Minutes
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING

April 4, 2012


Guests: President Farish, Interim Provost Potter, Interim Associate Provost Cole

Announcements: President Topf’s announcements:

1. The Board of Trustees will welcome a contact with the President of Senate.
2. There will a Faculty Caucus meeting during the month of April.

Items on the agenda:

(1) Minutes:
   A. Approval of the Senate minutes of March 7, 2012.
      Minutes were approved unanimously.

   B. Acknowledgement of receipt of standing committee minutes.
      a. Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee minutes of March 28
      b. University Life Committee minutes of March 21
      c. Faculty Senate General Education Committee minutes of February 29 and March 22
      d. Steering Committee minutes of March 28

   C. J. Speakman reported on the Senate Executive Committee meetings of February 22 and March 28.

(2) Executive Committee Reports
   a. Report of February 22:

Present: President Farish, Provost Potter, Senators Topf and Speakman

1. Academic Integrity Policy: Regarding administration action on this item, Provost Potter replied that the deans would take it up in the spring. He plans to speak with Bob Dermody as well and then present a revised version to the Senate.
2. Honorary Degree: The Board awards them in an ad hoc way, but is moving towards a process with criteria. Faculty input is welcome, but it is essentially a board decision. President Farish will come back to the Senate with ideas about how to involve faculty more consistently.

3. Faculty emails: There is a committee working on this item by looking at the best practices at other universities. There will be a policy available for the Senate review in the spring semester.

4. Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty-led programs abroad: How to ensure that these programs have an appropriate level of academic rigor? The Faculty Senate nominated five people to form a review committee. Associate Provost Wang will do the initial review and then it will go to the faculty committee for review.

5. Final Exams: Provost Potter raised the issue of whether or not finals are still relevant at RWU. Relatively few faculty members give them during finals week. Students remain on campus long after their academic obligations are complete. Why not extend the semester by a week and let the faculty determine what to do with that time? President Topf responded that he would raise this with the Senate.

(b) Report of March 28:

Present: President Farish, Provost Potter, Senate President Topf, Senate VPs Tehrani and Speakman

1. Senate motion on Special Topics: The Senate recommends that 430 courses be offered with the consensus of the majority of fulltime faculty in the sponsoring department.

Discussion focused on how best to vet proposals for special topics courses, in particular 430s that are part of the faculty-led study abroad programs. Is there a written policy regarding what standards a 430 course should meet? Consistency and predictability as well as faculty oversight are the goals.

Provost Potter will take this recommendation under advisement and will consult with the deans and Associate Provost Wang and will respond to the Senate.

2. Implementation of Senate recommendations that have been approved by the President:

Discussion focused on the Senate recommendation that school/college curriculum committees be composed of and chaired by Faculty. The president accepted the recommendation but it has not been implemented in some schools.

Provost Potter will follow up with the deans and report back to the Executive Committee prior to the next meeting.
3. Senate motion on faculty consultation regarding the transfer of academic programs:
Discussion focused on this matter and the creation of 8-week programs without faculty consultation and comment.

**President Farish agrees that faculty will be consulted for any programs that are to be relocated.** He noted that the relocation of the MPA and Leadership programs took place prior to his tenure.

Regarding 8-week programs, these were also implemented prior to President Farish’s arrival. Provost Potter noted that they were planned and programmed with faculty buy-in. He also noted that a study has been done by Dean Manzi that assessed faculty and students and found high levels of satisfaction with the programs. The Executive Committee noted that the Senate was not aware of this assessment. **Provost Potter will send copies to the Executive Committee**

(3) Discussion with President Farish and Provost Potter (15 minutes)

a. On the search for the Provost:
President Farish announced that six candidates were invited to campus. President Farish anticipates moving on this matter quickly. He has a meeting with the Provost Search Committee next Wednesday. President Farish said that there was a great deal of consensus as to the selection of the candidates and he hoped to receive the names of the three finalists by the middle of April.

b. On the university policies:
President Farish discussed the lack of written policies beyond the faculty contract. President Farish said that he would like to create a policy manual. President Farish proposed to create a committee of six, three from administration and 3 from the faculty who would work through the summer with some type of compensation for the faculty. This committee is to be co-chaired by R. Hale and a faculty member from the committee. President Farish said that a manual was important because it would record the policies for new faculty and also serve as point of reference. The manual can provide a guideline that breach of which can be grieved. President Farish emphasized that his wish was for shared governance and if the Faculty Senate approved creation of such committee, then the Senate could move forward with the election of the members. President Farish said that the decisions on the motions that were passed through the Senate and discussed during the Executive meetings also needed to be in writing and added to the policy manual if appropriate so there would be no confusion.

