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Senate Minutes

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UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES
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APRIL 4, 2019
ACADEMIC FORUM 103

Present: H. Alviani, A. Arnold, A. Christman, K. Clair, A. Corder, R. Courtney, C. Cotellese, S. Doll-Myers, M. Gabriel, J. Garcia, J. Gehrenger, M. Gober, C. Habeck, B. Hudak, D. Immel, L. Irving, J. Jedwab, M. John, D. Johnson, E. Kraal, S. Lem, P. McLoughlin, F. Murshed, L. Norris, A. Pfeiler-Wunder, V. Reidout, W. Rogers, J. Schlegel, D. Scott, M. Sims, G. Sirkakos, R. Flatley (for D. Stafford), A. D'Ancona (for E. Sweet), J. Sunsay, M. Vaughn, A. Vogel, S. Wei, T. Wong, A. Zayaitz, T. Hussain (for Y. Zhang)

Absent: M. Cardozo, J. Conahan, S. Dewey, K. Hawkinson, E. Johnson, S. Mangold, A. Meck, L. Moss, C. Price, S. Riley, M. Scheuing, J. Sober-White

Guests: J. Cherneloff, G. Clary, M. Delaney, J. Downing, K. Prock, J. Silberman, V. Vlaun

I. Call to Order & Order of Business - A. Arnold

A. Arnold called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM

II. Approval of the Minutes - A. Arnold

J. Jedwab moved to approve Minutes from March 7, 2019; second R. Courtney. Minutes approved.

III. Announcements - A. Arnold

None.

IV. President, Committee Task Force Reports:

A. Senate President's Report – A. Arnold -

A reminder that Senate is moving to written reports for Senators to review prior to meeting. Key is to be prepared so time for Reports is spent on questions/discussion.

RE: University Budget report, keep the following in mind: budgetary problems on the academic side can be addressed in three ways: 1) attract more students; 2) retain more students; 3) rethink deployment of faculty. This is a complex problem that requires building a culture of trust across the university; putting the university first, not individual departments/units, to best serve our students.

We need to think about what university will look like in 5 years in relation to 3 items above. Essential to build trust where the history of KU culture is the opposite.

Continue to advocate for a strong Center of Excellence in Teaching & Learning for Professional Development in teaching to best serve & retain our students.

Questions or discussion? None.

B. Senate Vice President's Report – A. Corder, Chair, Committee on Committees (CoC)

A. Corder referred to her written report. She read slate for each committee. CoC moves that Senate approve its slate of appointments; needs no second for a vote. Slate approved. Appointments can be seen here: <https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administration/university-senate/committees.htm>

C. Senate Secretary's Report - L. Norris

L. Norris announced results of Elections to Senate Committees. (CoC, Grade Appeal Board, & Strategic Planning & Resources (SPRC)). There were nominees for every opening except a College of Ed. representative to SPRC. L. Norris urged Senators in Education departments to convey the importance of representation on this extremely important committee.

D. University President's Report –

K. Hawkinson absent due to the Board of Governor's meeting in Harrisburg. No written report.

E. University Provost's Report - A. Zayaitz

A. Zayaitz addressed Middle States, saying there was much she could not yet say. She read the following: "Because Kutztown University is on warning due to non-compliance with Standard V (Educational Effectiveness Assessment), a small team visit from MSCHE occurred on March 25 and 26. The team affirmed the assessment work that is occurring and found the institution in compliance. However, this is only the first of three steps of the review process conducted by MSCHE. The second step will occur at the end of May when the Committee on Follow-Up Activities/Candidate Institutions will review the reports and recommend an action for the Commission. The Commission meets in June at which time a final decision will be made and reported to the university."

F. Student Government Board (SGB) Report: – B. Hudak

1. SGB's Special Funding applications closed March 8th; Budget & Finance Committee (BFC) has nearly completed review of all requests.
2. BFC finalized the Athletics Budget; SGB a \$45,000 increase out of \$200,000 requested. Impact is a final \$11.50 raise to student activity fee for 2019-2020.
3. SGB's House of Representative's initiative on March 19th & 26th had very good turnout.
4. Be the Change diversity open dialogue event took place on March 20th; had much support & feedback from our diversity organizations.
5. SGB At-Large representatives volunteered with Habitat for Humanity this past weekend, renovating homes in Reading.
6. On April 9, 7 SGB voting members will attend Advocacy Days with President Hawkinson, VP Santos, & former Mayor Sandy Green. We will advocate with legislators for increased funding to our State System.
7. SGB Elections will take place on April 8th-12th
8. SGB Academic Affairs Committee, along with a videographer, is creating a textbook affordability video featuring real testimonies from KU students.
9. Our annual SGA Day event will take place on the MSU lawn on May 4th
10. SGB to host the first ever Pride Fest initiative alongside Allies organization on Sept. 12th, 11am-4pm. President Hawkinson has agreed to speak.

G. Chief Assessment Office Report - K. Prock

K. Prock referred to her written report. It contains reminders for deadlines & important dates for current & 2019-20 assessment cycles.

