Minutes

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING

February 1, 2012

L. Laby (student senator), M. Rooney (student senator)

Absent: P. Alfieri, B. Carr, P. Charles, R. Evans, M. Sawoski

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

Announcements: President Topf’s announcements:

1. The Senate Constitution needs to be amended for holding two meetings per month per President Parish’s request. This change will take place at the start of fall 2012.

2. President Topf thanked the Senate Election Committee for holding the election for the General Education Committee in an expedited manner.

Items on the agenda:

(1) Minutes

A. Approval of the Senate minutes of December 7, 2011.
Minutes were approved unanimously with addition of R. Woodruff to the list of the present senators at the meeting of December 7, 2011.

B. Acknowledgement of receipt of standing committee minutes.

    a. General Education Committee – Minutes of January 26, 2012 meeting.

President Topf stated that reports from different standing committees of the senate were accepted as a whole. Any part of the report that a committee wanted to be discussed in the senate, it should be in the form of motions to be posted on the senate agenda.
C. Acknowledgement of receipt of Senate Executive Committee minutes of December 14, 2011.
The report was submitted by J. Speakman.

(2) Report from the Executive Committee.

M. Tehrani stated that points “c” and “d” under item #4 (Ad hoc Committee on Faculty-led programs abroad) on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting Notes were not part of the senate approved motion of the December 7, 2011 meeting. The approved motion entailed creation of an ad hoc committee of faculty with experience in faculty-led programs abroad to review the guidelines distributed by the Global Center. Points “c” and “d” under Item #4 were eliminated from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting Notes of December 14, 2011.

J. Stevens stated that Item #1, points “b” and “c” shall read as per the Academic Standards and Policies Committee’s report. Items under Academic Integrity Policy are not the same as the report by the Standards and Policies Committee. These items will be corrected and will reflect the report.

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

President Farish stated that the search committee for the Provost had a meeting in the afternoon. The Committee has received 120 applications out of which half meet the qualifications and there are some solid candidates. The search is to be concluded by April.

President Farish stated that a message from him had been just sent out to the university community announcing a university wide meeting for February 15. President Farish said that a tradition at RWU was to address the university in fall as to the “State of the University”. However, in fall, he was not familiar enough to deliver this tradition to its full extent and waiting for the next fall would be too long in time. As a result, he would address the university community on February 15th and would share his hopes and dreams for RWU future. In addition, President Farish has been working on a White Paper to capture a sense of direction for the university as to where we want to be in ten years. The first draft of this White Paper delineating a strategic vision for RWU was given to the cabinet in early January and then to the Deans’ Council. On February 15th, President Farish will post the draft of the strategic vision on the web for RWU community to respond to it. The White Paper contains not more than five line piece about a vision statement, the direction we want to go and how to achieve it. President Farish is asking the RWU community for suggestions and comments. President Farish plans to deliver the final statement for adoption of a strategic vision statement to the Board of Trustees on June 21st, 2012. President Farish emphasized the role of the Faculty Senate in this endeavor. President Farish stated everything would go through the Senate with the utmost transparency and the involvement of the entire campus in order to draft the final version of the strategic vision statement.
(4) General Education.

(A) Additional charges to the new General Education Committee.

(The Senate adopted a committee charge as part of President Farish’s statement which the Senate accepted on December 7. The relevant part of the President’s statement is:

*The committee* shall be tasked with bringing back to the Senate, on a timetable to be determined by the Senate but one that is responsive to our needs for the 2016 NEASC visit, recommendations that the Senate will ultimately approve as regards the General Education program at Roger Williams University. . . .

*The Senate will further charge the committee* with developing a set of learning outcomes for our current CORE program, [and,] upon receipt and approval of the CORE learning outcomes, to charge the [committee] with evaluating how successfully these learning outcomes are being achieved.