c. On the question as to where the faculty can go if there are problems with a dean:

President Farish’s response: Whatever culture at the top shall govern this process. The shared governance shall be the type of governance at all levels. Decisions that are made have to be made in consultation with relevant entities/groups at all levels.
President Farish stated that at his last school, there were evaluations of top management and they helped to create a point of reference as to how the affairs were conducted at the dean, vice president and provost levels. These evaluations also indicated that if these entities did not have the support of the faculty then how the issues could be remedied. President Farish said that there were procedures that were not followed at various levels and correcting them was a work in progress.

d. On the issue of the lack of input by faculty in searching for deans and assistant deans.

President Farish’s response: The faculty members shall be involved in such searches as is the case for the search for the current provost.

e. On the question of hiring a new Associate Dean for Continuing Studies without any involvement of the faculty and also the total lack of knowledge by the faculty as to the existence of an organizational chart even though such chart was made available to the provost candidates.

President Farish’s response: President Farish said he was guilty of not following the procedure of shared governance. Continuing Education program was at a dire strait situation and he needed to act quickly before the program disappeared. This program had no leadership and he appointed someone to a leadership position with the title of Associate Dean to govern the program and bring structure to it.

As per the question regarding the organizational chart, President Farish stated that there should be an organizational chart to show the lines of communication and responsibilities and also a telephone directory. It will take some time to put these documents together.

f. On the question of the Policy Manual and what type of policies it would contain:

President Farish’s response: An example would be the policy about emails and who owns the emails and if the faculty emails can be scrutinized and read. Policies that are not in the contract shall be created with the involvement of relevant entities.

g. On the question of full-time faculty members who teach in Providence and the hiring of adjunct faculty: What are the boundaries between such faculty, the use of the syllabi and other related issues?

President Farish’s response: The procedure in place is not appropriate. The Providence campus needs a lot of work and its boundaries are currently problematic, but this structure will be changed.

(4) Status of the Center for Teaching, Advising and Assessment (Tabled Feb. 1)
Motion 1 (N. Nester, R. O’Connell): Moved that the Faculty Senate requests the administration to establish a Center for Teaching and Learning as a formal organizational entity in accordance with its stated commitment to do so.

[This Center is provided for in RWU’s 2005 NEASC report, which states that the Center “will be operational in AY 2006-7.” (Report at Standard Four, page 4, http://www.rwu.wdu/sites/default/files/st4.pdf.)]

Discussion was centered on the role of the center. The center would assist faculty to be better teachers and advisors.

Motion carried unanimously with 2 abstentions.

(5) Faculty Evaluations of Deans (Tabled March 7 pending report from Steering Committee)

L. Turner reported that the Steering Committee’s study of peer and aspirant universities indicated that in some universities faculty conducted an evaluation of the relevant dean and this practice was more prevalent in public schools than private schools. Some peer and aspirant private schools had such practice in place.

Motion 2: (L. Turner, M. Tehrani): Moved that the Steering Committee develop a survey questionnaire as to the evaluation of the deans.

Motion carried unanimously with 2 abstentions.

(6) Senate contact with the Chairman of the Board

Motion 3 (D. Moskowitz, J. Speakman): Moved to amend the Senate Constitution, Article IV, section 1, to add the sentence below as the second sentence:

The President shall also communicate with the Chair of the RWU Board of Trustees, such communication to be as needed and as instructed by the Senate or by its Executive Committee.

Motion carried unanimously with 2 abstentions.

(7) Election of a Senator to be liaison to the Dean’s Council.

[On February 1 the Senate passed a motion recommending that the Dean’s Council include a liaison from the Senate. The Provost accepted the recommendation with some restrictions on the number of meetings the liaison may attend.]

Motion 4 (J. Speakman, M. Tehrani): Moved to open nominations for a Senate liaison to the Dean’s Council.

Discussion: To charge the Senate Election committee to announce the election and close nomination by Wednesday, April 11 and conclude the election by Friday, April 13. The motion was withdrawn and the Senate Election Committee will conduct the election as above.

