Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes February 4, 2015

Senate Meeting called to order at 4:00 PM

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes of the January 21 meeting be approved. The motion passed.

A request was made that senate meetings be run by a consent agenda. This can be brought up under new business.

Executive Officer report:

Executive Officer Jim McDonald reported a response from the Provost regarding the parking committee. Unlike other university committees, the parking committee is specified in the senate constitution. Dr. McDonald read the relevant sections which included contradictory statements regarding the committee chair. He reported that after reviewing the current list of members the Provost suggested appointing Greg Bekurs as chair of the parking committee and adding student members, then having the committee meet this semester while working on revising written policies. Proposed changes will need to eventually go through Ways and Means, but informal discussions may occur first.

Dr. McDonald then gave senator Wooddell an opportunity to report on problems with getting requested data by the extended deadline of Feb. 13. The problem stems from the fact that data on people who are on 12 month salary is not yet available.

Next, Dr. McDonald spoke about the proposed senate budget committee. Membership could be elected the same as other senate committees. The current university governance task force may propose a budget process that would provide input from faculty and staff, so there may be some redundancy with a senate budget committee. The task force is currently at the stage of discussing policies and hasn’t yet gotten to specific procedures.

Reports of Senate Committees: no reports from regular senate committees were presented at the Feb. 4 meeting. Reports from committee chairs will be presented at the Feb. 25 meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Proposed Senate Budget Committee: Senator Wooddell suggested that the committee’s charge should include meeting with administration to develop the budget and reporting to the senate on budget issues. A suggestion was made that the committee should include someone with an accounting or similar background who is familiar with budgeting. The specific areas of budgeting that are of particular concern to faculty include faculty pay and also the distribution of funds across different areas.

Robert Slater made a motion to urge whatever committee is responsible for developing the formulation of the senate budget committee to consider using the AAUP policy on “Model University Budget Committee” as the basis for their formulation. The motion was seconded by
George Wooddell. Since the Ways and Means Committee has been without a chair and has not been functioning recently there was some question about what committee would develop the budget committee formulation.

Mary Neiheisel then made a motion that the Executive Officer appoint a special committee to explore and recommend the formulation and charge of a senate budget committee. This motion was seconded and passed. Sheri Lazare volunteered to serve on the committee. Frank DelFavero agreed to serve on the committee also.

A discussion then followed in which it was emphasized that Ways and Means needs to be a functioning committee.

**New Business:** The executive officer pointed out that the senate constitution requires a committee of 5 to recruit 2 candidates for executive officer and 2 candidates for secretary for the election to be held at the April meeting. Senators George Wooddell, Mary Neiheisel, Jonathan Goodwin, Greg Davis, and Andrea Flockton volunteered to be on the nominating committee.

Campus No Tobacco Policy: Prof. McDonald asked whether the senate is content with the current policy. The policy and problems of enforcement were then discussed. It will take time to get to full compliance. The Library and Wharton Hall were mentioned as problem areas.

Plus/minus grading system: Chad Parker spoke about a plus, minus grading system and recommended adoption of plus-minus grades. In discussing the possibility it was pointed out that some policies and issues would need to be clarified before making a decision about a possible change. Senator Parker made a motion that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Standards investigate the issues involved with a possible change to a plus, minus grade system and make a recommendation about that. Senator Wooddell seconded the motion and it passed.

Faculty Handbook Changes: Senator Wooddell submitted a list of approximately 35 changes required for the faculty handbook to make it consistent with current practice. The proposed changes will be posted.

Library Survey: A request was made that faculty fill out the survey from the Library.

Senator Deaton pointed out that there is currently no system in place for faculty to evaluate administrators. The Executive Officer stated that he will bring that up at University Council.

Lastly, Prof. McDonald said that the question will come up in the governance task force as to whether department heads should have term limits.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Kathleen Knierim
Secretary