

DRAFT FOR SENATE CONSIDERATION 10/27/2016

UNO Faculty Senate Minutes

September 28, 2016, Innsbruck Room, 3:00 pm

President Cherie Trumbach opened the meeting and asked for the roll to be called.

Roster of Faculty Senate Members, 2016-1017							
Roll/Attendance September 28, 2016 Meeting							
ATT?	#	Representation	First	Last	Term		
Y	1	1 Administration Rep.	Norm	Whitley	(16-17)	Interim pending Provost appt.	
	2	1 Staff Council Pres.	LeeAnne	Sipe	(16-17)		
Y	3	1 SG President	Antonio	Torres	(16-17)		
	4	1 Alumni Assoc. Rep.		TBD	(16-17)	Faculty Senate President appt.	
	5	1 Adjunct Rep.		TBD	(16-17)	Faculty Senate President appt.	
Y	6	1 Business	Dinah	Payne (SE)	(13-16)		
Y	7	2 Business	Joe	Beams	(16-19)		
	8	3 Business	Christy	Corey	(16-19)		
Y	9	4 Business	Cherie	Trumbach (Pres., SE)	(14-17)		
Y	10	5 Business	James	Logan	(15-18)		
Y	11	6 Business	Tarun	Mukherjee	(15-18)		
Y	12	1 Education	Matt	Lyons (SE)	(14-17)		
Y	13	3 Education	Ivan	Gill	(14-17)		
Y	14	4 Education	Kenneth	Farizo	(16-19)		
Y	15	1 Engineering	Edit	Bourgeois (SE)	(14-17)		
Y	16	2 Engineering	Dimitrios	Charalampidis	(16-19)		
Y	17	3 Engineering	Ting	Wang	(15-18)		
	18	4 Engineering	Guillermo	Rincon	(16-18)	replacing Christy Ikeda (16-18)	
	19	1 Liberal Arts	Nancy	Easterlin (SE)	(14-17)		
Y	20	2 Liberal Arts	D. Ryan	Gray	(16-19)		
Y	21	3 Liberal Arts	Chris	Day	(14-17)		
	22	4 Liberal Arts	David	Beriss	(14-17)		
Y	23	5 Liberal Arts	James	Mokhiber (Sec'y, SE)	(14-17)		
Y	24	6 Liberal Arts	Peter	Schock	(14-17)		
	25	7 Liberal Arts	Elizabeth	Steeby	(16-17)	replacing Steve Striffler (14-17), on leave	
Y	26	8 Liberal Arts	John	Kiefer	(15-17)	replacing Pam Jenkins (15-17), retired	
Y	27	9 Liberal Arts	Ed	Chervenak	(16-18)	replacing Vern Baxter (15-18), retired	
Y	28	10 Liberal Arts	John	Hazlett	(16-18)	replacing Beth Blankenship (15-18), now admin.	
Y	29	11 Liberal Arts	Robert	Dupont	(15-18)		
Y	30	12 Liberal Arts	Juliana	Starr	(15-18)		
Y	31	13 Liberal Arts	Cheryl	Hayes	F 2016	replacing Jeffrey Ehrenreich (15-18), on leave	
Y	32	1 Sciences	Nicola	Anthony (SE)	(15-18)		
Y	33	2 Sciences	Melanie	Stiegler	(15-18)		
Y	34	3 Sciences	Kenneth	Holladay	(15-18)		
Y	35	4 Sciences	Wendy	Schluchter	(14-17)		
	36	5 Sciences	Greg	Seab	(14-17)		
Y	37	6 Sciences	Elliott	Beaton	(14-17)		
	38	7 Sciences	Joel Andrew	Webb	(14-17)		
Y	39	8 Sciences	Vassil	Roussev (VP, SE)	(15-18)		
Y	40	1 Library	Connie	Phelps (SE)	(15-18)		
Y	41	2 Library	Lindsey	Reno	(16-19)		
	<i>Late arrivals included</i>						<i>SE= Senate Executive Board Member</i>

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Approval of the Minutes

Trumbach opened the floor to discussion of the August 28, 2016 minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was heard and seconded. The minutes were approved.

Senate Updates

Trumbach then proceeded to a number of updates and reports.

Faculty/Staff Retention Retreat Report

Trumbach asked Jim Mokhiber to report on the Faculty/Staff Retention Retreat, held at the Homer Hitt Alumni Center from 1:00 to 4:00pm on Wednesday, September 21, 2016.

