

Faculty Senate Minutes
March 21, 2005

- Senators** Barry Anton, Kris Bartanen, Bill Beardsley [Chair], Alyce DeMarais, Robin Foster, Bill Haltom, Suzanne Holland, Keith Maxwell, Eric Orlin, Karen Porter, David Tinsley, Peter Wimberger
- Guests** Bill Breitenbach
- Order** **Senate Chair Beardsley** called the meeting to order at about 4:05 p.m.
- Minutes** Minutes of February 28, 2005 were approved as amended.
- Chair's Report** **Chair Beardsley** asked whether any senator objected if “validation deadline” in the newest *University of Puget Sound Bulletin* were changed to “confirmation deadline.” (See Appendix 1) No objection was heard.
- Chair Beardsley** then distributed a report from the Curriculum Committee (appended to these minutes) regarding the calendar and announced that it would be on the agenda of the Senate for action at the April 4th meeting.
- Chair Beardsley** also announced that the Academic Standards Committee had decided to eliminate students’ option to take courses Pass-Fail (students would still be able to take courses that are offered only Pass-Fail). He noted that consideration of this matter would fall under “Other Business” on the agenda and that, absent reconsideration in the Senate or in a plenary meeting of the faculty, this decision would become policy.
- Special Orders** **Senator Holland** noted that faculty with advising sections were expected to return to deal with arriving first-year students by August 20, 2005 when classes would not begin until August 29, 2005. She said that colleagues had complained to her that they did not understand why their summers had to be truncated to such a degree. She asked if there were no way to abbreviate the orientation season so that faculty could work on their research, course preparation, and so on.
- Senate Secretary DeMarais** announced that ballots for the Faculty Salary Committee, Faculty Advancement Committee, Faculty Senate, and Chair of the Faculty Senate would be in campus mailboxes soon.
- Senator Anton** asked whether Tuesday-Thursday classes that start at 3:30 p.m. and end at 6:20 p.m. were so scheduled by administrative prerogative or by faculty decision and stated that he would prefer different options and greater flexibility. He was assured that the Academic Standards Committee was charged to consider such matters.

Senator Maxwell voiced concern about the apparent apathy of faculty, especially junior faculty, regarding governance and faculty meetings. He wondered in junior faculty might gently be exhorted to involve themselves in discourse and deliberation.

Honorary Degrees The Senate ratified unanimously a list of individuals upon whom honorary degrees are to be bestowed at graduation. As per tradition, the list was distributed, discussed, approved, and re-collected for security's sake.

Old Business One **Senators Holland** and **Orlin** reminded the Senate that the checklist of evaluation categories might be completed to give that ad hoc Senate subcommittee input.

Old Business Two **Senator Anton** then reopened discussion of the motion, postponed from last meeting, to create a Task Force regarding Governance. **Senators Anton** and **Holland** stated their continuing support for the task force. **Senators Bartanen** and **Wimberger** worried that another task force might overburden the faculty or the Faculty Senate. **Senators Wimberger** and **Foster** said that they had difficulty supporting a task force unless its composition and mission were made clear. Speaking to mission, **Senator Anton** anticipated that the Task Force might consider 1) charging each faculty committee to justify its continued existence and provenance; 2) electing members of the Professional Standards Committee or perhaps other committees; 3) establishing liaisons from the Faculty Senate to standing committees; and/or 4) rationalizing the number of members of each committee. **Senator Tinsley** opined that the Senate could consider each of those issues *seriatim*, so the Task Force might be unneeded. **Senator Holland** responded that the Task force could propose or prioritize issues for Senate consideration, so it might be needed or useful. **Senator Anton** agreed and added that the Task Force would take a more synoptic, more synthetic perspective than piecemeal pondering. **Senator Tinsley** thought that the Task Force would need a far clearer mission or it would quickly lose focus. **Senator Wimberger** favored Senate consideration of whether committees might assess and/or sunset themselves and of direct election of members of the Professional Standards Committee. **Senator Orlin** reminded the Senate that such issues were being raised as part of the instant discussion, so the necessity of a task force was hard to establish. **Senator Anton** responded that the Task Force could look into these issues more deeply and more deliberately than could the whole Senate. **Chair Beardsley** reminded the assembled that some of the topics might involve changes in the Faculty By-laws and thus would need to garner three-quarters of the votes in a faculty meeting. **Senator Maxwell** observed that faculty governance was a system, so consideration of governance bit by bit in scattered meetings of the Senate was ill-advised. The motion was put to a vote; **Chair Beardsley** voted to create a 6-6 tie; the motion thus was not agreed to.

