

ACADEMIC SENATE

April 3, 2017

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Academic Senate, held on April 3, 2017, was called to order at 3:00 pm by Xan Johnson, Senate President. The meeting was held in the Eccles Institute of Human Genetics auditorium.

Present: Sarah Hinnners, Brenda Scheer, Robert Allen, Alberta Comer, Yongmei Ni, John Funk, Rajeev Balasubramonian, Chuck Dorval, Sudeep Kanungo, Hanseup Kim, Ken Monson, John Regehr, Denny Berry, Michael Chikinda, Stacy Manwaring, Susan Naidu, Nelson Roy, Les Podlog, James Anderson, Karin Baumgartner, Disa Gambera, Eric Hinderaker, Lex Newman, Adrian Palmer, David Hill, Tom Lund, Alicia Brillon, Luke Leither, Julie Barkmeier-Kraemer, Nadia Cobb, Julio Facelli, Per Gesteland, Mia Hashibe, Katherine Kendall, Nicole L. Mihalopoulos, Ravi Ranjan, Robert A. Stephenson, Thomas Winter, Ravi Chandran, Paul Jewell, Lauren Clark, Lynn Hollister, Steve Ott, Donald Blumenthal, Randy Dryer, Joel Brownstein, Yekaterina Epshten, David Goldenberg, Dmytro Pesin, Thomas Richmond, John Sperry, Andrejs Treiberigs, Adrienne Cachelin, Korkut Erturk, Duncan Metcalfe, Paul White, Jason Castillo, Mary Beth Vogel-Ferguson, Joanne Yaffe, Caroline Li, Madison Day, Zach Zundel, Zach Marquez, Robert Coffman, Rachel Petersen, Carley Herrick, Nathan Ong, Sabrina Hancock, Jake Knight, Kyndle Pardun, Connor Roach, Jack Bender, Zoe Tsoutsounis

Absent: Shundana Yusaf, Elena Asparouhova, Brian Cadman, Adam Meiowitz, Jeff Nielsen, David Plumlee, Todd Zenger, Olga Baker, Mark Durham, Leticia Alvarez, Xiaoyue Liu, Michael Cottle, Ning Lu, Joe Marotta, Melonie Murray, Jim Martin, Julie Metos, Nadja Durbach, Avery Holton, John Bramble, John T. Langell, Antoinette Laskey, Brad Rockwell, Frederick Strathmann, David Dinter, Andrea Bild, Tommaso de Fernex, Pearl Sandick, Michael Shapiro, Jennifer Shumaker-Parry, Wade Cole, Thomas Cova, Baodong Liu, Zhou Yu, Edmund Fong, Lauren Adams, Edwin Lin, Kevin Yang

Ex Officio: Bill Johnson, Bob Flores, Xan Johnson, Paul Mogren, Margaret Clayton, David Pershing

Excused with proxy: Sara Simonsen, Linda Tyler, Michael Stapley

Excused: Vivian Lee, Ruth Watkins, Dianne Harris, Mathieu Francoeur, Sean Lawson, Terry Kogan, Maureen Murtaugh

Others: Chris Bell, Karen Gunning, Heather Sobko

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes dated March 6, 2017 were approved with a motion from Joanne Yaffe and a second from Jim Anderson.

Consent Calendar:

The current list of appointments and resignations dated April 3, 2017 was approved with a motion by Jim Anderson and second by Joanne Yaffe. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Committee Report

Request for New Business

No new business

Report from Administration:

President Pershing gave an update on the activities of the U administration. He noted that the legislature passed a 2.5 percent tuition increase for all state universities in Utah (called “tier one” tuition). The U’s differential tuition request passed as well, which includes the law school’s request to redo its tuition structure. Fall enrollment requests from students are still strong- application numbers are up, as is the quality of applicants. In athletics news, the U gymnastics team won the PAC-12 title, won the sectional meet, and is now off to nationals. Additionally, the U’s ski team won the NCAA championship. In construction news, the new ski team training facility will be dedicated soon, the Gardner building construction is well underway, Milton Bennion Hall is coming down, to be replaced by the Garth building, and the Crocker Science Center will be opening soon. All of these new buildings will help increase teaching capacity on campus. Finally, commencement is May 4; Conrad Anker is the speaker, and both he and Gayle Miller will receive honorary degrees at the ceremony.

