

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
Minutes
September 2, 2015

In attendance: Sens. Dermody, Espinosa, Ghanem, Graham, Gumb, Johnson, Langdon, Leguizamo, McKinley, Menton, Micken, Murphy, Noussi Kamdem, O'Connell, Pearce, Reynolds, Sawoski, Smolowitz, Soto, Speakman, Tehrani, Thangaraj, Topf, Tsankova, Updike, Warnapala, Wu, Yui

Absent: Sens. Breen, Roberts, Schroth

*Laura Turner resigned from the Senate, effective this meeting

Guests: Pres. Farish, Provost Workman, through the convening of the Executive Session

Reports

1. Written Deans Council report submitted by Senator Espinosa. No questions or discussion.

2. RWU President Farish

Pres. Farish noted that the State of the University address will be delivered on 9/9. At that time, he will roll out the results of the Vision Project, indicating what will change as a result of this effort, and emphasizing the need for a shared and distinctive message for our students. A public roll-out of the vision will occur in Providence later in the month.

3. Provost Workman

Provost Workman noted that Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning Robert Shea has joined the university. Steve Cantine has been hired as Director of Career Services. He reminded the senate that reception for retiring Library Dean Peter Deekle was at 3:30 and that Betsy Learned would be stepping in as Interim Dean of the Library.

The Provost seeks the Senate's help on several initiatives:

a. Anti-melt: a. Anti-melt: Last summer a team that included representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Life, Financial Aid, and the Burser's office reached out to continuing students who had not registered for the fall. With help from the Deans and faculty, many students were retained who might otherwise have left the institution. This committee will continue under the leadership of Bob Shea who will reach out to faculty advisors after each registration period, and when requests for transfer are received, to help identify and retain qualified students in danger of leaving the University.

b. Walking short: Many students who walk in Commencement with too few credits to graduate end up never completing their degree. An effort is underway to get a better quantitative picture of the problem, to understand the reasons students are not finishing on time, and to devise a response. A committee will be created to address the problem which will include

faculty representation. In the meantime, the Provost has directed the Registrar to move degree audits to the spring semester of the Junior year so that advisors and students will have more time to plan for timely completion of degrees.

c. Incompletes: the policy on when and if to assign incompletes is vague and inconsistent. At one point, there was a form requiring justification and a plan for completion. That has disappeared. There are occasions when entire classes receive incomplete. The Provost would like the Senate Academic Standards and Policies committee to help develop a better approach.

d. Experiential Learning: The Provost will be constituting a task force on this issue to process the results of the Fall Faculty Conference and will look to the Senate to elect representatives.

A question was raised about P-Cards and some of the difficulties using them for departmental expenditures. The Provost responded that new p-card policies are forthcoming.

President Farish and Provost Workman left the meeting at this time having received notice that the Senate was about to go into Executive Session.

At the request of Senate President Tehrani, the following motion was offered.

Motion (Menton, Micken): to go into Executive Session. Passed without objection

Elections Committee: Sen. Micken reported that elections for the Foundation for the Promotion of Scholarship and Teaching, and for the vacant CAS/SS, seat are underway.

Agenda item 3: Senate Agenda: Pres. Tehrani pointed out that the Senate Constitution requires agenda items to be submitted by faculty, the President or the Provost two weeks in advance. Discussion ensued regarding that length of time, the purpose for that deadline, and whether or not it was meaningful given electronic communication.

Motion (Sawoski, O'Connell) To amend Article IV, Section 6 of the Constitution to change two weeks to one week, and to add the word "electronic or otherwise" in parentheses after the word "writing." Passed without objection.

Agenda item 4: Diversity Dialogue: Pres. Tehrani discussed improving the work environment atmosphere to become a happy work environment. There should be processes in place that ensure that complaints based on hostile work environment would not get to the stage of grievance. She suggested enhanced training, holding forums, dialogues across campus and workshops to discuss how to have a happy work environment. What can the Senate do to help to improve campus climate, and to address the needs of faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds.

