

**RWU Faculty Senate Meeting
October 7, 2015
Minutes--Draft**

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

Absent: Sen. Johnson

Guests: Pres. Farish, Provost Workman, Dean Peck Learned, Profs. Fobert, Schlinke, Fagan, Student Senator Lyman, Prof. Spritz, Associate Provost Cole

1. Approval of the Minutes of 9-2-2015. Approved as presented.
2. Committee Reports:
 - a. **Election**
 - b. **AS&P--Motion**
 - c. **Adm& Enr—Distributed- C. Menton**
 - d. **Curriculum—Distributed- R. O'Connell**
 - e. **Diversity**
 - f. **Fac. Dev**
 - g. **Steering**
 - h. **Univ. Life**
 - i. **Deans' Council—Distributed- A. Espinoza**

Questions:

Regarding FSCC minutes: why do curriculum petitions move from the FSCC to the Provost in Curricunet before they are considered by the Faculty Senate? Answer: there is a glitch in the system that is being addressed.

1. President Farish

Pres. Farish clarified the connection between the release of the RWU Vision and Roger's Revolution. The latter gives voice to how the former will be implemented. In Bristol, all students will get some kind of experiential learning. In Providence, RWU needs to meet people's educational experience where they are in their lives. The goals are to strengthen society, to keep more highly educated people in RI, to connect our students with job opportunities. Only 12-15% of RWU graduates remain in RI.

A task force is being convened to implement this vision, to link all parts of the university to this revolutionary vision, to show how unique RWU's offerings are, to preserve all that is good about liberal arts education with practical skills.

2. Provost Workman

First to second year **retention** was 81.3% giving RWU the largest 2nd year class ever.

The **graduation rate** is also increasing. Support for that comes through earlier degree audits, a “graduation status” letter sent home during holiday break. We have a graduation rate of 65%, and strive for 70%.

Question: Will the report that is sent home be in the form a “degree audit” which is difficult to read for someone unfamiliar with the format? **Answer:** no, it will be in accessible language.

Question: many academic adjustments have not been recorded in the degree audits that have been recently sent to faculty. **Answer:** The documentation queue is being cleared up and all changes should be reflected shortly.

rCloud: twice as many students are using it this year than did last year.

Resilience: there has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of students leaving for medical reasons, including anxiety. Faculty should be aware of the warning signs. The CTL will be hosting workshops on this.

Parking in Providence: there is sufficient parking for all those who need to use the building. The problem is with implementation of the permit process. It is being addressed.

Student email addresses: each dean has his or her own policy regarding access. Deans need review of these requests in the case of surveys, where HSRB review may be required. Faculty are invited to contact the provost if they feel that their requests are being denied inappropriately.

Engagement Task Force: The Provost seeks Senate help in electing two faculty to each of four subcommittees that will be implementing the president’s call of engaged learning. The chairs of the Task force are Bob Shea and Arnold Robinson. Those subcommittees, their charges and their co-chairs are as follows:

Pedagogical training and resources (Bob Shea, Adria Updike)

- Charge: Make recommendations for the preparation of faculty and staff to develop, deliver, and assess experiential learning opportunities.

Infrastructure for Experiential Education (KC Ferrara, Al Cutting)

- Charge: Develop recommendations for the improvement of logistical and informational systems that support experiential education.

Project and Partnership Development(Arnold Robinson, June Speakman)

- Charge: Develop recommendations for best practices and policies to support the development of experiential education projects and long-term partnerships between faculty, partners and the community.

Academic systems (Jason Jacobs, Kathy Micken)

- Charge: Develop recommendations for actions that will create systems within RWU that will support and encourage experiential education by faculty, staff and students.

Statement: It is important that the work of this task force take into account the experiential learning that takes place in our classrooms, in the research we do with our students, and in the faculty-led short-term study abroad programs.

3. **Emeritus Committee:** The Faculty Senate conducted elections for an emeritus committee last year. Those elected were Profs. Swanson, Tackach and Robinson. Terms are three years, but in order to provide for staggered terms, there was random assignment of a one, two and three year tenure. Swanson—3 years, Tackach—2 years, Robinson—1 year. Nominations are due to this committee by February 1.

4. **Administrator Evaluation Instrument Motion (Tehrani, Lonardo) The Faculty Senate creates an Ad Hoc Committee to work with Rick Hale on the Administrators Evaluation instrument and appoints June Speakman. Dave Moskowitz and Roxanne O’Connell volunteered to join this committee. Passed without objection.**

5. **SASH.** Associate Provost Cole and Professor Becky Spritz addressed the Senate about the Student Academic Showcase. A handout (attached) was distributed about the program. They explained that they would like faculty to take ownership of the program, perhaps with a faculty committee that would run the event with administrative support.

Motion (Speakman, Topf) That the University Life Committee be charged with opening a conversation with the SASH organizers to more greatly integrate faculty into the planning of SASH and to report back to the Senate by the December Senate meeting. Passed without objection.

6. Faculty Speaker at Commencement

Motion (M. Topf, O’Connell): The Faculty Senate requests that at Commencement the faculty member most recently awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award give a brief talk. The President of the Faculty Senate should remain a member of the platform party, and may escort the recipient of the award to the podium.

