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Senate Minutes

Kutztown University Senate

Spring 2-1-2018

Senate Minutes 2-1-18

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

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UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES
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FEBRUARY 1, 2018
ACADEMIC FORUM 202

Action Items:

- To what extent can we provide course materials to students free (or nearly free) of charge for the first one, two or three weeks?
- What is best practice in your area if faculty want students to learn how to read, engage, learn from the textbook or course materials?
- When is it reasonable for students to not buy the books? When are they wrong? What signs do students look for in making this decision? How can we help students to make the right decision? (How can faculty effectively signal that the book is indeed central to student success in the course?)

Present: M. Weller (for H. Alviani) , A. Arnold, L. Barish, M. Cardozo, A. Christman, K. Clair, J. Conahan, A. Corder, R. Courtney, S. Dewey, S. Doll-Myers, R. Flatley, M. Gallagher, J. Garcia, M. Gober, K. Hawkinson, K. Hudak, D. Immel, M. John, D. Johnson, D. Johnson, E. Johnson, E. Kraal, D. Lea, S. Mangold, L. Moss, F. Murshed, E. Nieves, R. Palov, R. Portada, V. Reidout, S. Riley, W. Rogers, J. Ronan, R. Salafia, M. Scheuing, C. Sunsay, M. Vaughn, A. Vogel, F. Wei, D. Wingrove, T. Wong, C. Wells (for A. Zayaitz), C. Shim (for Y. Zhang)

Absent: D. Aruscavage, D. Beougher, R. Gross, J. Jedwab, P. McLoughlin, R. Perkins, T. Stahler, C. Walck

Guests: W. Hilton, L. Kowalski, G. Silberman, D. Stafford, J. Werner, T. Witryk

I. Call to Order

University Senate President A. Arnold called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

II. Announcements – A. Arnold

None

III. Approval of Minutes from November and December–

Move to approve-F. Murshed; Second-R. Courtney. Motion passed.

IV. President, Committee Task Force Reports-

A. Senate President's Report – A. Arnold

1. CET Workshop – The Center for the Enhancement of Teaching will host a workshop on the First Week Problem in the MSU on February 22. The workshop will address such issues as textbook affordability and student and faculty culture. An email announcement of the workshop will be sent shortly.
2. Reporting to Constituency – Senators are reminded of the need to report to and obtain information from their constituents as the Senate is the only venue in which all constituents are represented. As such, Senate can have a greater impact than other venues.

B. Senate Vice President's Report – J. Ronan

1. IRB Bylaws—The rationale for the presentation of new bylaws is that none existed before this point. This motion came from the committee, requiring no second. L. Moss noted that the IRB and Jeff Werner deserves thanks for the necessary work that they do. A. Arnold stated that research involving human subjects cannot be done without the work of the IRB. Vote to approve passes.
2. Willingness to Serve—The request for applications is out. Please encourage applications.

C. University President's Report – K. Hawkinson

1. Two letters were sent to the university community during the first week of school. M. Santos has been appointed Vice President for Communication, Marketing and External Affairs. A. Ogeka has also been appointed as the Executive Director of KU Foundation. The appointments resulted in some reorganization. The Department of Recreational Services and University Radio has been transferred to the division headed by M. Santos.
2. Middle States will visit the campus on March 4-7. The campus is ready thanks to C. Wells.
3. There are new enrollment numbers that look encouraging. Last year we were at 7,116 applications by this date. This year we are at 8,359. That is 1,200 applicants above last year. The number of denials is also up (515 last year to 625 now), and it is still early. Students can retest and resubmit their applications. This indicates that the quality of students who have been accepted is high, about 3.3 high school GPA. This year we have 600 students who have made deposits compared to only 328 last year. This shows early commitment from the students.
4. We do continue to have budget issues. Income is short of expenditures. We project an increase of 1.2% in enrollment, but a deficit of \$5.5 million compared to a \$7.7 million deficit last year. These deficits, falling enrollment and a decrease in reserves puts the university near the at-risk category as determined by the state system. Nonetheless, we are still optimistic. Once a clearer picture of the state appropriation is obtained, more plans will be made and another letter will be sent outlining steps. If we are able to meet our goals, we should be able to move into the black in the next few years. The budget book is available in the library for those who want to review it. Campus leaders receive budget updates as they are made

5. At a meeting in Harrisburg last week, there was a lot of discussion of reorganizing or reconceptualizing the role of the state system. The Chancellor and Board of Governors are advocating more independence. That is beginning to happen. A new policy allows new program approvals to be in the hands of the Chancellor rather than the Board of Governors, which would make the process faster. The Board of Governors is focused on strategizing for the entire system. This would be a great benefit to KU. The Board of Governors now sees their role in terms of doing strategic planning for the whole system.

6. The new General Education program should not create any more additional problems than in other years. Services are being enhanced. A Director of the First Year Experience was hired two years ago. Additional services are being put into place. More scholarship money is being made available. The university will be positioned to handle more students.

7. In response to a question about diversity K. Hawkinson reported that this year's class is the most diverse we have had at 25%. The overall sense is that this level will either remain the same or increase in coming years.

D. Student Government Board (SGB) Report- M. Gallagher

1. During the SGB conference goals were set and action plans were made for the semester.

2. The pilot shuttle program has been extended through this semester. It runs Monday through Thursday from 10 to 4.

3. The Advocacy Day event will take place on February 22. This is a one day event during which representatives from the PASSHE schools will meet with legislators to explain student needs. Twenty-two members of the SGB will be attending. Students are invited to attend a rally that day. A Bieber bus will leave from the student union at 7 am and return at 5 pm.

4. Special funding will be done on line for the first time.

5. As a member of the Board of Governors, M. Gallagher will take part in the interviews for Chancellor once the number of applicants has been narrowed to 3 or 4. She will be able to vote. Will have a strong voice in the selection of the new Chancellor.

V. As May Arise

None

VI. New Business

None

VII. Unfinished Business

A. First Week Problem: A. Arnold reported that the first week problem extends beyond the lack of funds. Some faculty assign books without using them or explaining how to use them. There will be a broader discussion of the problem on February 22 at 11 am hosted by CET. SGB reported that a discussion of the issue has been opened with students. There are a number of factors that need to be addressed: (1) cost of textbooks, (2) the uncertainty of whether the student will stay in the course during the drop/add period, (3) the cost of other supplies that are also required for the course, (4) a lack of awareness of other resources, and (5) a sense of distrust.

The bookstore is promoting the resources available from the bookstore and financial aid via email. Many departments make resources available for free. The discussion included the following major points:

- In Modern Languages courses students need an access code to reach the material. That code expires after a few weeks. Access to these materials is less expensive if a subscription is purchased for a longer term, but students do not plan for long term (i.e., multi-semester) access
- The bookstore reported that they can negotiate with publishers better than individual faculty are able to do. They might also be able to negotiate long term access to materials for individual students.
- Using e-reserves solves a lot of the copyright problems that faculty might face, given that we are limited to reproducing only 10% of the text otherwise.
- According to the National Center for the Collection of Education Statistics, the average cost of course materials for beginning college students at KU is \$1,628 compared to the national average of \$1,200. Some of our sister schools average only \$1,000. These numbers suggest that the cost of materials at KU is 30% higher than the national average and 60% higher than some of our sister schools in PASSHE. A. Vogel suggested that the statistics be published in the Daily Brief.
- Several options open to faculty: (1) the adoption of open educational resources (OER), (2) work with the bookstore to get electronic sources in the library, and (3) expand the library's reserve program. E-serves have been made available for 152 courses and used 1,834 times. The plan is to expand the service by at least 100 more courses next semester. There are some very good OERs. Openstacks.org was mentioned as a source that is very good and easy to use. There is a process to let students know that an OER will be used for a course.
- The cost of art supplies was discussed. The cost of supplies varies with the class and the class year of the students. Spreading the costs over time will help, but students need to know what the total cost of a course will be. Different options are being used to help mitigate this problem. There is no formal program for using materials that are left behind by students once the semester ends. Studio art is also an expensive endeavor. The trade-off for students is that they are able to use facilities that they would otherwise be unable to afford.
- The cost of music varies. Unfortunately, those costs are going to continue to increase.

- It was suggested that the university incentivize the system for developing free texts. He noted that a large number of students rely on the food pantry each week, so they may have to choose between food and course materials.
- R. Salafia noted that the conversation about budgeting is tied to time management skills. He also suggested that the university might want to explore the possibility of sponsoring a bus to major urban areas in order to increase the number of urban students at KU. A. Arnold noted that marginal students are not represented directly in Senate.
- V. Reidout reported that CASA focuses on first year students and those who are struggling, but good students are also served. Good time management is a major factor in student success. The transition to the university is difficult. Many students lack skills in financial literacy, time management, and so on. Moreover, students don't always realize that they lack skills in these areas. A number of ways of getting this type of information into the hands of students are being used. CASA connect students to all kinds of resources, including those outside of academia.
- SGB's discussions with students indicated that students have been burned in the past when they buy a book and it is not used in the course. Students want to see a connection between readings and the assignments.
- A. Arnold suggested that senators discuss syllabi construction with their departments. It was noted that we need to be more proactive in our approach to the issue. Syllabi show how the book is used and how it will be incorporated into the course on a regular basis.
- It was noted that students do not buy into the idea of the text as a reference. They want to see the text actually used in class.
- The fact that some students do not attend during the first week was noted, because they view it as a "syllabus" week. Some even change their status in MyKU in order to avoid work in the first week. Faculty are seen as complicit in this by (1) assigning a light workload in the first week and (2) being too generous with help to facilitate make-up work.
- D. Johnson pointed out that some students have their schedules dropped for nonpayment and then have a difficult time obtaining a schedule that fits their needs for specific courses. One potential solution to this problem is to work with the Bursar's Office to make some type of payment to avoid the problem. However, students are not guaranteed seats in the courses they selected. It's a tough situation, but there are consequences for nonpayment. We need to work together to teach them responsibility. We might also keep the cap for the class lower than the physical capacity of the room in order to allow schedule adjustments of this sort.
- Some options to pursue are the creation of a task force to work on the question, creating a policy that requires that a copy of the book be in the library or on reserve, putting together a guide to best practices.
- B. Flatley reported that the SGB at Mansfield University purchases a copy of every text assigned for inclusion in the library.

B. The university is still in the process of determining how General Education will be implemented. More details will be provided at the next meeting.

C. The Academic Dishonesty policy will come up again later. We are waiting for the committee to come to Senate to explain why changes need to be made. One of the questions they face is how long a black mark should stay on a student's record.

VIII. **Adjournment**

5:42 p.m.