Report from ASUU

Jack Bender gave an update on ASUU’s activities. ASUU recently held student elections, and had its highest voter turnout in the past few years, with approximately 4,400 students participating in the elections. The new president and assembly members are currently transitioning into their positions. The U’s spring concert, the Wasatch Music Festival, will be held on April 21 in the Huntsman Center; Cold War Kids and American Authors will be performing. Finally, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and ASUU has teamed up with the Center for Student Wellness to hold various events throughout the month. More information can be found at <http://wellness.utah.edu/>.

Notice of Intent

No items of intent

Debate Calendar

Brenda Bowen and Sarah Hinnners presented a proposal for a new Center for Ecological Planning and Design. This will be a joint center within the Global Sustainability and Change Center and the College of Architecture and Design. This center was originally under the College of

Architecture + Planning, as the Ecological Planning Center, and has been a provisional center since 2012. The work of the center involves many fields, such as ecological science, social science, planning and design, and engineering, and it was looking for more interdisciplinary partners to further its work. It will now be included under both the CAP and GCSC umbrellas, and the name will be changed to be inclusive of CAP, as well as other fields, such as engineering. *Motion was made by Randy Dryer to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Joanne Yaffe. Motion passed unanimously.*

Steve Alder and Alicen Bringard presented a proposal for a new Master of Public Health extended program in Ghana. This is an existing degree, and the proposal is merely to have the existing degree offered at the extension location in Africa. The Division of Public Health hopes that this is the first step to developing an extended campus in Ghana, with more opportunities for facilities and programming in that region. The division is trying to extend its global vision with this proposal. *Motion was made by Jim Anderson to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Joanne Yaffe. Motion passed unanimously.*

Gianluca Lazzi presented a proposal for a new undergraduate certificate in engineering entrepreneurship. The graduate-level certificate for this subject has already been approved. There is a great degree of interest from engineers in developing business concepts, especially at the U, with its strong reputation for entrepreneurship. These types of programs are available at other institutions, and students on campus have expressed strong interest in developing one here. It is a 20-credit hour certificate. The program will also have a strong partnership with the Lassonde Institute. *Motion was made by Jim Anderson to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Joanne Yaffe. Motion passed unanimously.*

Mary Parker and Brenda Burke presented a proposal for new policy 6-420 Student Financial Aid. The goals of this new Policy are to streamline scholarship processes and definitions, define award types so that everyone across campus is using standard language, follow best practices in terms of how money is disbursed to students, and ensure the U is in compliance with Title IV regulations regarding the distribution of federal financial aid. *Motion was made by Joanne Yaffe to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Jack Bender. Motion passed unanimously.*

Amy Wildermuth presented a proposal for revisions to Rule 6-310. Changes to this Rule will allow Career-line faculty to serve on the Interdisciplinary Teaching Program Committee. The Committee has a role in approving appointments, reappointments, and promotions of Lecturer faculty in the interdisciplinary teaching programs (including LEAP, Honors, Entertainment Arts & Engineering, and Environmental & Sustainability Studies). From the 2010 inception of the Committee until now, only Tenure-line faculty were eligible. This proposal will add slots for three Career-line faculty to serve along with six Tenure-line faculty, which, better reflects the growth of career-line faculty across campus. *Motion was made by Randy Dryer to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed unanimously.*

