

Minutes

Faculty Senate Meeting

October 7, 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, David Banks, Kyle Brannon, Rachel Borchardt, Chris Edelson, Maria Gomez, Olivia Ivey, Kelly Joyner, 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 2:31 PM

Chair's Report – Larry Engel

Minutes Approval

Professor Engel opened the meeting requesting approval of the September 9, 2015, minutes. No discussion was had and the Senate **VOTED 19-0-1** in favor.

Ad-Hoc Grade Inflation Committee

Professor Engel presented to the Senate the ad-hoc Grade Inflation Committee membership. He stated that the committee will reach out to students for their input. The Senate **VOTED** and the committee membership was approved **20-0-2**.

Changing Class Schedules

Professor Engel updated the Senate on possible changes to the class schedule times to accommodate the 4801 Massachusetts Ave building, currently WCL, for classroom use. Approximately 28 classrooms will be added to the schedule. To accommodate transportation, the current proposal suggests a start time of 8:10 AM with twenty minutes between classes, and evening classes will begin at 5:30 PM with ten minutes between them to allow for transportation to and from campuses. The new proposed schedule is intended be implemented in the fall of 2016.

Provost's Report – Scott Bass

Provost Bass stated that the faculty & staff retreat will be held on Friday October 9, 2015, and will focus on Reinventing the Student Experience (RiSE) project. During the retreat there will be a focus on some of the challenges with attrition on campus and ways that AU can be more responsive to retaining students but also providing a higher quality experience in the range of services that students seek at AU.

Provost Bass stated that the WCL and KSB deans searches are underway. The search committee for the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies will be meeting soon to receive its charge. The Dean of Education search will be led by Dean Peter Starr.

Provost Bass said that a new partnership with Shorelight is underway. Shorelight is a provider that works to support services for the transition of international students. A memo is to be sent out to the AU community to present the partnership.

Vice Provost Vi Eittle stated that the Shorelight partnership is often referred to as a “bridge” or “pathway” program for international students who need additional preparation before being admitted into a degree program. The university will provide a full-time academic director who will oversee all the academic matters relating to the program. The director will work directly with Shorelight’s support staff. The program will serve the undergraduate level, starting with the admissions and will be an “opt in” for the graduate programs that will decide if they want to open the program to their international students. The proposed contract with Shorelight has a term of 10 years but does have provisions if the program is not successful and certain criteria are not met. All expenses will be reimbursed by Shorelight, leaving no out-of-pocket expenses for AU. AU will provide the academic programs and faculty will teach in the program.

Provost Bass added that Shorelight will only makes its money when students graduate. They receive 10% of the tuition cost after commencement. Payments are not made to Shorelight for unsuccessful students.

Student Leaders and Sexual Assault Working Group (SAWG) on Freedom of Expression – Sasha Gilthorpe

President of Student Government Sasha Gilthorpe thanked the Senate for the invitation to speak and stated she looks forward to working together in the future with the faculty and Senate. Sasha said she was very disappointed with the Resolution on Academic Freedom that the Senate passed on September 7, 2015, because it did not include student input. Along with several other students, Sasha expressed concern that trigger warnings on emotional and difficult content are vital in courses with sensitive material. She stated that students are not looking to “opt out” of classes and they are not seeking to be “coddled.”

Professor Engel apologized for not seeking student input in the development of the resolution and hopes that further student/faculty discussion will take place.

Undergraduate Regulation Changes – Lyn Stallings

Vice provost of Undergraduate Studies Lyn Stallings stated that over the past summer the Undergraduate Regulations were edited and reformatted for clarity. As a result the following sections had changes:

- **Section 6.4: Course Levels**, Clarified who can take 600-799 course numbers; **6.5: Exceptions for Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Coursework**, Clarified that undergraduate students can take a 600-level class if in the combined master’s/bachelor

degree; and **10.3: Combined Bachelors and Masters Degrees**, Clarified when students can pursue a combined Bachelor /Master's degree.

- **Section 7.2.1.: Permit to Study at Another U.S. Institution**, Added sentence currently in university catalog clarifying Permits to Study for non-articulated courses.
- **Section 10.1: Honors Program**, Added language that students must have an overall 3.0 GPA in all courses to receive notation on the final transcript, *American University Honors Program*.
- **Section 12.3: Waitlist Rules**, Clarified students on waitlist must drop class if not able to register at the end of add/drop but does not include students who audit class.
- **Section 12.5: Withdrawal from a Course or from All Courses**, Tabled.
- **Section 12.6: Reduction of Course Load Due to Medical Reasons**, Aligned language to match practice. Dean of Students will initiate petitions.

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Michael Keynes and the University Registrar Doug McKenna stated that they each had concerns about the proposed change to the withdrawal date regarding the Graduate Regulations, which mirror the withdrawal date in the Undergraduate Regulations. They requested additional time to present this change to the Graduate Associate Deans for review and comments.

The Senate **VOTED** and passed sections, 6.4, 6.5, 10.3, 7.2.1, 10.1, 12.3, & 12.6, in favor **21-0-0**, but tabled section 12.5 (withdrawal date) for requested information.

Term Faculty Associate Promotion/Outside Letters – Steve Silvia

Professor and Chair of the Committee on Faculty Actions Steve Silvia stated that he had two items to report. 1) In response to the Senate request for the CFA to discuss and possibly amend the *Faculty Manual* to take into account the public intellectual activity statement that was part of the High Impact Research Report, the CFA did have a discussion and decided to not change the current *Manual* language. The committee agreed that the significance of public intellectual activity varies widely from field to field, and changing this in the *Manual* was not the best approach. The CFA members did agree that this might be something that colleagues in specific units look at and amend their unit guidelines for promotion and tenure or their annual-review guidelines. 2) The CFA also discussed the criteria for promotion for term faculty in the Professor track. Since research has been included in the assessment for promotion, the ranks within this track are reviewed by the same criteria as a tenure-track review. There is no time limit to seeking promotion to Associate or Full Professor in the term track as there is in the tenure-line track. Further, discussion led to the DAA agreeing to look at the template used for seeking outside evaluators and making recommendations about adapting that form for the term track so that letter writers understand the particular circumstances of term promotions.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM