

Faculty Senate Minutes
October 3, 2018

Roll Call:

Present: Bosco, D'Amore, Knights, Tehrani, Stevens, Emmer, Thangaraj, Pearce, Updike, McKinley, Topf, McCormack, Engvall, MacPhee, Soto, Rebelo, Roberts, Gumb

Absent: Fenske, Quezada-Grant, Sawoski

Guests: A Workman, R Cole, J Dunseath, J Speakman, P Prado

Meeting opened with President Bosco's acknowledgement of the passing of Charles Trimbach

Report from Interim President Andrew Workman:

Reiteration of State of Univ address, noting accomplishments over 7 years; we face declining numbers, increasing competition, and we are working to handle that

Numbers look good – 1040 new, 93 transfer (40% increase in transfer enrollments) – partly from Mt Ida, but also other 4 yr institutions. We are planning on a transfer initiative with community colleges

Retention up 1.7%

Up 2.6% total students over last year (all schools)

Engineering bldg.: trying to mitigate noise of construction. Each week they will chart out construction plan related to how much noise can be expected each week; final exams from ENG bldg. might go to LAW school. The exterior work will be done by about winter break.

Senator Roberts: egress from CAS is problematic; single door-wide; need access to double doors; massive traffic delays, concern about fire

Workman will ask the contractor about that again

Senator Soto: Is there a transfer effort from PVD campus to Bristol?

Workman: in some ways they are like CC – transfer pathways make sense. The key to community college pipelines is to base them on different program strengths. For example, Miami Dade CC is something we are working on for ARCH, Design, and Justice Studies

Univ College offers both Assoc and Bachelors, Masters and Post-grad, so calling them a community college would be inaccurate.

Senator Tehrani noted some existing structures at Mass CC & UMass that might be used as model

President Bosco – Dean’s Reviews?

Workman said he will look into it

Report from Acting Provost R. Cole:

Will meet with Board of Trustees later this month, along with the academic affairs sub-committee. Doug White is Faculty Rep

Commencement concerns: connect the committee with Melanie Stone and Bob Cole – Cabinet defines shape of Commencement.

Study Abroad: Alyssa Poey is resigning. We are prepared to run Winter programs, Becky Denson is well-skilled in details, we are exploring permutations for remainder of year – drawing on faculty as they define the replacement position; Spiegel has obligation to ensure fiscal soundness, oversight of risk mgmt.; charged with helping market programs; manages applicants and deposits. The academic quality of the programs, however, rests with faculty and Deans; there is no change to the curricular process. Spiegel Center assures layers of insurance/assurance

Senator Tehrani: Academic Policies Committee will be reviewing all forms related to faculty-led study abroad programs R. Cole suggested having a dialogue with relevant offices.

SCS – Univ College: met with Senators Peace and Topf; there is complexity to this issue beyond curricular pathways, and he will continue to work this out, in consultation with the Faculty Senate.

Senator D’Amore asked if R. Cole has a position on the issue of Faculty Senate divesting curricular oversight of Univ. College

R. Cole noted that whether it is realistic to have various pieces of the curriculum under the purview of the Senate, but noted that more time is needed to figure that out. He does not have a personal position on the matter.

Senator Pearce: Did you find the SCS response document sufficient?

Cole – it contains curricular pathways, internal and external – for UC only. What has to be reviewed is committee make-up, whether or not the curriculum that touches the Bristol campus needs more policies.

Senator Roberts: ASEM – some depts. still haven't seen ASEM reports

R. Cole: Deans should be working directly with their faculty; feel free to call on them, or Brian Williams.

Motion to adopt the minutes from September 5th, 2018 (McKinley/McCormack)

Senator Stevens noted that something had been left off May minutes related to curriculum; Bosco will Adjust them and have a revote in November.