Amy Wildermuth and Matt Miller presented a proposal for revisions to Policy 6-100—Instruction and Evaluation, to add a section regarding “essential course information.” A paragraph in Policy 6-100 will be modified to require faculty to provide course goals and projected exam dates, where applicable, as essential course information, one week prior to the start of courses. This is standard practice for many faculty, but there has not been a standard policy to require it. This will help students as they plan their academic and work schedules, as well as childcare arrangements. A template form will be provided to facilitate the process for faculty. *Motion was made by Randy Dryer to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Joanne Yaffe. Motion passed unanimously.*

Dave Hill, as chair of the Senate Personnel and Elections Committee, presented a proposal to temporarily reduce the size of three Senate committees for one year, and during that year to study prospects for their continued existence and functions. They are: the Senate Advisory Committee on Budget and Planning, Senate Advisory Committee on Library Policy, and Senate Advisory Committee on Salaries and Benefits. The upcoming annual vacancies on these committees will not be filled in this year’s Senate elections cycle, and the committees next year, in collaboration with ex officio committee members (i.e. related administrators, etc.), will be tasked with evaluating the activities of the committees and deciding whether they should be returned to full size, or perhaps consolidated, reduced, or eliminated. *Motion was made by Joanne Yaffe to approve the proposal Motion seconded by Chuck Dorval. Motion passed unanimously. The Personnel and Elections Committee will now implement the first step in this proposal, in the upcoming annual Senate committee elections process, by not including the usual ballots for filling the annual vacancies on these three committees (as Policy 6-002 ordinarily requires be done for Senate-elected committees).*

Ann Darling, as co-chair of the Senate Ad Hoc Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee for 2015-2017, presented a proposal for revision of Policy 6-001 Academic Units and Academic Governance. The proposal will add required reporting from departments regarding learning outcomes assessment. The revised Policy will govern when and by whom learning outcomes assessments will take place. Universities of Arizona, Washington, and Nebraska were considered as models for the process. The process will be owned by faculty and will be woven into the process of seven-year Graduate Council reviews of academic departments. It is recommended that assessments occur periodically over the seven-year review timeline. The assessment process will also be part of the existing curriculum management process and will thus efficiently take advantage of existing processes and offices, instead of creating a need for new processes and offices. Departments will be responsible for determining their own learning outcomes. The proposal was developed after a mandate from the university’s accrediting body. *Motion was made by Joanne Yaffe to approve the proposal and forward to the Board of Trustees. Motion seconded by Lynn Hollister. Motion passed with one nay vote and one abstention. The individual who voted “nay,” Professor David Goldenberg, will write a minority report, which is appended at the end of these minutes.*

Information and Recommendations Calendar

The following items were presented for the information and recommendations of the Academic Senate:

- Kai Medina-Martinez and Kathryn Stockton presented on the topic of student preferred names and pronouns. Their proposal contains a request that course instructors include language in their syllabi regarding students' right to be called by their preferred names and pronouns. This will be recommended (not mandatory) language for course syllabi, and will hopefully be prepopulated in the University's online "Canvas" system of web-pages for administering courses to make it easy for instructors to include the recommended information. There are more students identifying as transgender and gender-non-conforming on our campuses, as well as more students who are more informed about these issues than are many faculty and staff. Students who are misgendered or mispronounced do not feel comfortable in classroom environments, so making students feel welcome and supported enhances the academic environment. The U would be leading its peer institutions if it were to take on this issue. The preferred name on record for a student in the online Campus Information System (CIS) should be pulled to populate all university materials, but this is a work in progress (i.e. in Canvas and some other areas). Graduating students may also identify their preferred names to appear on their diplomas, dissertations, and theses. Kathryn also noted that, if there is a question about a person's preferred pronoun, the use of *they* can be employed until the preferred pronoun is determined.
- Dale Spartz presented a proposal to revise University Rule 5-302B, to change the retirement benefit vesting structure for University Hospitals and Clinics (UUHC) staff employees. The prior structure was that UUHC employees would be vested 50% after four years, and 100% after six. The proposed structure will provide for 20% vesting each year, so employees will be fully vested after five years. This is competitive with the national healthcare market, due to competition for hiring clinical staff.
- Bobbi Davis and Shawn Adrian presented a report on academic advising at the U. They hope to formalize the relationship between the University Academic Advisors Council and the Academic Senate, to improve communication between academic advisors and faculty. Advisors feel they have a unique relationship with students that is different from that between students and faculty, and as such, they think they would bring a valuable perspective to the Academic Senate. There is already a UAAC representative on the Undergraduate Council, which has been a very successful partnership. Other partnerships between faculty and academic advisors have been ad hoc and irregular. As such, they hope to establish an ex officio position for an academic advisor on the Academic Senate. It was explained that the Senate Executive Committee has approved starting a project to revise Policy 6-002 and then implement the change, such that a representative of the Academic Advisors Council, and a representative of the University Staff Council, will be added as non-voting ex-officio members on the Senate, and an Academic Advisor representative will be included as an ex officio member of the Senate Advisory Committee on Academic Policy. This project is to be carried out in the 2017-2018 Senate year.

