Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting

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

November 4, 2015


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

Chair’s Report – Larry Engel

October Minutes Approval – Professor Engel opened the floor for discussion and approval of the October 7, 2015 minutes. The senate VOTED and the minutes were approved 19-0-2.

Jim McCabe Resolution – Professor Engel stated that he would be bringing to the floor a sensitive discussion that was requested by two of his colleagues, Professors John Willoughby and Mary Gray. The events entailed the arrest of a previous staff member, Jim McCabe. Professor Engel asked Professor Gray to inform the senators of this event.

Professor Gray stated that she had written and signed a letter to President Kerwin along with forty five other members of the faculty. The letter addressed the incident resulting in the arrest of Mr. Jim McCabe. Since then, the charges against Mr. McCabe have been dropped; however, she stated that the incident was handled well by the police but the fact they were called in the first place was her concern. Mr. McCabe was seated in the TDR peacefully passing out literature to students about the working conditions of the dining hall and cleaning workers at AU. It is Professor Gray’s understanding that Mr. McCabe has been banned from campus. She found that anyone banned from the campus for using his or her freedom of expression was disturbing. Professor Gray stated that she is hopeful that freedom of expression is being taught at AU and offered to visiting speakers.

Professor Gray expressed that what she would like is a response from President Kerwin explaining a firm defense of freedom of expression at AU, what rule did Mr. McCabe violate and what progress is happening on the working conditions of the workers in question. She requested a response from the Faculty Senate as well as the members who signed the letter she formulated.

Professor Engel thanked Professor Gray and opened the floor for questions and comments. After the senators had a discussion Professor Engel determined that further information needed to be obtained regarding the details of this event and returned to the Senate for further review.

Professor Mintz expressed that she would like to bring forth a draft resolution she composed for consideration of the Senate which reads:
“Whereas a retired staff member was arrested and subsequently banned from the AU campus while distributing information about the condition of workers at the University, the Faculty Senate expresses deep regret at this action by the University and urges the Senate Executive Committee to investigate this event and its implications for academic freedom and freedom of speech at the University and report back to the Senate.” The Senate VOTED on the resolution 20-0-2 in favor.

Provost’s Report – Scott Bass

Provost Bass summarized the October 9, 2015 leadership retreat on the RiSE initiative. He said it was the first time he recalls all levels of administration, faculty and staff coming together to discuss the student experience. He expressed that it was a great event and very substantive. Additionally he stated that Senior Vice President of Consumer Affairs Mary Ellen Burris from Wegmans came to campus to share the Wegmans’ customer service practice and informed the senators that on Nov 16, Clinical Psychologist Dr. Amy Windover from the Cleveland Clinic will also be speaking on their patient services practice.

Provost Bass stated that with the move of WCL to Tenley Town, the current Spring Valley campus will be used in the fall for additional classroom and office space. This will cause some logistical issues with the timing of the shuttle busses so revised class schedule times will need to be implemented to accommodate the change. Provost Bass asked University Registrar Doug McKenna to present the details of the proposed schedule changes.

University Registrar Doug McKenna introduced the new schedule time changes clarifying that the first class will start at 8:10 AM with 20 minutes between classes and that the first evening class will begin at 5:30 PM with 10 minutes between classes. These changes are to accommodate the shuttle and foot traffic related to the opening of East campus and the classroom use in the Spring Valley location.

Campus Life and Climate – Vice Provost Gail Hanson

Vice Provost Gail Hanson from the Office of Campus Life thanked the Senate for the invitation to speak. VP Hanson stated that she will be speaking on three main topics, well being, sexual conduct and campus climate. VP Hanson gave an overview of each of these topics, providing professional contacts, resources and suggestions on how faculty can address all three of these topics with students. She also addressed further questions and concerns from the faculty.

Undergraduate Regulations Medical Withdrawal – VP Lyn Stallings – Rob Hradsky

VP Stallings stated that she is bringing back the proposed Medical Withdrawal language change first brought to the senators at the October meeting. The suggested changes included changing the withdrawal date to 10 weeks or to the last day of classes. The Senate had discussion and a motion for the 10th week option was VOTED on and approved 19-1-1.

Faculty Senate By-Law Changes – Lacey Wootton
Honors Advisory Committee – Lacey Wootton and Lyn Stallings

VP Stallings explained that the position of chair on the Honors Advisory Committee does involve a lot of work and in the past has been a struggle to fill. The position is demanding and requires a lot of time. As a result it was determined that including the chair title with the AU Honors program director’s position was the best solution. Lengthy discussion was had on the logistics of filling this position and new language suggestions were noted. At the request of the Senate, revised language would be crafted with the suggested changes and brought back to the next senate meeting for approval in December.

Professor Wootton began the review of the remaining changes that include:

- **Article II. Membership** – Change language from “replace half” to “fill vacancies”
- **Article IX. Committees and Functions, A. Executive Committee** – Change language to paragraph three from “meeting university administrators once every three years” to current practice, which is “as needed.” Paragraph 5, bullet 4 will be followed as there are no changes. Bullet 8, “providing minutes for the Executive Committee” will be returned for further review and discussion
- **B. Standing Committees** – Discussion was had about clarifying language in the charge of the UCC and GCC, and due to uncertainty, it was requested that this section be brought back.

Professor Mintz suggested that the discussion of the by-laws end and return at the next meeting to allow for proper edits to be made and the remaining business to be addressed. The senators agreed.

**SIT Update – Doug McKenna**

University Registrar Doug McKenna stated that he has been working with Assistant University Registrar Brett Berkowitz who has been the functional lead on the SET replacement implementation. University Registrar McKenna gave an overview of the new SIT process. He stated that the vendor selected is eXplorance and will be providing their product called Blue. Further detailed explanation and discussion was had about the online pilot, and Registrar McKenna stated that the pilot is on a tight timeline and is projected to begin the process the week of November 11, 2015. He clarified that the current SET questions would be used in this pilot, and not the new questions approved by the Senate.

University Registrar McKenna stated that he wanted to thank Assistant Registrar Berkowitz for his lead role in the implementation of the new platform.

**For the Good of the Order – Larry Engel**

Professor Engel informed the Senators that on November 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM there will be the 50th Anniversary celebration of the dedication of the Kay Spiritual Life Center. He encouraged all to attend.

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM**

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