Explanation A few years ago the administration honored faculty requests to raise the prominence of the faculty at Commencement, in part by having a faculty member offer a brief speech to the graduates. The Senate President has been the speaker at Commencement the last two years. The recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award

would be more appropriate, spotlighting not only a faculty member but also one recognized for teaching excellence.

Question: the recipient of this award typically speaks at Convocation. Would that change? Answer: that is not the subject of this motion.

Question: is it the intent of the motion that the President of the Faculty Senate NOT address students? Answer: that is not the subject of this motion.

Motion passed 14 in favor, 9 opposed, 4 abstentions.

7. Library deselection process.

Motion (M. Topf, Speakman): The Faculty Senate requests that implementation of the decision regarding reductions in the University Library's collection (as announced by the Provost) be postponed until such time as:

(A) Each school and department has had opportunity to take a position on the nature and extent of library collections that are significant to its programs;

(B) The faculty is informed of the extent and nature of the downsizing, and the proposed schedule for the completion of the downsizing;

(C) An explanation is provided to the Faculty Senate as to why the decision was made long before faculty received notice, and made without opportunity for faculty to affect the decision.

Dean of the Library Betsy Peck Learned distributed a handout describing the process. (attached)

She discussed the concept of a Learning Commons and how that has led to rearrangement of space in the library, as well as "cooperative collection management" which examines redundancy in the collections of the neighboring academic libraries. She noted that library use is up by 50%, but book checkouts are down by 44%. She noted that architectural plans were going to require the elimination of 30,000 volumes, but those plans have been abandoned, so the library will now undertake the process with less urgency, with the number of volumes to be determined by the consultative process described in the handout. She noted also that compact shelving is being installed to provide more space, that there is a need for more study space for students, and that the location of the entire CSAS unit has filled up the space left by the relocation of the School of Education.

The motion was approved 18 in favor, 1 against, 10 abstentions.

It was noted that conditions A and B of the motion have been met, so that implementation can move forward. The Executive Committee will bring condition C to the President and Provost.

8. Motion (K. Micken, Tehrani): Faculty elected to on-going administrative committees, such as the Provost's Fund for Student Research and the Foundation to Promote

Scholarship and Teaching, shall be elected to two-year terms. When the number of committee members makes it possible, terms will be staggered.

Rationale: To provide continuity for committee decisions and to reduce the number of elections.

Motion carried with one abstention.

9. Motion (R. O'Connell, Murphy)--Approval of GSS 430 Special Topics in Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Passed without objection

10. Academic Advisors for Double Majors

Parker Lyman from the Student Senate Academic Affairs Committee presented a motion (attached) that had been adopted by the Student Senate endorsing the addition of a second advisor for student pursuing two majors.

It was noted that the Faculty Senate passed a similar motion last year and brought it to Provost Workman. Provost Workman noted that he supports the concept and is examining the possibility of implementation.

Motion (Speakman, O'Connell): The Faculty Senate acknowledges receipt of Student Senate resolution SS42-001, and will report back to the Student Senate regarding implementation.

Passed without objection.

11. Latin Honors

Motion (Langdon, Murphy): The Faculty Senate charges the Academic Standards Committee with reporting and distributing to all faculty the percentage of student graduating with Latin Honors from each school and division.

On Prof. Rhyne's behalf, Sen. Murphy provided a bar chart (attached) showing the percentage of Latin Honors granted by school. Discussion focused on the reasons for the motion and the fact that a motion to change from a GPA-based to a "top percent"-based method was rejected last year.

Motion was defeated 12 in favor, 12 opposed, 4 abstentions.

12. Transportation—personal vehicles, university vans, etc.

Sen. Micken outlined the issue as follows:

Student use of personal vehicles for university business as well as the requirement that faculty accompany students in university vans, even when students are van certified.

This is a topic that has been discussed before. Faculty expressed dismay at these new policies. Many of the community engaged projects have students working at various sites, often at the same time, thereby making it physically impossible for a faculty member to accompany each group. At other times, faculty may be teaching other classes and simply cannot accompany the students.

Provost Workman indicated that these policies are under discussion and he will report to the Senate as the discussions proceed and policies are considered for change.

13. **Curricunet:** Sen. Speakman withdrew her agenda item on Curricunet pending further research on her part.

14. **Campus Safety:** Sen. Sawoski noted that a faculty member asked that he bring this issue to the Senate given recent tragedies on other campuses. Pres. Farish indicated that this had been discussed at a cabinet meeting and that the university is working on a more comprehensive campus safety plan.

Motion (Sawoski, O'Connell) The Senate charges the University Life Committee with investigating the issue of classroom safety at RWU, compared to best practices at other campuses, especially in regard to whether all classrooms should have lockable doors.

Passed with two abstentions.

15. **Collation of Senate motions.** President Tehrani is seeking assistance from willing senators in gathering Senate motions passed over the past several years into a policy book. Sen. O'Connell and Sen. Noussi Kamdem volunteered to do so.

16. **Class size.** Discussion ensued regarding students being added to courses by persons other than the faculty member, in particular when the course is fully enrolled.

Motion (Tsankova, O'Connell) The Faculty Senate reiterates its commitment to the principle that only the faculty member teaching a particular section can add students to that section over the enrollment cap.

Passed without objection.

17. **Motion (Micken, Espinosa) The caps on the size of a course should not exceed the capacity of the classroom.**

Passed without objection.

**Final draft, 10/27/15
June Speakman**

October 17, 2015