

Minutes, Rules Committee Meeting, Tuesday, January 2, 2013, 10:15-11:30 a.m., Hampshire House 120.

Present: Joe Bartolomeo, Marilyn Billings, Tony Butterfield, Ernie May, Brian O'Connor, MJ Peterson, and guest, Steven Brewer, re: LMS

1. With guest Brewer, the Committee discussed the current campus debate regarding which Learning Management System the campus should adopt, Moodle or BlackBoard Learn. While the latter was recommended by a majority of the LMS Review Committee, the former appears to have substantial support among faculty, esp. those not actively involved in UMass Online teaching (which uses BlackBoard Learn). The discussion acknowledged the administration's apparent willingness to consider having two systems for the campus. Specific reference was made to the Provost's statement at the December 11 Senate meeting, similar comments made by the Chancellor at a meeting with the Rules Committee on December 10, and a Dec. 31, 2012 email from John Dubach to Secretary May reviewing the history and current status of the LMS issue on campus. However, simply agreeing to allow two systems for the campus is not sufficient. There needs to be strong reassurance from the administration that it will provide adequate resources for both systems. Moodle in particular, since it is not the LMS for revenue-producing UMass Online programs, needs guaranteed support for continued development and upgrades. The RC hopes the Provost can provide such reassurance at the next Faculty Senate meeting (Jan. 31, 2013).

In addition, the RC recommends that the current "University Computer and Electronic Communications Committee," which has not been active in the recent LMS debate, be "re-invented" with a new name, expanded membership, and be assigned greater responsibility for issues having to do with the use of computer technology in the learning process.

2. Minutes of the Nov. 30 and Dec. 6, 2012 RC meetings were not yet available.
3. Action Items
 - A. Receipt of the Provost's statement on the LMS issue was acknowledged. A follow-up thank you will be sent to him.
 - B. The Special Report of the Academic Priorities and Research Councils concerning a name change in the College of Natural Sciences from "Center for Agriculture" to "Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment" was unanimously approved by the RC, acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate.
 - C. Similarly, the Amendment to the Special Report of the Committee on Committees concerning Nominations to Faculty Senate Councils and Committees was unanimously approved by the RC on behalf of the Faculty Senate.
 - D. The new course, COMM 602 – "Food Pedagogies and Media Literacy"- approved by the Graduate Council on Dec. 14, 2012, will be placed on the agenda for approval at the Jan.31, 2013 Faculty Senate meeting.
 - E. It was decided to invite Ed Ferszt, Assistant Provost for Summer Programs, to speak at the Jan. 31 Senate meeting on what the campus has been and could be doing running summer programs. Possibilities for working with students from Brazil and China are particularly attractive.
 - F. It was decided to try to arrange a meeting with the Chancellor before the Jan. 31 Senate meeting, even if only by SKYPE if necessary.
 - G. The RC meets next on Jan. 18.
4. Discussion Items re: outstanding issues with the central administration.

The LMS was discussed extensively in the first half of the meeting. The FBS issue awaits input from the various Senate councils and committees asked to review it. A clear statement from Chancellor Subbaswamy may be needed. UMass Performs is an initiative from the President's office that needs to be coordinated across the several UMass campuses.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Butterfield