**Motion 1:** Move that the charge to the new General Education Committee shall include:

(a) Assessing the current Core;  
(b) Developing, where necessary, new learning outcomes; and  
(c) Making recommendations for the general education program at Roger Williams University going forward. (General Education Committee)

Discussion pursued as to the tasks of the General Education Committee. T. Sorger introduced an amendment to the motion for the tasks to include assessing a set of standards of learning outcomes (seconded by R. O’Connell). T. Sorger stated that assessing such standards was needed to meet the NEASC requirements. D. Moskowitz stated to redo the amendment as to: Solicitate current learning outcomes, where no learning outcome exists, develop outcomes and then assess these outcomes. T. Sorger amended the motion to include “common learning outcomes” in place of standard learning outcomes. There were more discussions including the followings:

- We cannot have new outcomes being applied to what we already have

- Keep the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) separate from the General Education Committee and have the CCC deal with the Core assessment and keep the General Education Committee for looking into the future.
M. Tehrani stated that the first meeting of the General Education Committee was highly professional and collegial. The General Education Committee was a faculty elected committee and at this time the Senate had the opportunity to own whatever that had to do with the curricular issues. The Senate should support the motions proposed by the General Education Committee since this committee was now a senate committee and would report to the senate.

N. Nester stated that the Senate should trust this elected committee and allow them to do their tasks.

J. Stevens stated that keeping the CCC and the General Education Committee separated would be counter-productive and ineffective.

J. Speakman stated that the two committees should stay separate.

T. Sorger empathized the importance of NEASC accreditation.

C. Murphy called it to question. The call to questions was carried with 2 opposed.

The amendment to the motion as to: Assess student learning with respect to common learning outcomes”:

Motion failed with 4 approved.

J. Roberts proposed a motion to consider Motion 1 by striking item c (seconded by D. Moskowitz). C. Menton called it to question. The call to question was carried with 13 approved.

Motion: To approve motion 1 by striking item c.
Motion failed to carry with 19 opposed.

J. Stevens called to question the discussion on Motion 1. The call to question carried:

Motion 1 (M. Tehrani, J. Stevens):

(a) Assessing the current Core;
(b) Developing, where necessary, new learning outcomes; and
(c) Making recommendations for the general education program at Roger Williams University going forward. (General Education Committee)

Motion carried with 4 opposed.

Motion 2 (J. Speakman, J. Roberts): Move that the new General Education Committee report monthly to the Faculty Senate, either through minutes or a written summary of actions.

Motion carried with 2 opposed and 1 abstention.

(B) Terms of committee members.

(A provision on the December 7 agenda regarding length of committee member terms was not included in the amended motion passed on December 7.)
**Motion 3a:** Move that members, except the chair, shall be elected for three-year terms, except in the first election. To provide for staggered terms, in the first election one third of the members elected shall serve a one-year term, one third a two-year term, and one-third a three-year term, to be decided by lot. Thereafter all members shall serve three-year terms. [Agenda item 7(B)(4) on the December 7 agenda.]

**Motion carried with 23 approved, 6 opposed and 1 abstention.**

**Motion 3b** (S. Varano, S. Bosco): Move that the staggered terms shall take effect beginning in 2014-15, and that until that year the members of the current General Education Committee shall remain in office. (General Education Committee).

The discussion ensued as to:
- The time needed for the General Education Committee to fulfill their tasks and meet the deadline for NEASC report
- Difficulty in determination of the staggering election date to start

D. Moskowitz asked for the motion date to be rolled back from 2014-2015 to September 2013-2014. The motion was seconded by R. O’Connell. B. Spritz called it to question. The call for question carried with 4 opposed and 2 abstentions.

**Motion 3b** (D. Moskowitz, R. O’Connell): Move that the staggered terms shall take effect beginning in 2013-14, and that until that year the members of the current General Education Committee shall remain in office. (General Education Committee).

**Motion carried with 18 approved, 6 opposed and 5 abstentions.**

**(C) Clarification on election of the chair of the new General Education Committee.**

[The motion passed December 7, as amended, stated that “The chair of the new General Education Committee [is] to be elected by the Faculty Senate and the members of the newly formed committee.” This amended motion failed to address two provisions in the original motion on the Dec. 7 agenda. First, the population from which the chair may be elected; and second, compensation for the position.]

**(1) Alternative motions regarding the population from which a chair is to be elected (per procedure approved December 7).**

**(a) Alternative no. 1** [Chair to be elected from among the RWU faculty.]

*Move* that the chair of the new General Education Committee shall be elected from among the RWU faculty. (From the December 7 agenda)
(b) Alternative no. 2  [Chair to be elected from members of the Senate.]

Move that the chair of the new General Education Committee shall be a member of the Faculty Senate, all members of which are eligible.
(J. Speakman)

(c) Alternative no. 3  [Chair to be elected from members of the Committee.]

