buildings off all day Sunday; if the issue is a rise in temperature in the afternoons on a warm day, then it is probably because of the problems that they have been having with CUP equipment that supports several buildings; this equipment is expected to be repaired in the next couple of weeks once required parts become available. So cooler times are ahead! And so is winter.

2) The second issue deals with the length of the academic calendar; the issue arose because a number of inquisitive faculty wrote the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and Senate Executive then sent it to their Committee. The basic issue is the recent increase in the length of the semester – so that faculty is essentially teaching an additional week of classes. This has made both semesters longer, and in the spring has changed the old pattern whereby there were no classes Monday through Wednesday of Mardi Gras and then a full week for Spring Break. This coming spring, there are no classes on the Monday and Tuesday of Mardi Gras, but we do have classes on Wednesday, and then for Spring Break, there are no classes on Wednesday through Friday, so there is no week long Spring Break for those.

Faculty wanted to know why these changes were made and how, as in were faculty involved in the decision-making process and were they told who made the decisions and why. A number of faculty noted that more work with no increase in pay is essentially a pay cut, and a bit annoying given that we have not seen raises in X years; others suggested that there are also issues with students and faculty who count on the breaks in the spring to catch up or at least catch their breath, especially students and faculty with higher class load and students who work.

Their Committee emailed Matt Moore who responded quickly, usefully, and in detail. According to Mr. Moore, the answer to the why question – why UNO made the semester longer – is that SACS made us do it, partly tied to new federal definitions with respect to defining a credit and contact time.

How this was done – the calendar is created by the Registrar and forwarded to the deans for review. That is the system that Mr. Moore inherited when he came here, and he said that he was more than willing to take input from anyone willing to review it. Typically, calendars are built two years in advance.

With respect to the spring semester, according to Mr. Moore, this is complicated because the date for Mardi Gras moves around. This coming spring, because Mardi Gras is earlier and some other factors, they had to split our break – two days around Mardi Gras and then three around Spring Break... Mr. Moore did offer up the option, one that could be explored, of having the break around Mardi Gras and still have a full Spring Break and then tacking on extra days at the end of semester. This obviously would be for subsequent years.

This did not, however, end their Committee's investigation. Dr. Striffler was not able to find any place where SACS or other guidelines say anything about the necessary amount of course contact time, though he has no doubt that it exists somewhere and is shaped by federal and state guidelines and accreditation and would confuse a mind as simple as his even if he found it online. So he looked at academic calendars for other universities in the state, although he did this fairly quickly.

- a) We have the longest semester of anyone. He thinks that almost all are shorter. Some are close to ours, but we are either the longest or tied for first. He thinks that most are closer to an even 15. He has to look a bit closer.
- b) On the second issue, with more confidence, he can say that it appears as though all other universities in the state get Monday through Wednesday off for Mardi Gras and a full Spring Break, with one exception, LSU.

In short, other places have shorter semesters and better breaks. To give us a sense:

UL Lafayette: in the fall they seem to have 15 weeks; in spring, their semester starts and ends when we do but they get Monday through Wednesday off for Mardi Gras and a full week for Spring Break. So that appears to be 15 weeks as well.

UL Monroe: in their calendar it is a bit hard to determine when the last day of classes is, but they appear to also be 15 weeks and definitely have Monday through Wednesday for Mardi Gras and a full Spring Break.

Nichols: definitely has Monday through Wednesday for Mardi Gras and a full Spring Break.

Grambling: full Mardi Gras and Spring Break; he thinks that they have a shorter semester.

LSU: semester appears to be shorter; he is not sure if it is a full week shorter; Mardi Gras is Monday, Tuesday, and half of Wednesday, but a full Spring Break.

The long and short of it is that we appear to have longer semesters and are the only ones who do not have Monday through Wednesday for Mardi Gras and a full Spring Break. Their Committee has not gotten back together to discuss where this leaves us, and perhaps that is just as well because they need some input from the Senate as a whole to decide where to go, if anywhere.

