**Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting**

May 1, 2014

Bump Conference Room

**I. Call to order**

Chair Ed Corwin called the meeting to order at 11:05 AM.

**II. Roll call**

Senators present: Drs. David Boyles, Al Boysen, Robert Corey, William Cross, Marius Ellingsen, Thomas Fontaine, Adam French, Patrick Gilcrease, Jason Henry, Travis Kowalski, Timothy Masterlark, Frank Matejcik, Charles Tolle, and Frank Van Nuys.

Also attending: Drs. Duane Hrncir, William Capehart, Dean Jensen, Toni Logar, Kelli McCormick, Rod Rice, Richard Sinden, Steve Smith, and Doug Wells.

**III. Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**IV. Meeting with Provost Hrncir**

1. *Dissolution of Atmospheric Sciences Department.* Provost Hrncir addressed faculty concerns over the dissolution of the Department of Academic Sciences. In budget hearings started in November, it was determined that changing the administrative structure of Atmospheric Sciences (which was “below the line” in generating credit hours, and research funding) would help reduce costs whiling preserving faculty. Dr. Hrncir emphasized that it was only the *administrative unit* for Atmospheric Sciences that does not exist anymore, not the program or the faculty. That is, rather than being a stand-alone department (which it wasn’t at the start of Hrncir’s tenure), ATM would be handled similar to the Nano program: an entity that exists for grants, with ATM faculty still administering ATM courses, and grant funds remaining with ATM faculty, but with the ATM faculty “dispersed” across one or more host departments. The current issue was finding a new in-campus “home” for the ATM faculty.

Senators expressed several logistical concerns regarding the dissolution:

* Is this an indication of a lack of the University’s long-term support of ATM? *Dr. Hrncir’s answer*: No. It is in the University’s best interest to keep the ATM faculty and their expertise on campus. Moreover, should ATM research money return to the point of self-sufficiency, it would be appropriate to discuss re-introducing it as a stand-alone entity (be it a department or institute).
* Should an ATM faculty member leave, would the new search be for as an Atmospheric Science position? *Answer*: there are never any guarantees on hiring decisions, but as long as the University needs ATM, searches would restrict to that.)
* Would a displaced ATM faculty member be obligated to teach low-level classes in their new host department? *Answer*: no, as the University still needs ATM courses to be taught.
* Who evaluates ATM faculty performance, and by what metric? *Answer*: the faculty member’s host department performs the evaluations, but the metric needs to be discussed by the faculty first.
* If insufficient research was a key factor in ATM’s dissolution, how will the further dispersal of its faculty assist in *increasing* its research? *Answer*: we haven’t worked through those details.
* Related to this, how does grant money get counted, and what programs get credit? *Answer*: this issue is currently being discussed among the Department Heads, and will be addressed with the arrival of the new Vice President for Research Affairs.

Senators also expressed concern about similar program dissolutions in the future:

* Since student revenue is counted based on course pre-fix rather than major, which can contribute to a program’s suffering (or bloating), how can we accurately measure the value of University programs? *Answer*: “the pre-fix model is *precise*, but it may not be *accurate*;” perhaps the faculty should propose parameters for the next fiscal year.
* What are the conditions that determine if a program is on the “chopping block,” such as revenue, number of graduates, etc? *Answer*: articulating those will be one of the Interim Provost’s first job. However, by way of reassurance, the University does not have many under-performing programs, and those that do are given the chance to provide a plan for sustainability and improvement. Under-performance “is not an automatic death knell” for a program.

1. *Further budget news*. Dr. Hrncir noted that much of the University’s reserve funds were depleted as part of President Wharton’s plan to grow the University. A main part of the FY 2015 budget is to build that reserve back, largely through the reallocation of money. The current budget is based on 3% growth. Any revenue from greater enrollment will be used first to pay part-time faculty to teach the extra courses, with leftovers being used as need be. Dr. Hrncir also reported that faculty will earn a 3% raise. Further budget details will be discussed by President Wilson at her campus presentation on May 11.
2. *Retirement.* Dr. Hrncir will be retiring in 2015. He has agreed to stay on through December of 2014, with Dr. Richard Sinden acting as the Interim Provost. Dr. Hrncir assured the Senate that Dr. Sinden will know and honor the commitments we has made to the faculty. A full search will be conducted in FY 2016, with the salary savings helping the reserves in the meantime. The Senate recognized Dr. Hrncir for his work on behalf of the campus.

**V. Approval of minutes**

The minutes of the April 10, 2014 meeting of the Faculty Senate were approved.

**VI. Report from the Chair**

1. *Budget meeting.* As noted earlier, President Wilson will meet with the faculty to discuss the budget on May 11, with meeting times scheduled for 9 am and 2 pm. Early word is that some administrative positions may be lost or transitioned into other positions funded by state money.
2. *Parking policy discussion*. Several parking issues remain unresolved: overnight parking for athletic folks; the loss of yellow permits (and therefore a cheaper option for faculty); parking at downtown campus. Dr. Gilcrease reported that the state vehicles spots were being moved, opening up some new blue stalls.

**VII. Committee reports**

* The Student Affairs Committee sought clarification on the two tasks charged to it at the General Faculty Meeting:
  + *Honor Code*. Seeking recommendations for a campus Honor Code policy, i.e. a statement of expectations of students. What are standard types of Honor Codes employed at similar institutions, and are they effective at reducing instances of student academic dishonesty? Should such a policy be student-run, or -governed, or -enforced?
  + *Deficient grades and travel*. Seeking recommendations on the issue of whether students with deficient grades should be allowed to travel with a University team (not necessarily sports), in order to draft a policy that helps advisors and faculty. A pressing issue is what the “cut off” criterion ought to be: 2.0 GPA (as in athletics); DEF grades; failed classes? Should a similar policy be extended to officers of organizations as well?
* The By-laws Committee is fixing some minor typos that resulted from the recent changes, but nothing substantive.
* The Nominating Committee reported that the election for Faculty Senate Chair is currently ongoing, with the winner to be announced to Dr. Corwin.
* The remaining standing committees had nothing to report.

**VIII. Old business**

1. *Emeritus policy.* Dr. Corwin presented the most recent draft of the revised Emeritus Policy for Senate review. In addition to the suggestion to change instances of “will” and “should” in the document to the imperative “must,” Senators also recommended that the benefits include free admission to sporting events, and the list of benefits be indicated to ne “including, but not limited to.” Dr. Corwin indicated he would made the appropriate changes and send the file version to the Senate for an email vote. (This was subsequently approved by the Senate through email vote on May 9, 2014.)

**IX. Old Business**

* There was no new business discussed.

**X. Adjournment**

The Senate adjourned at 12:30 PM.