

SUNY/ COLLEGE AT OLD WESTBURY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Friday, April 16, 2004
12:40 - 2:40 pm

Present

Senators: K. Velsor, E. Linger, J. Edelson, M. Dolan, J. Conforti, C. Franco, I. Ahmed, A. Barbera, N. Dorata (alt), M. Metlay, C. Hobson, M. Keefe, M. Crocitto, H. Lewittes, G. Snedeker

Ex Officio: C. Butts, L. Cox, M. Rankin, R. Brown

Visitors: E. Gomez-Nieto, J. Lloyd, M. Kinane, R. Mukherji, W. Lupardo, P. O'Sullivan, L. L. Racher, N. Sacks, M. Torrell, R. Welton

Chair's report by K. Velsor:

The Senate Executive Committee has met with Dr. Butts on two issues, disparities in salaries (gaps that have grown with each increase by a percentage of pay), and the physical working environment in Academic Village.

1. Because a preliminary fact-finding committee found great disparities in salaries within rank, gender gaps within rank and within departments, and inequalities based on ethnicity, the Executive Committee requested that President Butts create a committee to review salary equity, a committee that would begin meeting immediately and come up with a plan.

2. The second issue was the dirty campus and lack of infrastructural needs such as working window blinds, trash cans, and so on; the Administration is seeking to follow up on each problem and urged faculty to be sure to file work orders.

A Health and Safety plan was requested earlier and Dr. Haynie will present this at the May 7 meeting.

Report from Academic Vice President L. Cox:

Dr. Cox has met with committees on NCATE and Middle States Review.

We face continuing issues with retention – some departments doing better than others.

For first year college students we now have a 75% retention rate, which moves us from the bottom to the midpoint of the SUNY average.

Transfer students' reasons for leaving were to have nicer surroundings or to have a more prestigious degree.

*Should be
Mission Review
cgs
10.29.04*

Report from OSSD Committee M. Crocitto:

Introduction of the Committee: Laura Rader of Teacher Education, Esther Gómez-Nieto of Comparative Humanities and Languages, and Margaret Torrell of English Language Studies.

Met extensively with Bill Lupardo and made a set of suggestions. (The recommendations attached to minutes - el.) OSSD has volunteers but needs a full-time assistant coordinator who is familiar with the equipment.

Recommendations include:

Hours of operation would allow OSSD to be open two nights per week to serve evening students, including many business students;

OSSD lab people would continue staffing the center from 9 am to 10 pm.

Discussion:

Rec. # 4 Student volunteers could handle some clerical issues but not work to oversee exams or handle confidential records.

The recommendation includes creating a line for an assistant coordinator, partly because students come to OSSD for many various reasons and if the Director is not there, or is busy, nobody is there to meet students' needs.

On recommendation # 2 – the Committee is willing to help with the writing of guidelines for accommodations for the campus community.

Question: Who is responsible to “establish, develop, utilize” the various points in the list of recommendations 3,4 and 5?

Answer: Combination of the office staff and the faculty on the Committee.

Rec'n # 6 was impossible to clarify because “a small discretionary fund” is not a precise term.

Confidentiality issue of students who do not want other students see them using the OSSD facility – but seems to be less a problem after the office was moved to the new location in Academic Village. Recommendations for support work already are being carried out, but it is not clear to whom the recommendations are addressed for implementation. Faculty subcommittee is willing to work with Bill to help with implementation and other issues such as signed questionnaires.

Question: Does the OSSD use work study students?

Answer: Yes, OSSD used work study students until this past fall, when they were stopped at the request of Academic Vice President Cox.

Question: Would this be under the umbrella of the Student Life Committee which is a Standing Committee under the Bylaws?

Answer: The understanding of the Committee was that the task was to make specific recommendations to Dr. Cox, and the issue of implementation was not discussed. Some can be implemented by Bill Lupardo, and some require other kinds of administration (e.g., creation of a line and conducting a search). The Senate can discuss and help implement.

Chris Hobson moved to accept the Committee's recommendations, and the motion was seconded.

On the question of voting: This is not a resolution, only recommendations; accepted by vote 15 for, 0 opposed, 1 abstention.

Minutes:

Corrections: p. 1 Madeline Crocitto should be on the list of those present.

Point of protocol: Voting members should be listed separately from ex officio members of the Senate.

p. 2 “under the ... there is a prohibition” should read “...there should not be a prohibition...”