Ms. Blankenship asked if the dead hour also fits into the SACS requirement. Dr. Striffler replied that he thought that the loss of the dead hour has to do with more efficient scheduling. Dr. Baxter lauded the Committee's work and follow-up on this issue. Dr. Schock asked about the SACS requirement, if it was a hard number of 2100 individual minutes per semester and if the Committee looked at the document *Principles of Accreditation*. He has looked at it, but it does not say the exact number of hours. Dr. Schock stressed that we need to be persuaded that there has been a SACS change. Mr. Moore stated that there is a federal financial aid requirement of 2250 minutes, and it depends on how we define the academic hour. We define it as 50 minutes; others might define it as 55 minutes.

Dr. Striffler said that if we go on the website of different universities, we could see that their classes are longer than our classes. Mr. Moore acknowledged that that could be so. Dr. Seab stated that ULL and SLU have 50 minutes classes. Mr. Moore said that he is not really concerned about everyone else and encourages a lot of discussion to see how the calendar is built. Ms. Esposito said that from an instructional standpoint, students take the hours for a break anyway. Dr. Lowry said that at his former institution they had a Calendar Committee chaired by the Registrar with representatives from each college. Mr. Moore said that he has worked with the Academic Standards Committee, so Dr. Jenkins suggested that we move this issue over to Academic Standards. Dr. Beaton said that last year we had Hurricane Isaac, which might be why the cushion was built in.

Academic Procedures and Standards Committee (Dr. Corey):

Dr. Corey stated that she was not here today to give a full report, just an update. They had a meeting with the Provost last Friday. They were charged to look at the purge scheduling, which went from two purges to one purge. This is consistent with other universities in the System. They did look at the relaxing deadlines; there has been some leniency here towards the academically disqualified, not putting them on probation or not suspending them. The State document tends to

take numbers at the end of the semester, so if we let in someone who is not academically qualified and they end up not finishing, they will not be reported. The Committee will give a fuller report at another meeting.

5. Follow Up on INTO-UNO (Dr. Jenkins)

Dr. Jenkins reported briefly on the INTO-UNO conversation last Friday. About 75 people were there, and she thinks that they got some pretty good information about where we are going. She hopes to have a monthly conversation with the President so that we can keep getting information as things change. Dr. Seab asked if the contract was signed, and Dr. Jenkins replied no.

6. Update on University Positions (Dr. Jenkins)

College of Liberal Arts Dean: in the last phases. Provost: candidates are here. College of Engineering Dean: they are here, too.

7. Faculty Governance Committee (FGC) Report (Dr. Matt Tarr)

Dr. Jenkins asked the FGC members present to stand up and be recognized; about one half of the members were there. She announced that FGC met from 3:00-7:00pm the previous Wednesday and from 9:00am-12:00pm on Saturday, might be meeting this weekend also, and that anyone on the Committee could answer questions.

Dr. Tarr stated that he was giving a brief update on FGC. He is chair and Dr. Jenkins is co-facilitating as Senate President. There are about 27 voting members. Some highlights of his presentation follow ([see Dr. Tarr's presentation slides](#)).

The task that FGC is trying to get through is revitalization and restructuring. The 84 programs are actually 80. The deadline was changed as FGC asked for an extension until November 7. FGC looked at both quantitative and qualitative information and came up with scores. There were six criteria; in some cases, FGC could not get all of the data needed because of the time frame. Scores are being used as a major piece of categorization, but they do not equate to program categories. FGC finally agreed on program categories: Enhance; Sustain; Restructure, Merge, or Otherwise Transform; Close. The goal is to put every one of the 80 programs in one of these four categories. Everything in green on the "Process" slide has already been done.

FGC is taking those scores and looking at additional information, for example, how connected that program is to another program or to the University. The things that FGC is discussing are not included in the numerical scores. The quantitative is just a categorization; it does not mean that it is the best program or the worst program. There are quantitative reasons why a score is low for a program, but that does not mean that it will be closed. And if we cut some programs out of the list, we will always have a fourth quartile.

The full Committee has access to all of the documents from the chairs, and all are encouraged to read them carefully. Quantitative categories are not equivalent to the quality of a program. Just

because a program got a low score does not mean that its students are not well educated. People are excluded from voting on their department's programs. A two-thirds majority vote is required for closure; the remaining categories only require a majority vote. FGC felt that closure is a very drastic measure and requires a higher level of agreement by the Committee. FGC may end up with a preliminary assessment – those programs in categories 3 and 4 – and put the remainder in 1-2.