Move that the chair of the new General Education Committee shall be a member of the Committee, per the approved procedures assed on December 7.  (General Education Committee)

M. Tehrani asked for (c) Alternative no. 3 to be considered first and also to reflect the motion that was proposed by the General Education Committee:

Motion (M. Tehrani, N. Nester): Move that the chair of the new General Education Committee shall be a senator/non-senator member of the General Education Committee elected per the approved procedures of the Faculty Senate Meeting of December 7, 2011.  (General Education Committee)

D. Moskowitz proposed to amend the motion as: Only the senator members of the General Education Committee to be eligible for the position of the chair of the committee. M. Tehrani did not accept the amendment.

K. Gentles-Peart proposed a motion as: Only the senator member of the General Education committee to be eligible for the chair position (seconded by R. Woodruff).  A lengthy discussion pursued as to:

● What if no member of the elected committee is a senators?
● Can a non-senator chair be accountable to the senate?

S. Bosco stated that to let the committee establish its own chair.  This was an elected committee so the chair should be elected from the committee members.

M. Tehrani stated that let us not to micro-manage this committee. The senate has never micro-managed its committees and let us keep the tradition.

F. Hunter called it to question.

Motion (K. Gentles-Peart, R. Woodruff): Only the senator members of the General Education committee to be eligible for the chair position.  
Motion failed to carry with 8 approved.
Motion on the floor:

**Motion** (M. Tehrani, N. Nester): Move that the chair of the new General Education Committee shall be a senator/non-senator member of the General Education Committee elected per the approved procedures of the Faculty Senate Meeting of December 7, 2011. (General Education Committee)

M. Tehrani called it to question. The call to question carried.

**Motion carried with 16 approved, 4 opposed and 1 abstention.**

(2) Length of term for chairs; timeline for the election of chairs.

*Move* that the chair shall serve a one year term beginning July 1 (except for the first chair, who shall serve from the date of election until June 30, 2013). The election shall held in April by the Senate Elections Committee, which shall seek nominations from the members of the committee and the Senate. Committee members who are also Senators shall have one vote. *(However, for the first election, such nominations shall be due to the Elections Committee by February 10. An electronic ballot shall be issued on February 12. Voting by Senators and committee members shall close on February 17.)* [J. Roberts, J. Speakman]

The above motion was revised as:

**Motion** (J. Roberts, J. Speakman) Move that the chair shall serve a one year term beginning July 1 (except for the first chair, who shall serve from the date of election until August 2013). The election shall held in April by the Senate Elections Committee, which shall be a member of the General Education Committee and nominated by the members of the General Education Committee. The senator members of the General Education Committee shall have one vote.

*(However, for the first election, such nominations shall be due to the Elections Committee by February 10. An electronic ballot shall be issued on February 12. Voting by Senators and committee members shall close on February 17.)*

**Motion carried with 1 abstention.**

(3) Compensation for the chair.

*Move* that the chair shall be granted compensation commensurate with the magnitude of the work involved, including summer stipend and reasonable secretarial support. *(From the December 7 agenda, item 7(B).)*

The above motion was revised as:

**Resolution** (J. Speakman, M. Stein): Propose a resolution that the chair and the General Education Committee members be shall be granted compensation
commensurate with the magnitude of the work involved, including summer stipend and reasonable secretarial support.

Resolution carried with 2 opposed and 2 abstentions.

(D) Alternative motions on relation of Core Committee to new General Education Committee.

Alternative no. 1 [Core Committee to be phased out after a transition period.]

Move that the duties and activities of the Core Committee be transferred to the new General Education Committee as soon as is convenient and practicable after the new committee is established; and further, that when the new committee reports to the Senate that the transfer has been satisfactorily completed, the Core Committee shall be dissolved. (Carried over from the meeting of December 7, item 7(B).)

Alternative no. 2 [Core Committee to continue to function as long as Core program is operative.]

Move that the Core Curriculum Committee shall continue its administration and assessment of the Core program. The CCC and the General Education Committee shall establish liaison. The CCC shall report monthly to the Faculty Senate either by minutes or written summary of actions. (J. Speakman)

Alternative no. 3 [Core Committee to be a subcommittee of the Gen Ed Committee.]

