

Academic Senate

Open Meeting

Monday, March 14, 2005
3:00-5:00

Room 1108

Minutes

Members Present

Susan Meacham

Frank Nigro

Warren Lytle
Toby Bodeen
Scott Gordon
Dave Bush
Andrea Williams
Kevin Fox
Roger Gerard
Ramon Tello
Terry Turner
David Cooper
Kendall Crenshaw
Vickie Kimbrough
Parker Pollock
Laura Valvatne
Marsha Ray
Ron Marley
Cathy Anderson
Sue Loring
Dan Scollon

Guests

Cindy Sandhagen

1. Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes –01/24/05 (Attachment sent last month), and 02/28/05 (coming from Frank): Frank Nigro moved approval of the 1/24 minutes; Andrea Williams seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Marsha Ray moved approval of the 2/28 minutes; Warren Lytle seconded. Dave Bush's name was added to the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Reports

a. Cathy Anderson reminded the Senate that the tenure party for new tenure recipients will be this Wednesday, March 16, at Tierra Oaks.

4. Discussion/Action Items

a. Environmental Advisory Committee (1 Attachment): *A discussion led by Dan Scollon regarding the relationship between the Senate and the Environmental Advisory Committee*

Dan Scollon read from the mission statement from the Envac committee. It has been altered to narrow the committee's focus to new construction and major remodels on campus. Administration responsiveness and faculty involvement on the committee are two of the concerns they are attempting to address; the committee is having difficulty retaining members, and they are getting little response from the administration. Dan hoped to partially rectify these problems by establishing a process that would clarify the relation of the committee to the Senate and other campus groups. He distributed a worksheet showing how the process would work. Terry Turner moved approval of this process, and Dave Bush seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Cathy will present this at College Council and say we'd like to see it implemented.

Regarding the issue of faculty involvement in the committee, several Senate members suggested that Envac do more p.r., making, for example, regular reports to the Senate and to the faculty. Dave suggested that the main thing was to get out information when a hot topic arises. Other members of the Senate encouraged ENVAC to send out regular emails. Dan agreed to do this.

Cathy suggested Dan send out information on what the composition of the committee should be and ask for volunteers.

b. Distance Education (1 Attachment): *A discussion led by Frank Nigro regarding a resolution from the DE to have a common course management environment.*

Frank began by noting that the Distance Ed Committee includes a rep from each of the centers (except for PSSF), along with four at-large reps, a part time rep, a student rep, the distance ed counselors, reps from DSPS, and reps from staff development and Technology. Also serving on the committee are Gary Lewis, Jim Poulsen, Sharon Lowry, Cassandra Ryan, and Doug Meline.

Over the past few years, much of the focus of the committee has been to improve and streamline the experience for students taking online classes. Hence, they've standardized the class schedule language for online classes; they've developed a comprehensive web "portal" for all the online classes, and they've advised on and in some cases developed a wide range of supporting features for online student. The resolution that the school mandate a common course management environment (CME) is a continuation of these efforts.

Frank took the class into a guest account for his class, into what's known as "myWebCT." If the school adopted a common CME, he noted, students taking online classes would all go to myWebCT. Here, all their classes would be in one place, and the school would have the capability of making announcements to all the students, of administering surveys, of spreading key information. The technicians would be better able to assist students with technical problems, and there would be much less confusion for students. Faculty who have designed non-WebCT classes would be able to link to these classes through the WebCT shell

A lot of questions were raised about the nuts and bolts of how this would work, if any course materials might not be able to be used in WebCT, and whether WebCT was really the best CME. Frank noted that contractually, the school is locked into WebCT for at least the next few years. We are only able to support one CME at a time. After our contract's up, the school would again have to make a decision about whether to stay with WebCT or to go to something else. However, the resolution from Distance Ed is not about WebCT, he explained, but about whether we should mandate a common CME, whatever that CME might be. Ramon Tello raised concerns on the possible ramifications of accepting this proposal on the faculty's academic autonomy i.e., the freedom to exercise our professional judgment on matters of course content and delivery.

Dave pointed out that what exactly Distance Ed was recommending was not particularly clear. The resolution read, "*We recommend that the CME be made mandatory for all online classes beginning Fall 2005.*" The Senate word-smithed this so that it eventually came to read as follows: "We recommend that a common

CME be made mandatory for all initial log-on procedures for online courses beginning **Fall 2005**.

Warren Lytle moved approval of this resolution; Chuck Spotts seconded the motion. The motion carried with no “no” votes and three abstentions. If approved by Cabinet, it will go into effect in Fall 2005.

c. Progress Reporting System (handouts at meeting): *A discussion let by Sue Loring regarding a recommendation by the Matriculation Committee to use Datatel to do progress reporting.*

The Matriculation Committee has formed a subcommittee that is designing a process to provide feedback to students who are having trouble with their classes so that we could contact them and give them direction. The hope is that it will improve retention. Sue Loring presented the subcommittee’s progress on this issue. Cathy clarified that the goal for today was to get complete information on this issue and to present it all of our constituents. The plan was not to vote on this today.

The Matriculation subcommittee is trying to devise a simple, easy-to-do system for faculty to report back on their students prior to grades being issued. Faculty would be asked to submit progress reports during the fifth and tenth weeks of each semester. The idea was for progress reports to be issued relatively early so that it would actually help the student.

Sue took us into WebAdvisor to demonstrate how it would work. As the subcommittee envisions these progress reports, they would work in the same way that we do the grading via WebAdvisor at the end of the semester. Faculty would log on, go to their class list, and enter in an “x” by the student’s name if they’re having trouble. If a student was having trouble, a letter would be generated by someone other than the faculty member (Counseling? Admissions?). It would go out to the student and encourage them to see a counselor.

These progress reports would probably take the place of the reports for many other student groups, such as those for athletes and College Connection students. Hence, it may actually save faculty work. It’s already been determined this is not a negotiable item, and it will not go in the contract. But Matriculation does want to institutionalize it.

A few years ago there was an early alert program that was developed by Becky Bogener, Debbie Goodman, and others. The only one to really use it was the Dental Hygiene program; they’re already required to do a lot of reporting to the state. It was very flexible, but it didn’t get used. Matriculation’s new plan is an

attempt to put together something more formal that would encourage more participation by faculty.

There were concerns raised about how the letter would be received by the students: they wouldn't know the sender and might be overly alarmed by the letter; it might have no impact; it might send the wrong message somehow. There were also questions about whether written comments could be entered into WebAdvisor, or whether we would just be able to check off a box. If the latter were the case, how helpful would it really be to the counselors? Also, some concerns were raised about whether Counseling could handle the increased traffic of students dropping in.

There were questions about the research that went into this, and whether it has been shown that such measures will really help students. Sue mentioned some data showing that more than half of schools have an early alert program that alerts students. Cathy asked Sue to find and send out five studies showing that this system will result in higher retention. Sue agreed to do this.

Cathy again encouraged us to share this with everyone to get info on how people feel.

5. Other: none.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

7. Next Meeting: 3:00 pm, April 11, 2005 in Room 1108.