Approved 18-0-0

Motion to approve Senate Executive Committee Report from September 7th, 2018 (McCormack/Tehrani)

Approved 18-0-0

Curriculum Committee Motion (Stevens/Topf)

The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee requests that the Executive Committee reviews with the interim President and acting Provost the proper make-up of school curriculum committees and the proper procedures (according to the current RWU Curriculum Policies) for them to follow. Further, move that the Executive Committee ask that the interim President and acting Provost make sure that all Deans and Curriculum Committees are acting within those guidelines to ensure that curriculum moves through the process as smoothly and quickly as possible.

Senator Soto: That is essential. Also, essential that provisions set for moving curriculum through schools is clear, practiced, schools should be conducting business regardless of Registrar System

Senator Stevens: It appears that not all schools have a process that follows the published policy and procedures. Curriculum should be properly vetted at school level before getting to Fac Sen. Will speed up process if FacSen CC doesn't have to send it back.

There is a possibility that the new curriculum system will go online in November. In the meantime, the Registrar is working on a clickable PDF as a temporary means of moving proposals forward.

President Bosco called the motion to a vote:

Approved 18-0-0

Report on the governance of the School of Continuing Studies (now University College):

Senator Topf: Charge to Senator Pearce and Senator Topf was to join a subcommittee to work out longstanding issues re SCS. They met and communicated for several months, no conclusion that could be “responsibly reported” to FacSen; already added one month (Sept-Oct) – identified difficulties and asked for proposal to rectify these, but the result was unsatisfactory

Senator Pearce: Report that was received was problematic in the details, the curriculum process is similar to that in Bristol, but if in PVD make-up of CC was industry experts – not even employees – it doesn’t seem faculty-driven.

Senator Rebelo noted that the curriculum committees at University College are overseen by a Program Director, who are all engaged full-time employees, with the participation of adjuncts (who have terminal degrees). He offered an invitation to help facilitate a response.

Senator Soto: Was there any reference to document that the FacSen worked on and submitted a year ago and can we have a copy of the most recent report?

Senator Topf: None of those issues have been addressed. The finding of Senator Pearce and Senator Topf was that it did not meet even minimum expectations Senator Topf wants a motion that acknowledges that we can’t accept responsibility for governing SCS (to be copied to NEASC).

Topf moved to untable Motion from May Faculty Senate Meeting (Topf/MacPhee)

MOTION: Whereas the Faculty Senate has responsibility for governance of academic programs including course and other requirements for degree, diploma and certificate programs offered by the University; and

Whereas the Senate has long experienced great difficulty in exercise of governance over programs in the School of Continuing Studies; and

Whereas President Farish has effectively confirmed to the Senate Executive Committee that SCS courses and programs cannot feasibly be subject to Senate governance in that he has acknowledged that SCS is “different” since it must “move quickly” on decisions regarding programs and participants, and that SCS programs do not fit the traditional model, for example non-credit-bearing courses and other programs offered ad hoc as requested by agencies and other organizations. [Executive Committee minutes, 11/14/17.].

Therefore, the Senate hereby acknowledges that it cannot reasonably bear responsibility for effective governance of the SCS, and hereby resolves that it is no longer responsible for overseeing the standards, policies, or curricula offered by the SCS.

Further, the Senate shall so inform the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, in that the most recent self-study submitted to NEASC in 2017 indicated no such limit on Senate Governance.

Discussion was wide-ranging with concerns raised about the implications of completely abandoning the process as well as the frustration of continuing to try to resolve the governance issues that have been identified multiple times. Other questions were raised about the result of cutting ties and the response by NEASC.

President Bosco called to vote or extend time.

Motion to Table – (Roberts/Updike)

Approved: 13-5-0

Motion is tabled.

At this time, guests were invited to join the meeting to discuss the Presidential Search – Presidential Search Committee Co-Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees Marcia Morris, and Vivian Brocard, President of the search firm Isaacson Miller

Senator Tehrani: We are top heavy, during time of financial difficulty. How can a candidate answer that question, other than freezing hires or hiring adjuncts?

M. Morris – more than issue of top heavy, has worked with businesses that are expensive and complex, when reach inflection point and expenses aren't in line with revenue sometimes you need to take a fresh look/move out of siloes – opportunities to see things diff when looking across instead of within. One way to frame that question with candidates is to ask whether they view the business model as effective vs historical.