- Nona Richardson presented a report about Athletics' academic services. There is a large staff of academic advisors, interns, learning specialists, and academic mentors. Student-athletes' success in the classroom is measured by the academic progress rate, the graduation success rate, and the federal graduation rate. There are penalties if student-athletes do not fulfill the NCAA's academic progress rate. The U's student-athletes perform well compared to other PAC-12 schools on this metric. Gymnastics is the U's top performer in regards to the three-term grade point average. The majors that are highest populated by student-athletes are sociology, communication, and business administration.
- Joanne Yaffe presented a year-end report for the Senate Advisory Committee on Student Course Feedback. The committee attempts to answer the following three questions: what should the feedback instrument look like, how should the instrument be administered, and how should results of the survey be disseminated or used. Other issues include falling response rates, likely due to a lack of incentive for completing the survey; extremely long surveys; and improper use of survey data for RPT decisions, particularly by student advisory councils (SACs). The committee recommends that surveys are shortened; questions should be about student experience in the class, not about what students learned (which will be handled by the aforementioned new processes for learning outcomes assessment). The committee recommends a small standard question set, allowing for additional questions for specific formats of classes, such as practicums, etc. The committee also wants to explore the possibility of moving the student course feedback survey administration back into the classroom during a regular class session (rather than be administered outside of a class meeting), although still in an electronic format. Almost all students carry at least one internet-connected device to their classes; allotting a specific time period for students to fill out their surveys would potentially increase the response rate. The committee also wants to produce a guide for how SACs and other students should use this data, what the data means, etc.
- Caren Frost presented a report on the activities of the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Review of Administration. The committee has looked at how peer universities approach faculty review of administration. There is a robust process at many PAC-12 institutions, as well as other institutions within the Utah system. The committee's primary point of reference was the process implemented several years ago by the University of Colorado-Boulder, and the committee plans to develop a similar model for the consideration of the Senate by this fall.
- Jason Perry presented a report on the activities of the Faculty Committee on Community and Governmental Relations. Jason gave an update on the activities of the 2017 Utah Legislature. The compensation increase went through at 2 percent, of which funding the U will need to come up with 25 percent. There was also an 8 percent increase for healthcare costs. The U also received approval to expand the University Guest House, \$8 million in ongoing funding for the Regents Scholarship program, a substantial amount of funding for the Huntsman Cancer Institute, among others.
- Eric Garland presented the provisional approval of a new Center for Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development. It is an interdisciplinary center housed in

the College of Social Work, with collaborations in psychiatry, anesthesiology, family medicine, physical therapy, and psychology, among others. The goal is to generate substantive research on mindfulness and other integrative health interventions in relation to issues such as prescription painkiller misuse for chronic pain. Having been provisionally approved by the central administration, the Center will next be presented to the Senate for permanent approval, within the three-year provisional period.