Mokhiber read a two-page report (see attachment) on the retreat, which was attended by more than thirty faculty, staff and administrators, and which was run by President John Nicklow and Bill Sharpton. Mokhiber noted that data packets were distributed for analysis by six groups of participants, who then discussed some preliminary findings and proposed potential courses of action. For example, the rate of tenured faculty leaving UNO has increased over the past five years, and the data indicates that since 2012 the percentage decline in overall faculty has outpaced the decrease in student population. In a second session, participants discussed a number of potential ways to improve retention, ranging from increasing opportunities for professional development, to reinstating some form of on-campus childcare, to developing strategies for the phased retirement of faculty who wish to retire.

The Administration intends to write up an official report on the proceedings of the retention retreat, and this will be distributed to faculty. Mokhiber noted that, in a subsequent discussion, the administration agreed that the data and materials that had been distributed at the retreat could be placed on the Senate Moodle site, but indicated that the materials were internal personnel documents and thus should not be made public. The Senate Executive Board will place this material online, and will forward to the administration any questions about retention issues it receives via the confidential Google Form dropbox noted on the Moodle site.

Administration Representative to the Faculty Senate

Trumbach noted that she would be inviting Norm Whitley to join the Faculty Senate as the administration's representative, replacing John Nicklow. Whitley's appointment will be an interim one, pending the appointment of a new Provost, she indicated.

Fringe Policy

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Vassil Roussev reported on the activities of a working group that had been looking into the fringe policy and whether changes needed to be implemented with regard to summer rates in particular. Currently we apply the regular fringe rate (about 27%) to summer research. Roussev noted that the committee recommends that for summer research and for extra compensation the default/full fringe rate should be reduced by those items for which we have already paid over the previous nine months. The group also recommends that summer teaching and summer research should be paid at the same rate. Roussev noted that the president will determine whether a change in policy is warranted. The group has completed its task, and Roussev thanked David Armstrong, Carol Lunn and others involved in the effort.

Athletic Advisory Council

Matt Zingoni gave a brief announcement regarding the Athletic Advisory Council, for which he is the Faculty Representative. He noted that the appointment of someone to fill this role is a requirement of the NCAA, and that he was appointed to the position by President Nicklow. His primary responsibility is to foster transparency and collaboration regarding athletic matters. On the 13 member Athletic Advisory Council, he noted, there are a total of 7 faculty members. Five of these members are to be nominated by the Faculty Senate, and the President then will choose three to serve on the council. Zingoni indicated he will attend every Faculty Senate meeting and welcomed input by the Senators and faculty.

Search for UNO Provost

Vassil Roussev updated the Senate regarding the search for a new Provost. He indicated that the search committee was in the final stages of its deliberations, and would be writing a report evaluating three of the candidates. Roussev expressed disappointment that the committee had only received 40 responses for feedback from members of the UNO community, but voiced the belief that the search had been a very thorough and open process. He expressed the hope that the committee would complete its work by the upcoming Friday.

Roussev then turned to the search for a new Vice President for Research. He noted that 27 applications had been received, and 6 candidates were interviewed online via Skype. Of the six candidates, he noted, the two internal candidates were interviewed by Skype as well so as to ensure fairness. The target date for the new appointment to take place is January 1, 2017.

Correction to the UNO calendar

Trumbach announced that there had been a correction to the UNO calendar, and Student Course Evaluations will now be closed the day before finals begin.

Senate Budget and Fiscal Affairs (SBFA)

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Jim Logan reported on the work of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Affairs committee. Logan indicated that, at its last meeting, the committee had held a wide-ranging discussion of the new Budget Models under consideration. Under this new model, he noted, the administration would apportion revenue on the basis of an academic unit's SCH (Student Credit Hour) totals. Such a model could potentially provide a more rational basis for budgeting, he noted, though he indicated that many SBFA members believe there are still many questions to be answered. Members of the SBFA expressed concern that they were unclear how the new model would affect their particular units, for example. Others had voiced concern that there was no clear link between the new Budget Model and the UNO Strategic Plan, and were concerned that the overall goals of this new initiative were not yet clear. Members of SBFA voiced the desire for more time to discuss a new model with their constituents. At this point, Logan stated, nothing was carved in stone regarding this draft report.

Update by President Nicklow

President Nicklow then addressed the Senate. He expressed appreciation for all of the faculty who had participated in the successful Mars Rover visit, which drew hundreds of visitors to campus. Regarding recruiting, Nicklow noted that UNO had once again been placed on US News and World Report's "Least Debt" list, and indicated that this was particularly helpful considering the university had also been placed on another "Best Early Career Salaries" list. Nicklow also discussed the appointing of a committee to continue to revisit the Strategic Plan, and indicated his desire that it be better connected to everyday activities, and be viewed as part of the annual Institutional Effectiveness (IE) process.