Senator Engvall: What do Trustees view as the role of the faculty in big initiatives? For example, the decision about Affordable Excellence did not involve faculty. Fac were told after the fact. There are conflicting narratives about whether that was a good idea or the cause of our current shortfall. As a Trustee, how should the next Pres be going about major initiatives without fac input? What should the level of input be from faculty?

M. Morris: In all of her business experiences doing consulting work, biotech was the only place without a union. All others had unionized workers. You have to strike a balance. In many industries, academia as well, people who are organized are the people who are delivering the service that is being sold – the success depends on the attitude of the front line, and the healthier that relationship with the people leading, more open, healthier the business. Always times of difficulty at times of negotiation, but work through them. When over, they work constructively. Personal view: the better the communication and collaboration, the better.

V. Brocard: notion of shared gov is fundamental to University structures, and fac have stake in major decision making in institutions; candidates should have commitment to that (with balance). At the end of day, academic institutions have faculty voices that are important to be heard. Will be looking for that in their candidate pool. Her company has experience with deeply committed institution hires, and an appreciation and respect for what faculty do. Institution can't thrive without faculty.

Senator Engvall: How can you figure out a candidate who is truly committed to shared governance compared to one who just says the right things?

V. Brocard: Out of conversations of interest, candidate pool will become developed. Part of their core work is to assess how this person's experience lines up with what we have said we need. Search Committee and Isaacson Miller match candidates to position profile. They do rigorous due diligence through on record and off record conversations. Who can provide insight into what a person is like day to day, are they who they say they are? Through that you get a deeper sense of whether a candidate is just saying something to appeal, or is dedicated to the principle.

Senator Updike: A lot of business language is being used. How do you treat an educational search differently than other types of corporations? Faculty are the institution's reputation, students recall their experiences with faculty. How will you ensure a President is faculty-driven vs a CEO?

Isaacson Miller was founded in 1982 with the core mission of serving civic institutions. Primary focus is on civic orgs, institutions of higher ed of all types, 60-70% of their work is in higher ed – the rest in health care, foundations, arts and culture, K-12 ed, ed reform, civil rights, social justice... the notion of shared governance, whether it's called that or something else, is central. They are consultative in processes; search committee are made up of multiple constituents; this work is interesting and complicated; hasn't really done any CEO searches lately.

M. Morris: As the Trustee who took lead in finding a search firm – their business is higher ed. We selected Isaacson Miller for those very reasons.

Senator Roberts: The process seemed closed. There is real concern about what process looks like henceforth. When will we know more?

M. Morris: Search firms made it clear that to build best candidate pool we would have to run a confidential search. Open searches are vehicles, in the market today, that candidates are likely to avoid. Confidential searches are used widely. There are a number of variations. They can tailor last phase. We want to give best chance to recruit highest quality most promising candidates and then make adjustments to include more people in the process based on the needs of those candidates. Sitting presidents, for example, require greatest level of confidentiality. For candidates who aren't as concerned about confidentiality, we can look at other options. Until we get deeper into the search, we can't strike that balance. We will add

more people to the committee now. We are committed to bringing in additional people at interview. But how many and who depends on a number of factors.

Senator Roberts: This won't make faculty happy. It is seen as disingenuous.

V. Brocard disagrees. Isaacson Miller has lots of experience. 30 presidential searches, 60% closed, 30% hybrid, 10% open. Reflects changes in higher ed market. Higher Ed is more competitive for students, faculty, and leadership.

Senator MacPhee: we need to pay attention to culture. A closed search will put this person at risk of failing when they start. We are feeling like we are being treated like a generic. Encourage the last bit be open. To start off on the right foot. Leverage community buy in.

The meeting had gone until 4:30pm, and because of space constraints could not be extended. President Bosco announced that an emergency meeting would be called to resolve who will be on the Presidential Search Committee.

Motion to adjourn (Emmer/Stevens)