**Old
Business
Three**

Chair Beardsley reviewed the actions that the Faculty Senate had taken with regard to the “Working Document for Faculty Senate Discussion of Evaluation/Governance of Faculty” introduced in the February 28 meeting: a) items 1-6 and 8a were sent to the Professional Standards Committee for comment but not for interpretations; and b) items 7, 9, 11, and 12 were shared with the Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation. **Senator DeMarais** suggested that the Senate retain item 10 for its own contemplation, to which retention no one objected. Regarding item 10 **Senate Chair Beardsley** and **PSC Chair Breitenbach** each uttered doubts that the PSC would have much or anything to do with future hearing boards because the *Faculty Code* authorized the Chair of the Senate and the Chair of the PSC to set up the hearing board and authorized neither the PSC nor the Faculty Senate to play any other role. **Senator Porter** observed that items 13-18 were all of one kind and thus should stay in and with the Faculty Senate. **Senator Holland** agreed and stated that all of Section C of the “Working Document” should remain before the Faculty Senate because they pertained to a committee of the Faculty Senate, the Professional Standards Committee. **Senator Porter** reminded the senators that they had sent item 8a to the Professional Standards Committee for comment but that item 8 itself was unassigned; she recommended that the Senate retain that item as well. **PSC Chair Breitenbach** believed that item 8 resembled item 7 and so might go to the Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluation. **Senator Foster** responded that the Ad Hoc Committee would get back to the Senate regarding item 8. **Senator Porter** suggested that the Senate move from items that the *Faculty Code* explicitly resolves (items 13, 14, 15, 17, and 23 by her count) to items that bear deliberation.

**Other
Business**

Senator Haltom uttered a parliamentary inquiry: Would senators’ consideration of the Academic Standards Committee’s recent decision to end Pass-Fail as a student option suspend that decision? **Chair Beardsley** responded that such was his understanding. In that spirit, **Senator Holland** moved to overrule the Academic Standards Committee and to maintain Pass-Fail options as they presently exist. That motion was seconded. **Senator Haltom** remarked that the spotty discussion recorded in the Academic Standards Committee minutes of March 4th articulated only use of Pass-Fail during Study Abroad and election of Pass-Fail within one’s major as “abuses.” Given the small percentage of units that are elected for Pass-Fail, he did not understand why the Academic Standards Committee was attempting to accomplish or why. **Senator Foster** said that the Academic Standards Committee appeared to have regarded subcommittee statistics as valid measures of abuses of Pass-Fail but wondered why the subcommittee or committee had not attempted to remedy those two problems. **Senator Holland** preferred the subcommittee’s option of letting departments police Pass-Fail in departmental courses to the Draconian motion passed by the Academic Standards Committee. She

noted that the present Pass-Fail policy permits students options just as the present general education requirements do. **Senator Orlin** agreed that the Academic Standards Committee appeared to have cracked an acorn with a sledgehammer but allowed that the Senate would do well to hear from representatives of the committee about any reasoning that had not appeared in the March 4th minutes. **Senator Wimberger** said he was down with that: Pass-Fail was already greatly circumscribed. **Senator Maxwell** expressed his disquietude about casually overruling a Senate committee and urged the Senate to presume the validity of a committee's action unless the action seemed plainly unreasonable. **Senator Tinsley** responded that the committee had not supplied in minutes or in the subcommittee report a rationale for the demise of Pass-Fail, which explained why the Senate was incredulous about the committee's overreaching. He recalled that Pass-Fail had been greatly curtailed in the past because certain colleagues or administrators abhor students' making choices different from the choices that those colleagues would prefer. He asked why students and departments were not to be allowed to choose for students and departments respectively. Further deliberation on this matter was postponed until the next meeting of Senate (April 4, 2005).

