

## Faculty Senate

McCormick Room, Collins Library

Minutes of the October 12, 2015 Meeting

**Senate Members Present:** Kris Bartanen, Bill Beardsley, Raine Black, Derek Buescher, Rachel DeMotts, Andrew Gardner, Bill Haltom, Nakisha Renee Jones, Brendan Lanctot, Emelie Peine, Maria Sampen, Mike Segawa, Shirley Skeel, Jonathan Stockdale, Ariela Tubert, Jennifer Utrata, John Wesley.

**Tubert called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.**

### **Announcements**

Utrata reported positive impressions of the first of two Discover Puget Sound days.

### **Discussion of Procedures and Language of 9/28 Meeting Minutes**

There was discussion as to whether or not Wesley should continue to send out a Word file attachment of the most recent version of the minutes just prior to Senate meetings, given that all senators received the editable Google Doc link prior to the meeting. Consensus determined that a Word file should be sent the day of the meeting, reflecting the final edits to the Google Doc.

Discussion ensued as to the level of specificity in the 9/28 minutes, especially concerning what happened towards the end of the 9/28 meeting.

**M/S/P to accept the deletion of the line towards the bottom of page 3 of 9/28 minutes about a motion to adjourn the meeting not having been seconded.**

Discussion ensued as to whether or not approval of minutes should get delayed because of charges to standing committees. Some argued that charges could still get to committees.

**M/S/P to postpone approval of 9/28 minutes to the 10/26 meeting.**

### **Updates from Liaisons to Standing Committees**

Lanctot reported that the Academic Standards Committee is beginning work on the common hour idea, but there is some collective concern about a perceived lack of clarity. ASC would like a rationale to steer their committee work. Does the common hour serve the faculty, or student clubs/departments? They seem less interested in the idea of a soft common hour. Gardner suggested that the ASC be charged and Buescher agreed that we let ASC work on it if they are willing. Stockdale wondered if Lanctot had a sense of when the ASC could be done with this work on the common hour. Would it take a few months, a year, several years? Bartanen said that her understanding is that faculty wanted a common hour so that every faculty member could attend faculty meetings. Currently many teach during the faculty meeting time. Lanctot argued that we should give this charge to the ASC so they can get to work on it. Stockdale asked about the content of emails regarding the desire for a common hour, and Tubert responded that there were faculty governance reasons in favor of a common hour as well as department chairs who had expressed interest.

## **ASUPS Report**

Jones reported that ASUPS elections started. There was a state of ASUPS letter in the Trail recently. Jones and ASUPS VP recently talked to Admissions and University Relations offices about having dining dollars be swappable with other students on campus to avoid hunger on campus among those without dollars. Finance committee meets on Monday nights and the next Town Hall Tuesday is scheduled for 10/13, 4-5pm in piano lounge concerning general topics of the Board of Trustees, divestment, presidential search, and more.

## **Staff Senate**

Skeel reported that the Rosa Beth Gibson Book Scholarship Award has a deadline of early December. There will be a related book and bake sale coming up soon to benefit this award. A staff pay discussion is also on the horizon.

## **Senate Charge to SLC and PSC**

Discussion ensued concerning revised wording of charges to SLC and PSC, with similar wording as the parallel charge to the CoD approved at September 28, 2015 meeting:

### **Charge to SLC:**

“Work with PSC, BHERT, and the CoD to identify conflicts, if there are any, between the Faculty Code and the Response Protocol to Incidents of Bias or Hate.”

*Rationale:* Discussion arose last year concerning possible conflicts between academic freedom as defined in various university documents and the rights of members of the university community.

### **Charge to PSC:**

“Work with SLC, BHERT, and the CoD to identify conflicts, if there are any, between the Faculty Code and the Response Protocol to Incidents of Bias or Hate.”

*Rationale:* Discussion arose last year concerning possible conflicts between academic freedom as defined in various university documents and the rights of members of the university community.

## **M/S/P to approve these charges to SLC and PSC.**

## **Discussion of PSC Draft Charges regarding Student Evaluations**

Tubert explained that last year’s senate approved motions requesting that the current senate take action on two issues: i) accessibility in student evaluations and ii) possible bias in student evaluations. Haltom distributed draft motions:

“The Faculty Senate charges the Professional Standards to assay studies of biases to which students’ evaluations of teaching are prone and to recommend for faculty those studies, if any, that should inform faculty discussion of biases in students’ evaluations.”

