UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
FACULTY SENATE
RULES COMMITTEE
Minutes

Friday, April 27th 2018

In Attendance: Bruce Baird, Marilyn Billings, David Gross, David Hoagland, Frank Hugus, MJ Peterson, Rebecca Spencer, Marinos Vouvakis, and Wilmore Webley

1. **Approval of the Minutes**

   Approval of minutes of meetings on April 13th and 20th postponed

2. **Discussion Item**

Assuring Information Reliability and Security in Online Instruction: discussion with Matthew Dalton
There are several issues to consider, however the main ones fall into two categories. The first involves protection and assuring veracity of student data:
   a. How to protect student information and comply with FERPA rules while using an online platform? Matt felt that the current platforms (Blackboard and Moodle) do a good job of protecting student information.
   b. How to determine whether the student registered for the class or taking an exam is who they say they are at registration. Some schools are currently requiring a multicolored government- issued ID as a means of verification. UMass might need to do some additional investigation into what would work best.

The other issue is minimizing cheating by students who take online classes. Other schools are using a 360 degree camera system that the student would purchase or it will be provided by the institution so that the instructor can see that the student is not cheating by having notes or someone there helping them with exam questions. Matt did not know if there are studies to determine how widespread and problematic cheating on online exam might be. He acknowledged that it would be difficult to determine the exact extent of the problem.

Matt was asked if Isenberg School of Management had higher levels of security for their online offerings and exams, but he was not sure. He acknowledged that security will have to be a collaborative effort among IT staff, faculty teaching online classes and students. It was observed that faculty might not be thinking about these security issues at the time of course creation and would assume that the online platform is secure.

It was highlighted that it only takes a few stories of fraud in online classes to devalue the quality of the brand. Matt suggested that there might have to be Red Flag rules for online exam taking and to deal with any threats of identify fraud.

Matt highlighted that the new information security governance document for the entire UMass campus, containing updated policies was approved last month. The Provost is designated as the data steward for the campus. Exploited credentials – someone stealing the login information from a user and using it to phish on the UMass website for entry into more important databases is always a concern. UMass has a good relationship with outside entities who report on suspicious activities.

Action Item
Standardizing Admission Requirements for Majors in the College of Engineering (CCMS proposal #5184)
- Currently first year students and transfer students enter the College of Engineering as Pre-Eng students and then transition to one of the BS degree programs (majors) after completing the required set of courses with specified grades. The majors do not currently have a uniform set of required courses leading to some difficulty and confusion among students. In addition, due to oversight the Biomedical Engineering major has no pre-requisite courses/grades. This omission needs to be remedied before September, preferably before NSO starts in June.
- The proposal was approved by the Academic Matters Council on Wednesday of this week, too late to be added to the agenda for the final meeting of the semester on Thursday April 26th. Though technically the spring semester is not over, the Rules Committee concluded that using its authority to act on behalf of the Faculty Senate was an appropriate course of action. Secretary Peterson indicated that Vice Provost Barr supported having the Rules Committee act now so these rules would be in place in time for New Students Orientation.
- Discussion also ensued about the impact the proposed changes would have on Engineering majors (Civil Engineering) who now have more stringent requirements, and whether that department supported adopting these new requirements. It was noted that the College of Engineering's Curriculum Committee had to approve it before it came to the Faculty Senate, and through representation on that committee each department would be aware.
- The Rules Committee approved the proposal.

Discussion Item
Evaluation of Teaching: discussion with Gabriela Weaver - Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Director of TEFD.

History of Proposal
- Gabriela had been working on a similar effort to revise teaching evaluation at Purdue for two years before coming to UMass Amherst in 2014. She thought this was important to tackle in light of her work on STEM education and curricular reform.
- She also believed there needs to be a clear reward structure for good teaching and therefore asked, how is teaching represented in the current UMass structure? The Provost and Chancellor revealed that there was no system to evaluate teaching of the sort that she wants to develop.

- Gabriela talked with Martha Stassen about student evaluation data and asked to bring a group together to look at how other institutions were handling teaching evaluations. They acknowledged that the current SRTI used at UMass Amherst has several limitations.
- She then talked with the Provost who approved the formation of an informational committee. Gabriela and Martha decided on the composition of the committee, which took almost a semester to get up and running. The entire process of information gathering lasted for 28 months.
- The chair of the Bay View Alliance (BVA), representing 9 institutions in the US and Canada, was hosted on campus by James Staros and the decision was made that UMass Amherst would join the BVA. The BVA had inter-institution research action clusters (RACs) in place at the time that UMass joined.
- Jennifer Normanly joined the BVA as a member and along with the UMass information group proposed to BVA that it establish a RAC on teaching evaluation. The BVA approved and it is RAC 4 in the alliance.
- The BVA then approved submitting a proposal to study methods of teaching evaluation, headed up by Gabriela on teaching evaluation and spanning three institutions (UMass Amherst, University of Colorado, Boulder and University of Kansas), to the NSF.
- In January 2017, leaders at the three institutions submitted a collaborative proposal to the NSF to support implementation and evaluation of their programs to support adoption of improved methods for teaching evaluation. The proposal was funded!
- A NSF-designated reviewer from the Michigan State University will be evaluating the process of transformation within and across the three campuses, creating case studies examining what approaches work most effectively under what circumstances as this change in culture takes place.
- Faculty from the three campuses will meet at predetermined intervals to discuss how the work is progressing.
- 16 departments on this campus will receive modest funding to carry out teaching evaluation reform over the funding period. This includes STEM and non-STEM departments. There are 5 UMass departments involved this year (one department wanted to participate even without the $5K that the others are getting). These are Linguistics, Music and Dance, College of Information and Computer Sciences (CICS), Physics, and Environmental Conservation.
- Departments are interested in talking about how teaching should factor into merit increases, tenure and mentoring.
- Michael Eagan and Gabriela met with representatives from MSP, and they were supportive of the proposal. MSP did stipulate that if a faculty member is going up for tenure review now or in the near future, the new teacher evaluation record should not be included unless the faculty member agrees that it should.
- Gabriela believes that the evaluation system that is being piloted offers a better way of looking holistically at faculty instruction.
- She also noted the importance of having Validity and Reliability in any tool used to evaluate teachers. While the STRI is a validated system, she believes that it is not always reliable in specific evaluation cases.