Move that the current Core Committee shall be a subcommittee of the new General Education Committee. (General Education Committee)

M. Tehrani requested that Alternative no. 3 to be discussed first.

Motion (T. Ruocco, C. Murphy): Move that the current Core Committee shall be a subcommittee of the new General Education Committee. (General Education Committee).

Discussion ensued as to:
- We need to clarifying the tasks of the CCC and the General Education Committee
- With the current CCC as a sub-committee of the General Education Committee, there will be connection between the two committees.
- Information flow can be provided from CCC to the General Education Committee and can streamline the processes and make the CCC part of a senate committee.

Motion carries with 3 opposed and 2 abstentions.

(E) Move that the old General Education Council shall be dissolved, effective immediately. (General Education Committee)

Provost Potter has asked the old General Education Committee to be dissolved.
Motion (M. Tehrani, J. Speakman): Move that the old General Education Council shall be dissolved, effective immediately. (General Education Committee)
Motion carried unanimously.

(5) Program and curricular review. [Carried over from the meeting of December 7.]

Move, that any review of, or proposed changes to, current curriculum or programs not proceed until all affected full time faculty have been consulted. (D. Moskowitz).
J. Speakman moved, seconded by R. O’Connell asked for the motion to be tabled for further thoughts and discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

(6) Status of the Center for Teaching, Advising and Assessment.

Move that the Faculty Senate request that the administration establish a Center for Teaching and Learning as a formal organizational entity, in accordance with its stated commitment to do so. (N. Nester)

[This Center is provided for in RWU’s 2005 NEASC report, which states that the Center “will be operational in AY 2006-7.” (NEASC report at Standard Four, p. 4. http://www.rwu.edu/sites/default/files/st4.pdf. See also Standard Five, p. 8. http://www.rwu.edu/sites/default/files/st5.pdf.)]

N. Nester asked for the motion to be tabled. Request to table the motion was carried unanimously.

(7) Proposal regarding final examination period.

Motion (J. Speakman, M. Tehrani); Move that the Academic Standards and Policies Committee be charged with engaging in research and in making recommendations on the following: that the final examination period be removed from the University’s academic schedule, and that the semester and other academic sessions be extended by a number of class hours to be determined. The AS&P Committee shall report back to the Senate at its regular meeting in either March or April.

Rationale: The motion arose from a suggestion of the Provost at the Dec. 14 meeting with the Executive Committee. Many courses do not have traditional sit-down examinations, using instead final papers and course projects. Student Affairs office notes that the final examination period is a relatively inactive one for many students, providing opportunities for inappropriate behavior. Further, the learning outcomes approach to designing and assessing courses is not served well by requiring final exams in many disciplines. Extension of the semester would permit time for in-class exams at end of semester.
Motion carried unanimously.
(8) The Deans’ Council

(A) Motion (J. Speakman, M. Tehrani): Move that the Faculty Senate recommend that the Deans’ Council publish minutes of its meetings, in a manner similar to that of the Faculty Senate.

Motion carried with 15 approved, 1 opposed and 3 abstentions.

(B) Motion (J. Speakman, M. Tehrani): Move that the Faculty Senate recommend that membership on the Deans’ Council be expanded to include a liaison from the Faculty Senate, who will serve in a non-voting capacity.

Motion carried with 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

(9) The position of Assistant Provost

Move that the Faculty Senate recommend that, for purposes of continuity and shared governance, the position of Assistant Provost be filled on a rotating three-year basis by a member of the faculty. This administrator shall have responsibility for oversight of general education, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and interdisciplinary programs, among other responsibilities. The position shall be filled by appointment by the Provost, from a pool of applications from interested faculty. (J. Speakman)

M. Stein moved that the motion to be withdrawn for more thoughts and reflection (seconded by J. Speakman). Motion carried unanimously.

(10) Publication of Senate minutes

Move that the minutes of the Faculty Senate, upon their approval by the Faculty Senate, shall be distributed to “All University.” (M. Tehrani)

The above motion was revised as:

Motion (M. Tehrani, S. Bosco): Move that the minutes of the Faculty Senate, upon their approval by the Faculty Senate, shall be distributed to all faculty and staff of RWU.

Motion carried with 2 opposed.

Submitted respectfully,

Minoo Tehrani
Submitted- 2/9/2012