Valediction

Chair Beardsley noted that the prescribed time for adjournment had crept in on little cat feet and promised to request that representatives from the Academic Standards Committee attend the next meeting of the Faculty Senate to inform the Senate about reasoning that appeared to some senators latent or nonexistent.

Reporter William Haltom

Appendix 1

Important announcement!

There has been a change to the Validation Deadline for the academic year 2005 and beyond.

Student Financial Services will refer to this deadline now as the Confirmation Deadline.

The fall semester date has changed from August 12th to August 5th. The spring date will be January 5th.

This will be true for each year from now on.

Confirmation deadline will be August 5th for Fall semester and January 5th for Spring semester.

These deadline changes have made to provide clarity and better accommodate our families on payment plans, allowing these families to spread their payments out evenly over the course of the semester. These changes will also facilitate electronic billing/payment in the near future.

Please make a note to update any publications that include these dates. Please forward this announcement to any colleagues that may need this information.

Appendix 2

DATE: 3/7/05
TO: Faculty Senate
FROM: Rich Anderson-Connolly, Chair, Curriculum Committee
SUBJECT: Proposal to Change Academic Calendar

In our deliberations the members Curriculum Committee expressed several desiderata regarding the academic calendar:

- Equalization of the number of teaching days in the fall and spring semesters. (The fall currently has 69, the spring 72.)
- Equalization of the number of teaching days (Mondays, Tuesdays, etc.) within each semester (ideally 14 of each).
- Holding no classes on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.
- Retaining the currently celebrated holidays, Labor Day and the observed birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Offering “full” weeks, i.e., holding classes on Monday-Friday of each week. (The most important rationale for this objective involves the scheduling problem created for courses with labs that meet once per week when there is one day off during a week.)
- Keeping the current length of winter break. (Students seemed generally opposed to lengthening, faculty to shortening.)
- Retaining the reading period.

While we were not able to achieve all these objectives, in the spirit of preventing the perfect from being the enemy of the good the CC proposes a calendar that we feel is superior to our current one. The elements of the proposed calendar in comparison to our current:

Fall Semester:

- The semester will begin as under the current system, maintaining the current rule to end before December 20. No classes will be held on Labor Day. In some years the semester will begin on the Tuesday after Labor Day; on others, classes will begin on a Monday and the Monday of the second week will be the holiday.
- No classes will be held the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. It will be designated as “Thanksgiving Travel Day” in the hopes of preventing “vacation

creep.” Faculty will be encouraged to treat the Monday and Tuesday of that week as normal class days, reminding students that Wednesday is set aside as the day for traveling.

- The Fall Break will occur at the same time as currently (week 8) but will be expanded to include the Tuesday of that week.
- Classes will end on the Friday of week 15, instead of the Wednesday as currently.
- Vital Statistics: 69 teachings days; 13 Mondays, 14 Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; 3 partial weeks and 12 full weeks.

Spring Semester:

- Classes will begin as under the current system, i.e., the day after MLK Jr. Day.
- Classes will end on the Friday of the 14th week of classes (15th week counting spring break), i.e., the Friday preceding what is currently the last (partial) week of classes. Thus the spring semester will end one week earlier than currently and summer vacation will be one week longer.
- Vital Statistics: 69 teaching days; 13 Mondays, 14 Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays; 1 partial week (week 1), 13 full weeks, and 1 week off (spring break).

Reading Period and Finals:

- The reading period will be the Saturday through Monday immediately following the last day of classes.
- Finals exams will be held on Tuesday through Friday. The number of exam periods per day will increase to four from the current three.

The CC happily hands the calendar issue off to the Faculty Senate. We hope that after your own deliberations a proposal to change the calendar will be sent the entire faculty.