(8) Student Evaluations of Teaching
**Motion 5** (R. O’Connell, M. Tehrani): Moved that Students’ Evaluations of Teaching be administered only during the last two weeks of instruction in the fall and spring semesters.

Discussion ensued as to the electronic versus paper evaluation and the lack of students’ participation in electronic evaluation of the faculty and the impact of the time of day or night that students decide to complete such evaluation.

**Motion carried with 4 opposed.**

(9) **Student Evaluations of Teaching**

**Motion 6** “that Student Evaluations of Teaching re-institute paper survey forms to be administered in class as was past practice” that was introduced by R. O’Connell was withdrawn.

(10) **General Education Committee**

**Motion 7** (R. O’Connell, J. Speakman): Moved that Article V, Section 6 of the Faculty Senate Constitution be amended as follows:

Add:

> General Education Committee. This committee shall develop, oversee implementation and assess the general education program for RWU.

Discussion: N. Nester stated that the General Education Committee at this time had the enormous task of evaluating the general education program on campus and such amendment was pre-mature before the final report of the General Education Committee. J. Speakman stated that she wanted to bring the General Education Committee under the Faculty Senate to report to the Senate. M. Tehrani stated the General Education Committee was composed differently from other Senate Committees and it was reporting to the Senate.

**Motion to table (T. Ruocco, D. Moskowitz) carried unanimously with 4 abstentions.**

(11) **Online courses**

**Motion 8** (T. Sorger, J. Speakman): Moved that online versions of regular course offerings not be made available to Day students without the approval of the faculty of the sponsoring major or minor or, in the case of CORE courses, the Core Curriculum Committee.

Discussion: T. Sorger stated that the biology courses with a lab section were offered online even though the Biology Department had unanimously disapproved such offerings. There were discussions as to where we could draw the line (e.g., online courses, three-week session courses.) Discussion ensued as to whether faculty members should be consulted when the courses that they teach and their syllabi are offered online. It was stated that there was a policy that was approved during the past President R.
Nirschel and past Provost Cavanaugh, but it was not implemented by the deans. The debate over this motion was extended and it was emphasized that the focus of the motion is the approval procedure of such courses and not comparison of the online versus regularly scheduled courses.

**Motion carried with 19 approved, 3 opposed and 2 abstentions.**

**Motion 9** (R. O’Connell, J. Speakman): Moved that an ad hoc committee be formed to produce a manual for the development, curricular review and delivery of online courses.

Discussion: J. Speakman stated that evaluation of online courses was part of the contract, but it did not take place and we needed such policy to ensure the integrity of the online courses. F. Schroth proposed an amendment to include all none 14-week courses in the motion (e.g., three-week session, etc.). The amendment was accepted.

**Motion failed to carry with 5 approved, 13 opposed and 3 abstentions.**

12) Marketing of summer and online courses

**Motion 10** (J. Speakman, T. Sorger): Moved that the Faculty Senate request a report from the Provost on the marketing strategies for summer and online courses.

F. Schroth proposed an amendment to include all none 14-week session courses. The amendment was not accepted.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

13) Parking

**Motion 11** (J. Speakman, R. O’Connell): Moved that the Faculty Senate recommends that three parking spaces at the Performing Arts Center be designated as PAC Faculty/Staff only and three parking spaces at MNS be designated as MNS Faculty only.

**Motion failed to carry with 6 approved and 12 opposed.**

14) New Items

a. Motions from FSCC minutes of March 28 (motions 11 and 12)

**Motion 11** (M. Tehrani, F. Schroth): Moved that as per standard FSCC procedures, all proposals submitted to the FSCC must include minutes of the school curriculum meeting(s) pertaining to the proposal.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion 12** (A. Hollingsworth, T. Sorger): Moved that any rejection of proposals submitted to the FSCC by one of the signatories on the petition cover page – the Chair of the CC and the Dean – must be accompanied by a written explanation justifying the decision.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

15) Other New Item:
Motion 13 (M. Stein, H. Khan): Moved to ask the General Education Committee members if they wanted the Committee to be a standing Faculty Senate Committee. 
Motion failed to carry with 3 approved, 17 opposed.

Submitted respectfully,

Minoo Tehrani
Submitted- Executive Committee-4/9/2012