- Seven-year review of the Department of Economics
- Seven-year review of the School of Music
- Distinguished Professor appointments
- Distinguished Innovation and Impact awards
- Hatch Teaching Prize
- Early Career Teaching Awards
- January President's Report
- February President's Report

New Business

No new business

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Maddy Oritt

To: Prof. Xan Johnson, President of the Academic Senate

From: David P. Goldenberg

Date: 18 April 2017

RE: Senate vote on Learning Outcomes Assessment, 3 April 2017

Xan,

I am writing in response to your request, at the end of the Academic Senate meeting on 3 April 2017, that I provide some comments regarding my negative vote on the adoption of policies regarding “learning outcomes assessments” (LOAs) for departments and other academic units. I apologize for my delay in providing these comments, but the past few weeks have been especially hectic.

First of all, I would like to say that I do appreciate the hard work done by the Senate Ad-hoc Committees working on this issue, and I certainly think that it would be useful to know what our undergraduate students have learned by the time that they graduate, and how that compares with what he hoped they would learn. I also appreciate that the policy that has been adopted places responsibility of the assessments with the departments and their faculty, rather than an administrative office. On the other hand, I felt that the policy was rushed through the Senate without a chance for us to understand its implications, and I still have misgivings about how much additional work the policy will make for departments and whether or not there will be real benefits for our students.

Perhaps my understanding is incomplete or wrong, but I had understood that changes to University Policies were presented at least twice to the Senate before being voted on, once under the Intent Calendar and then under the Debate Calendar at a subsequent meeting. So far as I can remember and can tell from the previously posted agenda, LOAs were not brought up previously to the Senate in the two years that I have now served. In addition, the LOA documents for the 3 April meeting were posted on Canvas under the Information Calendar (although I now see that the Agenda document does indicate that it was intended to be a debate item). I did read and try to understand the documents before the meeting, but I did not expect a vote on them.

Once the subject was brought up at the meeting, I found the description of what would constitute valid assessments quite vague, apparently deliberately so. Since my department graduates approximately 200 students per year, this was a particular concern for me. I think that it would have helped if those presenting the proposed policy could have offered some more explicit examples of possible assessment methods. In the absence of more complete information, I did not feel that I could vote in favor of policy changes that could have a major impact on the work of faculty members. I don’t know what the actual amount of time spent on this issue was, but the Agenda indicates that only 10 minutes were set aside for it. This is the same amount of time that was scheduled for the report on student athlete academics, though my impression was that more time was spent on that report than on discussing and voting on a policy change.

I also question whether or not implementing campus-wide LOAs will really enhance the education of our students. Based on my own experience and conversations with numerous colleagues, I suspect that a large fraction of our graduating students do not, in fact, learn nearly as much as we hope they will. If this suspicion is confirmed by systematic assessments, what will we do with that information? It would be nice to think that we would turn around and use the information to

improve our curricula and courses. But, that would require a large investment of faculty time and university financial resources, both of which are in short supply. In addition, learning outcomes depend on factors, such as students' investment in their own educutions, that are beyond the control of the faculty and university. Frankly, I think that it is much more likely that we would somehow refine the assessments (or design them from the outset) to demonstrate great learning outcomes, regardless of the actual situation.

Finally, I was concerned by the statements, made after the vote, that these policy changes were being mandated by the accrediting organization and university administration, and the Senate didn't really have any choice but to approve the policy. This raises serious doubts in my mind about whether or not the notion of shared governance of the university has any real meaning.

I realize that these comments do not represent much of a coherent argument and reflect a rather cynical view of the governance of the University of Utah, especially regarding undergraduate education. Like many others, I am deeply concerned about the state of higher education in the United States, and I work hard to provide my students with the best education that I can. But, I often feel that these efforts are largely unsupported, and sometimes undermined, by the university administration. I would like to see the Academic Senate stand up occasionally to pressures from the administration that seem, to me at least, to have more to do with creating an image of improved education for our students than real improvements.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Goble", with a stylized flourish at the end.