Motion (Graham, Leguizamo): The Faculty Senate authorizes the Executive Committee to open a dialogue with the presidents of the five bargaining units on the subject of "work environment."

Passed with one abstention.

Agenda item 5: Dean, Associate Dean, Assistant Dean Evaluations. President Tehrani noted that a motion was passed in 2011-12 that gave the Faculty Senate the responsibility for developing evaluation forms that would be used as performance assessments for deans, and that the results of the evaluations would be shared with the faculty of the relevant divisions. 1st VP Speakman will meet with Chief-of-Staff to review the process in place.

Discussion ensued about the current state of affairs. Is there an evaluation instrument in place? Is there a timetable? Who reads the results? How does the faculty ensure that the survey is asking the most useful questions.

Motion (Topf, Murphy) The Faculty Senate requests that the President report on the evaluation rotation for administrators. Passed without objection.

Agenda item 6. Faculty access to student emails. Pres. Tehrani noted that in some schools, the deans do not allow access to a list-serve of groups of students despite filling out the forms in place. In the past, there has been a form that could be signed by a faculty member and the dean that would generate these lists. In some schools, the faculty signs the form and the requested list is generated.

Motion (Speakman, Langdon): The Faculty Senate seeks clarification of the policies regarding faculty and administrative assistant access to student emails in Datatel. Passed 18-7

Agenda item 7. Open Houses Faculty who attend open houses would like information to make their presentations at Open House more effective.

Motion (Menton, Langdon): When the new director of Institutional Research comes on board, the Faculty Senate requests information on graduation rates and job placement for our majors so that we can provide this information to the families at Open House. Passed without objection.

Agenda item 8. Parking in Providence. The agenda contains a statement outlines the parking situation in Providence. A faculty sticker does not guarantee a spot in the lot behind 150 Washington, but certain spots are reserved for certain members of the RWU faculty and staff. The suggestion was made that the “first come, first served” rule that applies in Bristol also apply in Providence. Discussion focused on the parking garage across the street—departments are charged \$7 for each car that parks there, and it may be dangerous at night---and on how things are likely to get worse once RWU locates to One Empire.

Motion (Speakman, Graham): The Faculty Senate charges the University Life Committee with investigation of the parking situation in Providence, with a report and possible recommendations back to the Senate. Passed without objection.

Agenda item 9. Policies regarding students selling class materials that they did not create.

The agenda contains an extensive background statement from Sen. Micken that outlines the problem of students uploading course materials (such as a professor's handouts or slides) to sites like Course Hero, Luvu and OneClass. The sites pay students for these materials which are then sold to other students.

A suggestion was made to consult the Office of General Counsel on this matter.

Motion (Micken, Tehrani): The Faculty Senate charges the Academic Standards and Policies Committee with the task of developing a policy with regard to students selling class materials for which they are not creators and/or which contain information related to work on behalf of class clients/class community partners. Passed without objection.

New business

Motion (Micken, O'Connell) The Faculty Senate authorizes the publication of the motions and the minutes of this executive session. Passed 17-1-8

New business 1. Open House information.

Motion (Ghanem, Tehrani) The Faculty Senate charges the Admission and Enrollment Committee to investigate the relationship between attendance at Open Houses, applications, and enrollment as RWU. Passed without objection

Other items:

- a. Why cannot faculty use a paid grader? Answer: it's prohibited by the faculty contract
- b. Request for more nutritious snacks at Senate meetings.
- c. The Senate Curriculum Committee needs a representative from SAAHP
- d. Senate CC Chair O'Connell seeks advice about the best way to report out CC actions to the Senate.
- e. O'Connell also asks the chairs of the school and college CCs to check catalog to make sure that the catalog copy is what they expected to see after last year's changes.

Submitted by June Speakman

9/7/15, 5:45 pm

Revised, 9/22/15