

Undergraduate Education Council Minutes from the December 6th, 2004 meeting

Present: Helene Cunningham, John Jenkins, Ernie May, Lori Mestre, Brian O'Connor, Ray Pfeiffer, Richard Rogers, Linda Slakey, Mary Deane Sorcinelli, Martha Stassen, Beatrice Botch, Bryan Harvey.

1. The minutes for the October 25th meeting were approved with one correction:

The full name of the student guest who gave an overview of the Textbook Rental idea is Jeffrey Napolitano.

2. Activities of the Classroom Subcommittee were presented by Richard Rogers.

- *Instructor Survey for Large Lecture Halls - Final Report* dated November 8, 2004 was distributed to the Council. It gave the results from an auditorium preference survey of all instructors who have taught courses with 275 or more students in the last two years.
- Progress on the 500-seat Auditorium has continued. Instructors of large lecture classes and members of the subcommittee met with the design team and an audiovisual consultant. Instructors went over the findings from the above survey and weighed in with additional comments and preferences. The preliminary design is nearly completed and will go out to bid next semester. Projected date for use is Fall 2006.

3. Activities of the Classroom Subcommittee were presented by Mary Deane Sorcinelli.

- Minutes of the "Who are the Faculty" Subcommittee meeting of November 9, 2004, and a packet of information detailing statistics were distributed to the Council.
- Over a third of our faculty are non tenure track and of the new hires it is roughly an equal split between tenure track positions and not tenure track positions. Discussion concerning low cost v.s. the right mix of talents, and the world-view brought by tenure and non tenure faculty ensued. It was suggested that the Council ask departments for an academic report addressing the question - Do you have the faculty to support robust undergraduate education? In order to maximize feedback the Council needs to address the questions - Who is going to read the reports, Is there money involved, Should this come from the Provost's Office, How do we ask the questions ?

The Program and Budget Council is looking at a department by department comparison with other universities. It was suggested that Brian O'Connor speak at the next Council meeting about this.

We need to make better use of non tenure track faculty by providing multiyear contracts and having them serve on committees at the department and university level. The New Faculty Orientation Program is for tenure track faculty and no one is looking after the new non tenure faculty.

- The need for a "New Faculty" Website was identified and detailed. The Center for Teaching is beginning work on this in collaboration with the Provost's Office.

- The CFT will approach academic deans about establishing mentoring programs for new faculty at the department/college level.
- The Subcommittee was asked to present their recommendations for new faculty in a form that could be taken to the Faculty Senate as a resolution from the Council.

4. Activities of the Textbook Subcommittee were presented by Ray Pfeiffer.

- The "non-compete" clause with the Bookstore was clarified: Follett can renew at their option.
- The Subcommittee met with student representatives and let them know that the Council supports their efforts to reduce text book prices.
- It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that the Council endorse the resolution of the Academic Matters Council with slight rewording:
 “That the Academic Matters Council *and the Undergraduate Education Council* support actively examining ways to reduce textbook costs to students, whether by adopting models from other campuses or by developing a new model suitable to our campus. In addition, the Academic Matters Council *and the Undergraduate Education Council are* committed to exercising leadership in examining this issue with faculty across the campus.”
- It was suggested that the Council may have a role in helping to raise the consciousness of the faculty on ways to reduce costs for students such as keeping the same edition of a text for 2-3 years and informing Follett early enough about this so that they will buy back used texts.

5. Intellectual Property Issues arising from the use of digital media were discussed briefly.

- Richard was to attend and speak on the issue on December 15, 2004 in Shrewsbury MA.

6. Issues concerning retention were discussed briefly.

- The Provost's Office would like to identify at-risk students sooner and intervene before they run into academic trouble. Bryan Harvey gave an overview of the ideas being discussed.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m...

Submitted by Beatrice Botch
 Sunday, February 27, 2005