A. Arnold: Noted and thanked K. Prock's excellent work; had great impact on visiting team for Middle States.

K. Prock: thanked her Council & all faculty for pulling together. We are doing assessment for all the right reasons, to improve student learning and cultivate continuous improvement. The challenge is to sustain this culture.

A. Arnold: Assessment is an excellent example that it is possible to build trust, work hard together & create positive cultural change at KU.

H. Budget Report - G. Silberman & M. Delaney

J. Silberman: KU waiting for PASSHE to finalize its new system for budgeting in order to redesign KU's process. Much is going on in Harrisburg; frequent meetings of 14 division heads in Finance & Academic Affairs. This is a new & very positive change.

Most PASSHE universities faring poorly; Mansfield's situation nearly as bad as Cheney's.

M. Delaney presented the annual E & G Budget report. Access here, under Task Forces and Links: <https://www.kutztown.edu/about-ku/administration/university-senate/ad-hoc-task-forces-and-links.htm>

Significant that KU achieved a balanced budget for first time in 9 years; unfortunately, currently face a 5 million deficit. Factors: Appropriations much less than expected; nearly 1 % net drop in enrollment (nearly a million lost in revenues); out of state discounts means loss of \$850,000; bargaining units raises & benefits; funds for scholarships to raise KU's student profile; uncertainty of all 3 bargaining unit outcomes

(all contracts expire in three months).

Balancing Strategies were presented. 42 vacant staff positions to save 2 million; 10 management positions; many AFSCME. Under consideration: 10% budget cuts in all divisions; would have severe impact. Trustees/Middle States very averse to covering shortfalls with one-time sources of funds. Position eliminations: hoping to avoid layoffs.

As ever, timing is problematic, with state budget appropriations & unknown results of upcoming contract negotiations for the 3 bargaining units.

Discussion:

A. D'Ancona: what is the actual enrollment projection?

M. Delaney: difficult; not all students are full time. Overall, drop in undergrads; rise in grads for projected net loss of about .89%.

H. Alviani: Are 42 frozen positions part of potential eliminations?

M. Delaney: They are separate.

D. Johnson: Look at staffing comparisons for 2010, peak of enrollment, with 2019; see where shifts may be in larger/smaller programs; could be useful for budgeting.

M. Delaney: We're at enrollment levels similar to 2001.

A. Arnold: Do we assess positions based on net impact on student retention? That would be an investment with a net positive. For example, positions to support student success; Director for CET for better teaching will impact retention; housing, etc. Must consider impact of hirings; believes KU is "under-administered."

J. Silberman: Director of Admissions is case in point; that position was released because of what A. Arnolds suggests.

M. Gabriel: What schools are doing well?

J. Silberman: WCU, due to location. Other is Slippery Rock; have created many new programs; great enrollment management for recruitment/retention; now bigger than KU.

M. Gabriel: Do Performance Indicators still exist; could that help KU?

J. Silberman: Still exist but going away over next few years as System Redesign is implemented.

K. Clair: How big, wide-ranging is this Redesign?

A. Zayaitz: much is unresolved. Chancellor Greenstein is focused on shared resources, but don't know yet what that will look like. May include shared tech. platforms, aligned numbering, SLOs, etc to make consistency across the System possible.

K. Clair: SUNY redesign resulted in grad programs being assigned to specific schools, reducing duplication but creating a two-tier system.

A. Zayaitz: PASSHE Provosts believe we're regional institutions; students unlikely to move. Many conversations are ongoing among different groups, so don't know the full picture currently. We need to wait for the Chancellor's plan and then align, as J. Silberman indicated. Chancellor will be at KU April 29 with an Open Forum at 4 PM. He does also respond to email.

J. Schlegel: Connecting to multiple areas needing to plan: SPRC, budget; all waiting on PASSHE plan. Waiting has not helped in past. Certain factors are known: birth rates; minimum wage will go up at some point soon. Can we take such factors into account & find any opportunity for Finance to make long-term budgetary plans (5-10 years?).

M. Delaney: We have a 3-year plan with worsening projections; however, the further in the future, the less dependable the assumptions.

J. Schlegel: But we can anticipate impact of increased minimum wage, for example.

D. Johnson: for many years, budget's been based on 2010 numbers for comparative purposes. Rethink size and plan based on actual student numbers.

T. Wong: a raise of 2.4M in scholarships is great but contributes to budget deficit next year. How much of this could be covered by the KU Foundation to alleviate deficit?

M. Delaney: Foundation is also a support for the 2.4 M in scholarships.

B. Hudak: Will student Campus Support Fee increase?

M. Delaney: No.

K Clair: Does 2-year residency requirement impact budget?

M. Delaney: Housing is a separate budget; it may impact but requirement is to boost retention.

A. Arnold: Invites interested Senators to join in a follow up meeting.

V. Unfinished Business

A. First Weeks Problem Memo - A. Arnold

A. Arnold noted that S. Lem and M. John will be joining A. Cordner in new leadership. He thanked J. Downing of Bookstore for great progress in addressing critical issue of early adoptions of books/materials. An example of the difference Senate can make, identifying a problem and finding solutions.

