

Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting

December 9, 2015

***** The complete recording for this meeting can be found at <http://www.american.edu/facultysenate/agendas-minutes.cfm>**

Present: Professors: Larry Engel, Todd Eisenstadt, Lacey Wootton, Karen Baehler, Kyle Brannon, Rachel Borchardt, Chris Edelson, Maria Gomez, Olivia Ivey, Kelly Joyner, Billie Jo Kaufman, Despina Kakoudaki, Iris Krasnow, Joshua Lansky, Gwanhoo Lee, Jun Lu, Mary Mintz, John Nolan, Andrea Pearson, Steve Silvia, Chris Simpson, Kate Wilson, Brian Yates, Provost Scott Bass, DAA Mary Clark.

Professor Engel called the meeting to order at 2:35 PM

Chair's Report – Larry Engel

November 4, 2015 Minutes Approval – Professor Engel opened the floor for discussion and approval of the November 4, 2015 minutes. The Senate **VOTED** and the minutes were approved 20-0-1.

Ad-Hoc Committee on Term Faculty Language in the Faculty Manual – Professor Engel informed the senators of the membership of the ad-hoc committee. He said that the members are a combination of volunteers and recommendations that include Professors Chris Edelson, Maria Gomez, Mary Mintz, Sherburne Laughlin, Valentino Bruno, Guy Ziv, and Sarah Menke-Fish. Additional members who were not included in the original list are Professors Steve Silvia and Karen Baehler. DAA Mary Clark will serve as an ex-officio member. It was recommended to try to find a member from SPExS. The Senate **VOTED** and the membership was approved 22-0-0 in favor.

Provost's Report – Scott Bass

Provost Bass stated that he had several items to discuss. They included:

- Race and diversity issues nationwide on campuses with students and faculty. It was requested that this be a future topic of conversation by the Senate
- RiSE update
- Multiple searches on campus that include 2 dean searches (one at WCL, the other at KSB), Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies, and a dean for the School of Education
- The old WCL building is now being called the Spring Valley Building for operation purposes. This building needs major infrastructure work and that will begin in the summer of 2016
- East Campus is behind schedule and most likely that will delay the opening of the resident's hall. The Myers Technology and Innovation Building will be delayed until the residents halls are complete delaying department move dates
- Recently attended a technology conference and how technology is changing higher education dramatically across the county

Guidelines for Faculty Conduct – Lydia Fettig

Professor Fettig stated that the committee had made many revisions to the original document, which began as a more actionable document and has now become more guideline-based. The following topics were discussed:

- Embedded live links in document to help keep it a living document
- New campus closure language to be included in guidelines
- Concern was expressed on how violations of items in the guidelines would affect faculty but it was clarified that the *Faculty Manual* will remain the actionable document
- Concern was expressed on the guidelines having more impact on term faculty
- Where will the document be housed? DAA Clark stated that she will work to insure that this document and all relevant material for faculty be available on the DAA website
- A request was made by the Provost to change language where applicable to accommodate online courses

Professor Engel asked what the committee anticipated the next step for the document would be.

Professor Fettig stated that it would be distributed to the AU community and then the committee will conduct town halls to allow for the AU community input.

General Education Task Force – Cindy Bair Van Dam & Peter Starr

Professor Bair Van Dam, chair of the Gen Ed Committee began with an overview of the process of the presented document. She stated that there have already been two town halls with one remaining. Two student focus groups have taken place and two student town halls are scheduled for the spring semester. Professor Bair Van Dam stated that after receiving today's input from the Senate, the task force will convene to revise the report based on the suggested concerns, suggestions, and ideas. Professor Bair Van Dam gave an overview of the new direction the General Education program is headed based on the following:

- Moving away from content-based distribution
- Focusing on learning outcomes
- Focusing more on diversity, inclusion, and equity
- First-year experience
- Moving away from what you do in the beginning of your college career to an overall experience

Some additional goals the task force has tried to accomplish are:

- Moving away from Gen Ed being an obstacle to get to the “fun stuff”
- Creating a coherent, scaffolded program

- Addressing findings from two task forces that show deficits in quantitative literacy training, and writing and information literacy training
- Reducing the double counting of Gen Ed courses towards the major but AP classes will still count
- Making more space for students to be able to double major and double minor by making the program a little smaller
- Building on the idea of being able to transition into and out of the college experience
- Middle States has changed the rules no longer requiring 30 credit minimum for Gen Ed, and now says Gen Ed must have certain learning outcomes that are being addressed

Dean Starr stated that the town halls have been very fruitful. He stated that there are two issues that need resolution:

- The name “General Education” is something that the task force would like to change. The committee first took the name “AU experience” which received pushback due to confusion with other similarly named courses and then changed it to “University College,” which is what is being used now, but also has received pushback.
- Concern, and open for resolution, is with the second semester AUx2 course being one or three credits.

Dean Starr stated that the timeline is tight for this massive project but blocks for courses have been put in place so that a pilot program can be run in AY 2016-2017. The full program is anticipated in AY 2017-2018.

Senators presented several questions and concerns addressed in the report. Because the topic ran over the allotted time, additional questions or comments were asked to be sent to Professor Bair Van Dam and Dean Starr via email.

Campus Closure Language – Lacey Wootton

Professor Wootton stated that this concern was brought to her from a faculty member last year as a result of the many snow days that the university experienced. She stated that the concern presented is that there is no language in the current campus closure language that obligates students to do any work that professors have assigned them during a campus closure. This was brought to the Executive Committee last year but because of an extremely heavy spring schedule it was not discussed with the Senate. Professor Wootton stated that the language changes are to let the students know of their academic responsibilities during these unusual circumstances. Further concerns were discussed on classes in the evening vis a vis closing times, and there was a request that online classes be included in the language. The Senate **VOTED** on the language with edits 16-0-0 in favor.

Faculty Senate By-Law Revisions – Lacey Wootton

Professor Wootton stated that many of the changes that are included in the presented document were changed to reflect practice. At the last Senate meeting this review started but because the discussion was running out of time, it was decided to bring it back to the Dec. meeting to allow more time to discuss the issues. As a result the following items were discussed and voted on:

- **Article II. Membership** – Changing language to reflect practice that elections will be to replace senators to fill vacancies. The senate **VOTED** 18-0-0 in favor
- **Article III. Officers of the Senate, B** – Two options were presented for the election process of the vice chair. Option 1) current senators are eligible to run for vice chair and this election will be part of the at-large senate elections. Option 2) Current senators and senators who have served within the past five years being elected by secret ballot at the March Senate meeting. The Senate **VOTED** on option 2, 17-1-0 in favor
- **Article V, Non-Participants and Observers** – Changes were made to the current language to make it clear that outside media would have to obtain permission to use television cameras and other recording devices from the chair with advance notice to the university's Office of Media Relations. The Senate **VOTED** 12-2-0

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM