

## ACADEMIC STAFF SENATE MEETING *MINUTES*

February 9, 2009

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Fennessey (President), Jen Bird (Secretary), Sue Holm, Tammy Fanning, Christina Kline, Joel Peterson, Ryan Kreuser, Ray Reinertsen, Ann Miller (Guest), Joel Sipress (Guest)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Donna Dahlvang

### I. Old Business

- a. Discussion and Approval of 1/12/09 minutes
  - i. Motion by Fanning to approve as amended, second by Kline. Approved.
  - ii. Bird will post.
- b. Reports
  - i. Legislative committee report
    - a. Kreuser spoke with a contact Dahlvang had given him to discuss topics that Senate could focus on at UW-Superior.
    - b. Legislative committee met and decided to work to get people to contact our state legislators. Kreuser brought a draft letter that could be used when contacting legislators. Committee will get the draft letter out to academic staff for their use with reminders about not using work emails, time, etc. to contact legislators.
    - c. Fanning suggested that Senate members contact academic staff members' to consider contacting their legislators.
    - d. Fennessey reported on Superior Days. It will take place February 23-25<sup>th</sup>. The academic building is on the agenda again. Governor requested to fully fund the academic building, but there is an issue as the stimulus money is to be used for maintenance not new construction. Currently we are 3.5 million dollars short of what is needed to have it move forward. Representatives are going to lobby for this at Superior Days. If it is not funded, then the academic building would be put on hold for a couple years. Other topics on the agenda at Superior Days include: invasive species, rural public transportation, and Murphy Oil tax.
  - ii. Personnel/compensation Committee report
    - i. Kreuser reported. Committee was not able to complete all changes to guidelines prior to call for promotion requests went out. Committee has had good discussions and will continue working on it and to have it all completed by the end of the semester and in place for next year. Promotion Appeals process was completed and is on the Academic Senate agenda to be approved.
  - iii. Mentoring sub-committee report
    - i. Bird reported. Received feedback for editing to the mentoring handbook and made changes. Bird will send out evaluation and training outline for review. Mentoring program and handbook will be on agenda for approval at the next meeting.
  - iv. Academic Staff Rep Report
    - i. Nothing to report.
  - v. Senate Chair report
    - i. At Chancellor's Cabinet meeting, discussed book costs. Our book costs are still quite high in comparison. This is going to be looked at via Student Senate and Faculty Senate. Kreuser asked if faculty will commit to keeping certain books for several years instead of updating every year. Fennessey explained that the publishers often update books and put out new versions each year then taking old ones out of circulation forcing people to purchase the new edition. Also discussed Campus Climate Survey, Fennessey will report more on this later in agenda. Discussed health insurance programs and campus wellness plan. HWC is

not covered under such insurance programs. Many of our current insurance plans offer rebates or discounts for joining a health club. Discussion also took place about a smoke-free campus. UW-Superior is ahead of other campuses with our current policy, but enforcement is an issue. Group discussed that the Governor is looking at having smoke-free state owned properties (campuses, parks, etc.). Reinertsen suggested approaching the insurance companies about assisting with funding other health initiatives. Fennessey explained that health insurance companies are contracted for the UW-System, not just UW-Superior and may not be likely to do more above and beyond. Fanning discussed that maybe we could approach insurance companies when contract is being bid to address some of these concerns and ideas.

- ii. There is a working group that is faculty driven between UW-Superior and LSC about credit transfers and how that all works to make it more smooth.
  - iii. Fennessey shared some student feedback that Reinertsen collected, with the cabinet.
  - iv. Chairs meeting.
    - a. Holding another meeting in the next week. Will discuss Campus Wellness Plan as well as any other relevant issues.
- c. Review of upcoming events:
- i. Open Forum for Academic Staff – Multicultural Center, 12-1pm, Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>
  - ii. RAGE Night – HWC – TBA
  - iii. Mock Trial Competition – Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>
- d. FERPA training follow up
- i. Fanning reported. Fennessey and Fanning met with Barb Erickson to follow-up on what is being done with the FERPA manual. Erickson said she needs to go through the manual again to update and make clarifications to the manual. Erickson is going to bring document to the Chancellor's Cabinet as well as working with Jim Rink on the technology piece. Discussed what further needs to be done in terms of FERPA training for students and for staff. Fanning suggested that FERPA information may need to come out of HR, and that everyone should annually receive the information. In addition Fanning suggested that there should be a supervisor training for FERPA. Erickson is working with administration to complete this.
- e. Campus Climate Survey follow up
- i. Fennessey reported that the survey Academic Senate looked at last month through the Chronicle of Higher Education deadline came up too fast, so it was not done. Will be offered again next year. In addition, the survey did not include Classified Staff, which is a concern. Fennessey is meeting with Joel Sipress and Logan Campa to see if they would come on board to do the Chronicle of Higher Education climate survey next February in the mean time before round three of the UW-System Climate survey is available to us. Chancellor's Cabinet is on board for participating in round three when it is available to us.
  - ii. Reinertsen is going to Florida for an AFT meeting. Reinertsen will put an email out to Academic Staff to solicit topics/concerns for him to bring to the meeting.
- f. Academic Affairs Council – Academic Staff members roles
- i. Joel Sipress (guest) shared information about conversations on this topic. There are complications for having Academic Staff members as voting members. Most topics discussed are unanimous, but some topics are controversial (i.e. changing the academic calendar, trimming down excess credits in majors, etc.). Concerns brought up were as follows 1) there is one vote per department, by having academic staff members voting, that would give extra votes to departments 2) academic staff members are hired at the service of the department, meaning if the

department does not want to keep them, they are not retained. In the case where a department has a different view as the staff member who is voting, it could potentially put the academic staff member in a tough situation.

- ii. Fennessey asked Sipress having the academic staff member on the committee without voting rights make sense as it is difficult to get teaching academic staff to be part of committees and then not being able to vote, makes them less likely to want to be part of this particular committee. Sipress addressed this concern saying that it is important as their input is important. Fennessey and Sipress explained that we need to make sure that those teaching academic staff signing up for this committee need to be informed of and understand their role in this committee. Reinertsen suggested that the academic staff member can still vote so it is noted in the minutes that the staff member has a specific opinion/vote, but that the vote does not officially count. Fanning suggested that Reinertsen's idea may lead to academic staff members still being put in a tough situation with their department.
- iii. Kline suggested an idea to avoid the retribution concern may be to have voting be closed/confidential. Sipress explained that this would make it necessary to make significant changes to the procedures for voting, and may not be do-able due to Robert's Rules.
- iv. Sipress reported that there is reluctance to have the academic staff members on this committee be voting member for reasons stated above. Sipress suggested that if Academic Staff Senate would like to push this forward, to think about the issues and have some recommendations as to how to address the concerns noted above.
- v. Fennessey will keep this on the agenda to continue discussions.
- g. Campus-wide information sessions for Academic Staff – Feb. 12
  - i. Bring your colleagues to this event.
- h. Other old business
  - i. None

## II. New Business

- a. Development Grant guideline updates for 2009-2010 (action item)
  - i. Kreuser motioned to table until next meeting. Peterson second. Approved.
- b. Academic Staff Promotion Policies and Procedures (action item)
  - i. Kreuser explained the draft of the appeals process and history of where it came from and why. Reinertsen motioned to approve the Promotion Appeals process. Peterson second. Approved.
- c. Other new business
  - i. Ann Miller (guest) addressed Academic Staff Senate about the retention and salary recommendations letters that come from HR. Concern was brought up that the way the letter is written leads people to believe they are being fired not retained.
    - 1. Fanning suggested that the retention letters start out with something more positive such as "congratulations." Reinertsen would like to move to ask HR to reword the retention and salary recommendation letter. Fanning second. Approved. Fanning and Fennessey will meet with Fecker to discuss this issue.
  - ii. Fennessey discussed that we need to amend December 15, 2008 minutes, New Business section d, to strike the words "to use across the board" as the decision was to split an increase 1/3, 1/3, 1/3. Fanning motion to approve amending December 15, 2008 minutes as stated. Reinertsen second. Approved.

Fennessey reported that it looks like we may not be getting the anticipated increase of 2% or above. Fennessey suggested that we propose that if the increase is less than 2% that we do not split it up 1/3, 1/3, 1/3, but instead distribute the increase across the board to all who have at least

satisfactory performance as per the Board of Regents guidelines along with 10% going to the Chancellor's discretionary fund to fund the academic staff salary review". Reinertsen motioned to approve Fennessey's suggested use of pay plan monies if under 2%. Kreuser second. Approved.

d. Peterson motioned to adjourn meeting. Reinertsen second. Meeting adjourned at pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jennifer Bird (Secretary)