A Senator asked Nicklow about the implementation of the new Budget Model, and its potential impact across the university's academic programs. Nicklow indicated that the model will include a "damping factor" that should make such impacts manageable. He is not, he stated, interested in laying off people or ending programs. However he noted that a Budget Model must be implemented in some form this year, and as early as possible. It will not be useful if is delayed until April. Nicklow stressed that it will be an evolving model in any event. He is in favor of an outcomes-based formula, and doesn't want to develop a cost formula that might undermine such goals.

Another Senator inquired about the timeline for a decision regarding the new Budget Model. Nicklow noted that the University Budget Review Committee (UBRC) will consider a status report next week, and another meeting is scheduled for two weeks later. Nicklow noted that the Senate is represented on the UBRC by Bobby Dupont, Jim Logan and Cherie Trumbach. Nicklow indicated that he welcomed comments on the Budget Model issue, but would not be putting the final decision to a vote by the UBRC. He is focused, he said, on the metrics and credit-hour production, and hopes to be in a position to make a decision in the next few weeks.

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Termination of Tenured Faculty Policy

Trumbach noted that revisions to the text of the policy were still underway, and indicated that she hoped they would be ready for distribution soon, so as to allow final consideration at the next meeting.

Old Business

No additional matters were considered.

New Business

Dinah Payne reminded Senators of the upcoming “Making History” events surrounding the president’s investiture. Substantial contributions by groups like Aramark, she noted, were expected.

Trumbach noted that the Senate hoped to hold a joint Faculty Senate/Faculty Council meeting at the October meeting so as to allow for the formal consideration and approval of the revised Faculty Council bylaws.

A motion to adjourn was heard, seconded and approved.

[Adjourned]

Appendix::

Report on the Faculty Staff Retention Retreat

Wednesday, October 21, 2016, 1:00-4:00pm

University Center Innsbruck Room

Jim Mokhiber

Over 30 faculty, staff and administrators participated in this event, which was run by President John Nicklow and Bill Sharpton. Members of the Senate who participated included Peter Schock, Cherie Trumbach, and Vassil Roussev.

The session began with a brief address by Dr. Nicklow setting out the parameters of the retreat:

- Participants were asked to avoid anecdotal approaches to the problem of retention. Our work was to be data-driven, and would entail the parsing of a packet of statistics detailing voluntary and involuntary separations from the university.

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- After identifying issues, we would be asked to propose potential strategies and remedies.
- Along these lines, the President noted that broad salary increases were not to be the focus of our work. The President did say that he places a high priority on some kind of increases in the future, however.
- However we were told to consider measures that would require new funding and those would be cost-neutral.

We then divided into 6 groups, with each group tasked to evaluate one of several collections of data. After 45 minutes we came together again to discuss our findings for the period since 2012, including the following preliminary determinations:

- The number of faculty leaving has increased over the past five years
- The percentage of faculty loss has outpaced the percentage/rate of overall student loss
- There has been many departures in the first five years of employment over the past five year period
- The rate of tenured faculty loss has increased
- Of faculty indicating a reason for leaving, there has been a fourfold increase in voluntary resignations to take up positions at other universities
- Overall, the age of the faculty is increasing
- We may be experiencing disproportionate losses of people of color or women (but we need more detailed data and baselines to see if this is the case)
- Programs with higher external funding appear to have higher attrition but the percent of faculty lost from STEM fields has been decreasing over the last five years.

Participants agreed above all else that we need more precise data so as to continue to refine our understanding of retention issues.

In the second session, the groups were tasked with proposing strategies to address retention and the findings outlined above. Discussions during this portion of the session were more speculative and often reflected personal experience.

For example, regarding heading off faculty loss in the first five years, one workgroup proposed several cost-neutral suggestions, including enhancing the initial Orientation process, allowing for greater professional development, and more fostering of the wider academic community on campus. In terms of strategies requiring additional funding, suggestions included reinstating some form of childcare on campus, increasing start up funding, developing new incentives for publication and funded research, and improving classroom technology on campus. Another group, charged with addressing the aging of the faculty, proposed developing a phased retirement process for faculty who express a desire to retire

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and improving the documentation of roles played by faculty (and staff) to allow for better continuity and succession.

Bill Sharpton facilitated the overall meeting and the President served as rapporteur, recording the session's deliberations himself. The Administration is thus demonstrating serious engagement with this important issue and initiative. The Administration intends to write up its own report on the session and chart a path forward for the university.

The Administration has agreed that we can post the documentation from the retreat for internal consumption via our Moodle page and we expect to make that available for Senators soon. Senators should please note, however, that since this involves personnel matters, this documentation is not for general public release.

The Senate Executive Board will solicit additional input from Senators regarding faculty and staff retention through a Google Form that will allow for anonymous submission of comments and questions via our Moodle page.