Consensus that Early Warning is critical to assist students before it's too late. One substantial assignment within first month can identify students & direct them to support services for success.

Critical: Senators should inform departments about this & solicit feedback. Senate is working with APSCUF on this.

Discussion:

C. Cottalese: Grades tank when students disappear. Dean of Students McCargo a fantastic help with disappeared students.

D. Johnson: 2/3 of PASSHE schools have early warning, especially by 4th week. This involves not attendance but graded assignment.

L. Norris: This speaks to need to put students first; university; then department/program.

K. Clair: Students need easy access to reminder of last day to withdraw. Can this be done electronically instead of having to seek withdraw through Registrar's Office?

A. Zayaitz: One problem with electronic is there's no opportunity to understand why a student withdraws.

A. Arnold: Senses that T. Witryk does not want since it can be an emotional decision; opportunity to talk with student would be lost.

S. Lem: Many new students don't realize they're not prepared for college level work. They need to know earlier through early warning.

A. Pfeiler-Wunder: in Education, many short/long-term opportunities for feedback from very early on. Important for students to experience success, which builds more success.

E. Kraal: Consider systematic planning of assignments across semester for advising, reporting, etc.

A. Arnold: Good idea; we can assist in a cultural adjustment.

T. Wong: Agrees with early warning, but problematic. Drop/Add and in Spring, closures due to storms present obstacles to an early assignment to identify students at risk. Issue may also be a problem depending on discipline.

J. Schlegel: APSCUF may support Task Force on these issues.

A. Arnold: Task Force in formative stage. Senate has substantive discussions and is a persuasive body.

G. Sirkakos: "substantial" assignment may be problematic within first few weeks. More effective is opportunity for substantial feedback to students based on assignment.

A. D'Acona: Students would find early warning great; asks that faculty use D2L to post grades. SGB can reach out to students for input about these issues.

L. Irving: Students don't necessarily know what an assigned grade means.

S. Wei: Uses D2L but students see percentage and are not clear about their standing. Has found it helpful to email advisor/program director to discuss how to help students succeed.

A. Arnold: We're gathering an inventory of successful strategies.

M. John: D2L has grade options/color-coded grade levels

D. Johnson: Key for students to have easy access about last day to withdraw from a course, financial aid (potential impact on withdrawing), and salvaging GPA with a grade of W rather than F.

D. Ancona: Students pay for D2L; Professors should use it to keep students informed.

B. Academic Policy Report: Academic Forgiveness - A. Arnold

Academic Standards/Policy Committee is working with Enrollment Management to develop a revised policy. Consider that KU should treat KU students who struggle and then return to KU with same policy as Transfer students who enter KU with no GPA.

C. Last Weeks & Final Exam Period

A. Arnold: This is an old policy that needs to be revised.

R. Courtney: reported that department Chairs are already ok with faculty specifying activities on syllabi for last weeks. Noted that existing policy stating copies of exam be submitted to dept. after exam time be replaced with before. Chairs an emphatic "NO" to notion that departments go through curricular approval process to administer end of term activities appropriate for disciplines.

P. McLoughlin: Issue with current policy's restriction of Final to no more than 33% of final grade problematic, since by implication, "final" could be as little as 0%. Issue is meaningful experience. One size fits all won't work for different disciplines.

A. Arnold: A minimum must be established for last week.

P. McLoughlin: Problem of students required to vacate university housing within two hours of last exam.

L. Norris: Students need to focus on studying; this is punitive.

A. Cordner: Partiers are a distraction for those still needing to study.

A. D'Ancona: Students can't party in dorms; other PASSHE schools allow move out through weekend. Also with experience as a tour guide, parents react negatively when hear of to two-year dorm requirement.

A. Arnold: Begs the question if this requirement helps with attraction/retention of students.

H. Alviani: Does off-campus housing have required vacating date?

A. D'Ancona: No.

B. Hudak: Essential to keep the no more than 33% of total grade rule. SGB reports a number of students have final grades beyond that percentage.

F. Murshed: With so much pressure at end of semester, students may give up.

A. Arnold: Overall: this is not about reducing standards but steps to take for student success.

G. Sirkakos: Final is not the only method for assessment of student learning; multiple ways.

M. Gabriel: This is a solution looking for a problem.

A. Arnold: PASSHE/Middle States define this problem: [all courses must include 14 weeks of instruction followed by a 15th week of Final Exam or Final Experience].

S. Lem: Students need predictability: compromise between vague/precise.

T. Wong: Depending on course set up, student can easily have grade fall drastically in last week's exam.

D. Johnson: Reminder: this policy has been under review for multiple reasons; originally because it doesn't address Summer/Winter Sessions, online teaching, and half-semester courses.

P. McLoughlin: Cumulative exam can actually raise overall grades as students gain comprehension/skill.

VI. New Business:

None.

VII. As May Arise:

None.

VIII. Adjournment:

G. Sirkakos moved to adjourn; second K. Clair. Meeting adjourned 5:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Norris
Secretary, University Senate