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Senate Minutes

Kutztown University Senate

Spring 4-2-2009

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KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
Minutes of the University Senate

Room 223, McFarland Student Union Building
Thursday, April 2, 2009

M. Sanelli called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Present: Kate Clair, Camille DeMarco, Samantha Dennis, Michael DeSantis for Lorri Engstrom, Dennis Dietrich, William Donner, Diane Fegely, Sudarshan Fernando, James Hall, Jo Cohen Hamilton, Gregory Hanson, Kathleen Hartman, Will Jefferson, Inmi Lee, Joe Lippincott, Keith Logan, JoAnn Mackesy, Susan Mangold, Elaine Mara, Robert Martin, John McAndrew, George Muugi, Sylvia Pham, Ilene Prokup, Trucilla Sabatino, Paul Sable, Maria Sanelli (President), Steve Schnell, Joo Tan, Heather Thomas, Carlos Vargas-Aburto, Anke Walz (Secretary), and Barth Yeboah.

Absent: Andrew Arnold, Len Barish, Bobbie Berry, Javier Cevallos, Ed Christian, James Delle, Todd Folk, Mitch Freed, Ted Hickman, Mark Mahosky, James McNiff, Paul Quinn, John Riley, Charles Roth, Christopher Sacchi, Rennie Sacco, and Norman Sigmond.

Also in Attendance: Robert Reynolds, Daniel Spiegel, and Jeffrey Werner.

I. Announcements

Dr. Vargas informed the Senators that all academic policies are available at the web address <http://www.kutztown.edu/admin/AdminServ/policy.index>. He further announced that his office is continuing to update the policies.

II. Approval of the Agenda

E. Mara moved, K. Logan seconded, to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

III. Approval of the Minutes

I. Prokup moved, A. Walz seconded, to approve the minutes from March 12, 2009. Motion passed.

IV. Graduation

A. Approval of the May 2009 Graduates.

M. Sanelli called for a motion to approve the May 2009 graduates as certified by the Registrar's Office. E. Mara moved, W. Jefferson seconded, to approve the May 2009 graduates. Motion passed.

B. Approval of Honorary Doctorate

R. Reynolds (on behalf of the Honorary Degree Committee) moved to approve an Honorary Doctorate for George M. Meiser IX. Mr. Meiser graduated from Kutztown University in 1959, he has been a life-long advocate for Berks County historic preservation,

and has written numerous newspaper columns and books on local history. He is currently the President of the Berks County Historical Society and the host of a popular BCTV program that frequently showcases the history of local people and places. The motion passed.

M. Sanelli pointed out that this was the first time that the University Senate was asked to approve an Honorary Doctorate, which indicates that the Senate is becoming more involved in the shared governance at the university.

V. President, Committee and Task Force Reports

A. Senate President's Report

Following a Senate resolution from Fall 2008, Dr. Vargas recently held an open meeting for faculty regarding the issue with teaching in the large classrooms. Approximately 25 faculty members attended the meeting. M. Sanelli suggested that similar meetings should be held every semester.

The Institutional Climate Task Force continues to meet. A progress report will be given at the last Senate meeting of the semester.

The Shared Governance Task Force will present their final report at the last Senate meeting of the semester.

B. Committee on Committees Report

No report at this time.

VI. Old Business

A. Committee on Committees Proposed Name Change

At the last Senate meeting the motion to change the name "Committee on Committees" to "Shared Governance Committee" was tabled. According to Robert's Rules of Order, the motion can be taken off the table for discussion, this requires a proper motion that needs to be seconded and then voted on. Alternatively the motion can be ignored at this time and will subsequently die. It can be reintroduced and discussed at a future meeting. The senators agreed to let the motion die at this time.

B. Large Classroom

The open forum (mentioned above) addressed the following topics:

Topic 1: How is the fact that many freshmen at Kutztown University have several classes in the Academic Forum affecting the student retention rate? At this point there is no data available.

Topic 2: How is the fact that some faculty members teach several classes per semester in the AF affecting the faculty retention rate? How can faculty burnout be prevented? Most faculty members expressed at the meeting that the technical support was very good, but issues regarding release time or monetary compensation have yet to be resolved.

Topic 3: The large classroom setting seems to encourage disruptive behavior on part of the students, such as lateness, absences, and sending text messages during lecture.

Topic 4: How can students taking classes in the AF acquire critical thinking skills and writing skills that they will need in their upper level major classes? This can not be measured by the grades that they receive in the large classes. Should students that have special needs or are considered to be at risk to take classes in the AF where their needs cannot be properly addressed?

Topic 5: The currently used method to determine which classes and faculty members are being scheduled for the AF needs to be reviewed.

Topic 6: The recruitment process for supplemental instructors and graduate students assisting faculty in the large classrooms should be improved.

Topic 7: When teaching in a large classroom, a lot of class time is wasted with administrative tasks such as handing out tests, returning graded material, and checking homework.

Since the large classrooms are not going away, all these issues will need to be addressed on an ongoing basis to try and find satisfactory solutions. Dr. Vargas suggested that the administration and the faculty should cooperate on this issue.

A discussion followed with many comments and concerns that have been discussed at length over the time since the Academic Forum opened. It was mentioned by M. Sanelli that there were a few positive comments discussed at the open forum that was held.

M. Sanelli suggested that a motion be made to form a Large Classroom Task Force, but no such motion was made.

VII. New Business

A. ATC Report

D. Spiegel (Chair, Academic Technology Committee) gave the annual report. One of the future activities of the committee is to implement the Academic Technology Strategic Plan. Depending on the operating status of the Assessment Office, the ATC will conduct assessments regarding various technologies to comply with the Middle States Report.

The ATC is planning to implement the paper usage policy that was introduced in a pilot study last academic year. To date, the paper usage went down from 1.6 million sheets of paper down to 800,000.

M. Sanelli will send out the written report to the senators.

B. Time and Effort Policy

J. Werner, Director of Grants and Sponsored Projects, talked about the Time and Effort Reporting Policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Kutztown University adheres to and complies with the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21 (Cost Principals for Educational Institutions) regulations that require the University to maintain a time and effort reporting system. A copy of the proposed policy was sent out to all Senators to review before the meeting. J. Werner is hoping to bring two more policies to Senate at the next meeting on April 30. A motion was made by S. Fernando, seconded by K. Logan:

For the University Senate to adopt the Time and Effort Reporting Policy put forth.

Motion passed.

As a final announcement, M. Sanelli reported that P. Quinn (APSCUF-KU President) asked for two volunteers from Senate to participate in an analysis of the Commonalities Document. There will be a joint task force with APSCUF and Senate. Since no volunteers came forward, M. Sanelli agreed to serve on the task force.

VII. Adjournment

S. Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by E. Mara. The motion passed unanimously; the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Signed:

Dr. Maria Sanelli, President

Dr. Anke Walz, Secretary

4-6-09