Enrollment revenues were based on majors and did not include service components; credit for service is in another area. There are higher dollars per credit hour for certain disciplines (multipliers). Internal demand scores include SCH, number of majors, and completion rates. External demand only addresses how well the program attracts students to the University. Master's degrees are generally given on the way to Ph.D. programs and are typically not the reason why people come here.

Dr. Tarr referred to the viability of the University moving forward. Everyone has issues with the loss of faculty, etc.; unfortunately, FGC has to make decisions based on lack of resources. The number one priority is the future of the University. Programs that generate revenue allow other programs to grow that do not generate revenue. Revenue is 15%, but it is not the most important thing. Regarding the enhancement category, it does not mean that the strongest programs are going to be enhanced; there is no agreement across the Committee whether strong or weak programs should be enhanced. The Committee has 30 people, with 27 voting members; there is a wide diversity of people in terms of disciplines and backgrounds. All have been at the University for a long time, and all are extremely dedicated to making this a strong University.

Ms. Esposito asked how the voting process will work. Dr. Tarr explained that it is a two-step process. FGC has gone through and discussed all programs in the third and fourth quartiles as a committee. The next stage is that everybody will vote on the categories anonymously. That vote will be distributed to Committee members who will meet and vote anonymously for closure using clickers; there must be a 2/3 majority vote for closure. He thinks that the Committee will meet Monday, October 3 for the vote.

Dr. Pam Kennett-Hensel, Chair of Marketing, asked if FGC is going to rank order the programs in category 4. Dr. Tarr replied that FGC is not planning on ranking programs but providing a statement for every program. His perspective is that we should vote for closure if we do not see a program as viable at all in the future.

Ms. Blankenship asked if FGC got all of the data that it wanted. Dr. Tarr responded no, that FGC really wanted some data on jobs related to specific job areas and wanted better quantitative data that shows what jobs people get. For external demand, FGC wanted to get better information on workforce demand. Dr. Trumbach said that one of the things that she spoke to the Committee about was looking at these numbers as more of an indication of where things are. Dr. Tarr added that FGC also got feedback from the programs.

Ms. Esposito recapped that we make a recommendation by the 7th and President Fos has to make his decision by the end of November, and then she asked if he will come to the Senate before he submits it to the Board. Ms. Phelps said that she believes that it is due to the Board by November

20 for a meeting on December 11. Dr. Hansen stated that he will recommend that President Fos does that; if the latter changes the recommendation or adds to it, it is important for him to follow up. Dr. Tarr asked Dr. Hansen what restrictions are placed on President Fos. Dr. Hansen replied that he thinks that it is advisory and that Fos is not bound by it.

Dr. Fulop understood that maybe FGC would like to recommend some weaker programs to stay on for possible review in the future. Dr. Tarr said that FGC talked about a one-year probationary period for programs in category 3. Dr. Baxter said that he thinks that the methodology of the Committee is that the criteria are not biased toward larger departments, and he appreciates that on behalf of smaller programs. Dr. Tarr stated that FGC is only using the data as a guide. The decision is not based on revenue but how each Committee member feels that the program is essential and viable to the University.

Dr. Hansen thanked the Committee and the chairs for their work. Dr. Jenkins said that FGC does not see this as being done on November 7, but as a long-term strategy in how we might look at University priorities.

Dr. Schluchter announced that a University Budget Committee will meet next week, and it is their intention that the same rigorous attention will be paid to the non-academic side as to the academic side. Dr. Payne asked what the mechanism is by which everyone will be alerted to that Committee's progress; it cannot be secret. Dr. Schluchter thinks that is a very important point and said that they possibly might have to meet jointly with FGC. Dr. Jenkins noted that it is a huge Budget Committee.

In closing, Dr. Jenkins thanked the chairs for their responses, saying that they were poignant, wonderfully written, and full of information. She added that Committee members read all 84 programs; there are some wonderful stories.

8. Old Business. None.

9. New Business.

Dr. Jenkins asked if there was something that we need to address that we have not yet done this year. Ms. Esposito recommended that as the report comes, we need to decide what we are going to say to students. Dr. Trumbach asked what happened to the discussion about benefits, and Dr. Jenkins answered that we are going to talk about it in November.

Adjournment.

A motion to adjourn was moved by Dr. Schluchter and seconded by Dr. Payne. The meeting adjourned at 3:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Morgan
Faculty Senate Secretary, 2014/15
November 13, 2014