

## **UNO Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

January 25, 2016 [DRAFT for consideration 2/16]

Attending: John Nicklow, Amanda Green, Dinah Payne, Christy Corey, Cherie Trumbach, James Logan, Tarun Mukherjee, Richard Speaker, Ivan Gill, Matthew Lyons, Edit Bourgeois, Dimitrios Charalampidis, Ting Wang, Christine Ikeda, Peter Schock, Mary Niall Mitchell, Laszlo Fulop, Chris Day, David Beriss, James Mokhiber, Steve Striffler, Vern Baxter, Robert Dupont, Juliana Starr, Jeffrey Ehrenreich, Steve Rick, Nicola Anthony, Wendy Schluchter, Greg Seab, Joel Andrew Webb, Vassil Roussev, Connie Phelps, Lindsey Reno

President Cherie Trumbach called the meeting to order.

A motion to approve the minutes from 12/3/2015 and 12/9/2015 was heard and passed unanimously.

Trumbach then made several announcements. She noted that the **Evaluation of Administrators** process was underway, and indicated that some early Qualtrics issues have been resolved. Reminders will be issued after Mardi Gras. Regarding the **University Budget Review Committee**, Trumbach noted that the Senate's parallel body – the Senate Budget and Financial Affairs Committee – needed to meet to clarify some issues and priorities. She stated that it would be useful to return to the former University Budget Committee's [the predecessor to the UBRC] report to evaluate how we are faring.

Trumbach then offered an update on the **UNO Presidential Search**. She stressed that this would be a very quick process, and noted that we would be given 9-10 names that would be whittled down to 3 or 4 on January 28<sup>th</sup>. We would have only one day to review 9-10 applications, and the semi-finalists will come to campus from 2/17-19. On 2/23 the finalists will be presented to the full board. A Senator asked if the 9-10 names will be made public and Trumbach stated that she thought that, under the open meetings laws, they would.

Trumbach then offered an update on the work of the **Committee on Committees**. She indicated that the group hoped to have a draft in place for the Senate to vote on at the February meeting. She then offered a PowerPoint detailing the proposed new structure, beginning with the principle that the Faculty Senate is the governing body of the Faculty Council. Under an Executive Council there will be three Boards – Finance, Academics and Administration -- that will oversee the new committees and diffuse the work of the Senate more widely. Senators posed questions regarding the selection of members, including non-Senators to serve on various committees, and the size of the boards. More work and detail on this draft proposal is necessary before the full Senate can take up the issue.

Regarding the **Program Review Process** plan, Trumbach offered a brief outline, noting that it would be primarily a self-study process implemented every six years.

Trumbach indicated that Program Review would sit under the upcoming academic board, with two representatives from each college. A review team would have two internal reviewers and two external reviewers. She hoped to have something to be voted on at the next meeting to move the discussion forward. Senators asked if either the internal or external reviewers would be compensated, and Trumbach responded that this was an issue still under discussion. One proposal suggested \$100 token payment to external reviewers of materials. The proposal, Trumbach noted, will be posted, and Senators' ideas and input are encouraged. She expects more input on this issue at the next session.

Regarding the **Faculty Evaluation Process**, Trumbach invited David Beriss to offer an update. Beriss noted that Norm Whitley had been working on a draft that would be distributed later in the week. He expected that it would be possible to vote on it at the next meeting. Beriss reiterated that individual departments were supposed to be submitting their own plans, and to date only three have done so. Provost John Nicklow acknowledged this was the case. A Senator observed that the flow of information on this issue to chairs had not been effective, and questioned whether a Senate discussion was sufficient for informing the departments. Finally, Beriss noted that the Faculty Handbook will require revisions in the future.

Christy Corey offered an update on the work of the **Academic Procedures and Standards Committee's** work. She noted that Academic Dishonesty matters have been transferred to Academic Affairs. She also noted that the APSC had been discussing the number of independent study course hours that could be applied toward a degree. Senators questioned why this issue had arisen at this time. Another Senator noted that sometimes a course that is normally offered on the usual schedule is given as an independent study to a student who wishes to graduate, and the Senator opined that this should be noted as the course itself and not simply "IS."

Corey also noted that there is discussion regarding assigning **end-of-semester graduation events** more of a ceremonial status, and thus allowing students to "walk" through the ceremony subject to completion of all degree requirements. It would diminish the "drama" of students who are not permitted to graduate. In response to questions from Senators, Corey noted that this is a practice followed at other universities. This change might affect the length of finals week too.

Corey then offered an update regarding **student evaluations**. She noted a 35% response rate on the first batch of online reviews, and deemed this "reasonable" given our expectations. She listed three goals in this area: trim the questions asked, develop a mobile "app," and increase response rate to 50%. A Senator noted that students are very concerned about anonymity. A Senator noted that it would be useful for a professor to be able to assign a W to a student who has not attended.

Trumbach then invited Lacey Cunningham of the **Office of Service Learning** to address the Senate. Cunningham described how the OSL connects research, learning and community needs. She described the office's goals, and the need to

increase the profile of service learning in the community. Cunningham indicated a desire to broaden the service designations of specific courses, and a wish to give more promotion and tenure recognition to service learning efforts. She distributed an application form for service learning courses, due 2/25. She also noted a proposal to create a service learning “option” for students, similar to the current Honors Option. Service Learning will also be launching issues weeks to discuss topics like “arts and culture, LGBT issues, etc.

Trumbach then addressed the issue of revisions to the **Honors Program**, as noted in a document she had circulated with this week’s agenda. She noted that there is a proposal for different levels of honors designations, and acknowledged that some of the questions regarding specific requirements are controversial. Discussion of the role of the Honors Council and Courses and Curriculum Committee ensued. A Senator questioned the need to make these changes with such great haste. Corey responded that discussions had been underway for some time, and Provost Nicklow acknowledged that part of the urgency had to do with the need to use honors to promote recruitment. Changes would thus need to be in place by March 1. A Senator noted that some of the issues regarding requirements affected by this change could be addressed by changing Gen Ed designations. Trumbach discussed how the initiative might be refined and considered in future Senate meetings and otherwise.

Provost Nicklow gave an update regarding **Academic Affairs**. He noted that enrollment stands at 7542, a 9% drop over last spring. That is, however, higher than he had expected given earlier indications and fall losses. He reviewed the actions for the February board meeting, including the proposal to merge the College of Liberal Arts and Education, a differential tuition proposal for the College of Engineering, and a performance-based funding model that will replace the Grad Act. He emphasized to the Senate his belief that UNO’s urban research mission is unique and needs to be recognized. His office will ask for summer course schedules soon, and noted the possibility of a 4-day teaching schedule. The Associate Provost search has concluded, and evaluations are ongoing. His office is still evaluating input regarding the COLA search.

Nicklow announced that the Center for Teaching Innovations is now active, and praised a recent interview Beth Blankenship gave on WWL TV. Regarding the UNO Extended Campus, Academic Affairs is opting to turn toward a more national talent pool for leadership, and it is working with the Distance Education Committee. A Veterans Service Office is to be moved to the second floor of the library, to make it more centrally located. Finally, Academic Affairs is submitting a pilot program to allow for exceptions to the admissions process, so as to better suit the needs of specific students and the community. In response to a Senator’s question, Nicklow indicated that recruiting in the home market has increased greatly, though he urged Senators to forward any names of people who should still be contacted.

Under new business, Trumbach noted that the Senate wants to hear more about how **graduate scholarships** will be awarded next year, and how we might be better informed of the process. We will ask for someone to speak to this issue at the next meeting.

A motion to adjourn was heard, seconded and approved unanimously.

[END]