“The Faculty Senate charges the Professional Standards Committee to consider whether students with accessibility hardships might be granted extended time in which to fill out evaluations of courses and instructors.”

Discussion ensued as to when and how these discussions about student evaluations should occur. Peine asked about reporting and Beardsley clarified that the PSC would make recommendations to the Senate. Members discussed whether or not there should be a timeline for making these recommendations as well as related issues. Stockdale felt that the speed of progress on these issues has already been slow and the faculty might agree on this point. Utrata said there is a rather large peer-reviewed literature on various kinds of bias present in student course evaluations, so it is not a small task to give to a committee. She noted that since there are unconscious biases in social life more generally, it would be rather shocking to learn that biases are not present in student evaluations. Tubert suggested that we try to give the PSC a sense of priority among the charges. Segawa wondered if the Office of Accommodation could handle the charge related to accessibility hardships. Bartanen said PSC needs to handle it even though it should be done.

**M/S/P to accept these charges to the PSC.**

### **Updates from Faculty Representatives to the Committees of the Board of Trustees**

Tubert explained that faculty representatives had been asked to report to the Senate after meetings with the Board of Trustees. Bartanen reported that Stirling provided a very helpful written report to the Senate on the topics discussed in the Finance and Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees, but conflated three items into two in the closing paragraph regarding higher costs to the university. Health care, new provisions by the Department of Labor, and (depending upon the election’s outcome) a higher minimum wage could add costs. The higher minimum salary under the Fair Labor Standards Act for exempt employees will impact some of our staff (coaches and admission counselors were the specific positions mentioned). The primary impact of a change in minimum wage, depending on definitions in the proposal, will be on our work-study students.

In the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, Bartanen provided a 2015-16 profile of the faculty (hiring, retention, diversity, proportions by rank and step), updated trustees on the progress of the Faculty Compensation Task Force, and provided the annual report on the graduate programs. Segawa discussed the sorority expansion process and progress toward invitation for a fifth sorority. Bartanen reported that she had updated the Board of Trustees about the faculty compensation committee’s work on philosophy and other related issues. Also, our graduate programs are positive for the university, and there was some discussion as to whether visiting professors should be called visitors or not.

Discussion ensued concerning some aspects of the Stirling report. Stockdale asked about “increasingly competitive environment” and what this referenced exactly. Sampen asked about the meaning, with respect to the endowment, of “benchmark loss.” Bartanen clarified that the investment managers had projected a negative benchmark loss, but investments did better than anticipated. Tubert mentioned that there was a workshop at the meeting of the Board of Trustees regarding university’s investments in Fossil Fuels. She wondered if faculty had interest in further discussion of the divestment question, for generally it was student requests which

motivated the divestment discussion. Segawa clarified that the Board's discussion was self-initiated since Mondou has been interested for some time in this issue. DeMotts noted that some students are interested in coming to talk to the Senate about this issue when they are ready.

**M/S/P to accept Stirling's report.**

**Discussion of Other Business**

Stockdale reminded the Senate that the Curriculum committee has started to post their minutes and that we have 30 days to intervene or respond.

Further discussion ensued as to whether the ASC should be charged with coming up with a common hour. Sampen noted that they are talking about it already so charging them officially may not be necessary. Gardner noted that it is positive that we have the registrar involved as well as an interested committee. Utrata argued that committees might focus on getting closer to the finish line with an official charge. Gardner updated the Senate about the meeting he and Buescher had with Tomhave, who is also on the ASC. Buescher wondered if we should have this as a charge to the ASC or instead request that an ad-hoc committee work on it. Beardsley suggested leaving it as is until we hear back from Tomhave and Kukreja.

Segawa suggested that we just issue a statement that the Senate approves of what the ASC is doing. Lanctot agreed and said he would give the ASC the green light from the Senate. Tubert reminded members that this will not show up again as a discussion point unless someone requests that she put it back on the agenda.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:10pm.**

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Utrata.

Respectfully submitted,

John Wesley, Secretary of the Faculty Senate