The following sentence should be deleted.

Motion to accept the minutes as corrected passed 16 for, 0 opposed, 0 abstained.

Report from President Butts:

One issue continuously recurring is OSSD. The recommendations are good and the administration will try to work with them, although it is difficult to understand why there

are so many difficulties. Will try to resolve the problems, either with funds, a line for assistant coordinator, or whatever is necessary to improve the OSSD services.

President thanks the faculty for work on both the Mission Review Two and NCATE, and knows that many will be here to help meet the June 30 and July 1 deadlines facing the Office of Academic Affairs.

Enrollment looks good – freshman applications are up 22%. Most SUNY campuses report applications are up 2%. We are also up 4% in transfer applications over this time last year.

Returning students or retention is still a big challenge. Students have a difficult time navigating our curriculum, especially the Gen Ed part. (“too many hours, takes too long,” and is coupled with the issue of advisement as handled in a number of disciplines). The poor facilities is not such an issue as it used to be.

Capital projects will greatly improve our physical appearance.

The Chancellor’s office says we have to grow in order to survive as a campus; we are asking for an exception but do not know the eventual outcome.

President has approved proposal to create a committee to develop a plan to solve faculty salary inequities; the academic vice president and the office of the president is trying to correct inherited problems.

Maintenance and repairs – had meeting with Bill Kimmins. It is urgent to report each repair or maintenance issue. Bill Kimmins is interviewing at this minute for the position of Director.

Job search: We are looking for a webmaster – this work is critical for the image online of the College.

Retention discussion:

Advising is an issue, partly because the use of adjuncts means fewer advisors per program or department. An issue that came up in the Gen-Ed Committee is student frustration with bureaucratic blockages – a large percentage of the current first year class were blocked from registering (some bureaucratic issue keeps them out). Generally, the FYE has been a positive experience for retaining students.

Retention is related to economic problems of students and their families.

98% of first year incoming students say that Old Westbury was their 3rd or last choice, and in the high 90-percents, they say they do not plan to stay. It is great, to our credit, that so many students decide to stay after that one year.

Advising problem is not due to many students getting bad advice, but, rather, due to many students never making appointments and not seeing a faculty advisor.

The most recent surveys already have far more student participants than previous surveys.

Some misadvising around Gen Ed is an issue because the chart and the different tiers of students are not easy to figure out.

Transfer students feel they have to take too many courses and parents cannot afford the extra money. Yet, we are in the mainstream of the SUNY campuses in courses required. Some require 4 semesters of history or social science, some, 3 years of language courses. Big problem for all SUNY campuses, according to Salins’ discussion, is that the community colleges are not meeting their Gen-Ed requirements. We are trying to meet with community colleges to get more similar standards (e.g., our math requirements are higher than community colleges and lower than some other SUNY campuses).

Psychology Department called students to ask why they stayed; the current survey seeks to combine positive and negative.

There was discussion of ending the Gen Ed program but for educational reasons we decided to keep it to maintain standards.

Relating to OSSD: We have had written complaints, often regarding lack of a specific resource or service. Previous search for an assistant coordinator resulted in an administrative error insofar as nobody was hired, which resulted in understaffing of the Office of OSSD.

Report of the Assessment plan by M. Dolan:

From a previous unanimous opposition to “externally referenced measures” [external testing] in the areas of math, writing and critical thinking, we have moved to alternative proposals, including a revised plan.

A standardized survey on “National Survey of Student Engagement” is considered important by the Chancellor’s office; thus, the assessment is not only for academic performance.

Discussion:

Three possibilities: 1) Complete external testing mechanism; 2) a SUNY (internally) developed standard but approved by outside testing; 3) SUNY campuses’ (internally) developed assessment but approved by SUNY/GEAR.

Fear expressed in e-mails and other discussions that if we reject the revised plan, SUNY would simply revert to an external evaluation, which would not help.

The revised plan is not very different from the Gen Ed proposals and each campus could manage to show how it relates with a value-added variable with which to compare to others. Some campus innovation, such as Fredonia’s curriculum for mathematics based on quantitative reasoning, is unique.

Motion to extend discussion 15 minutes passed.

If we are not signing on and if we oppose the revised plan, we should say so.

The Gen-Ed Committee decided the entire discussion has been a waste of time and energy.

All indications are that we DO assess writing, math and critical thinking in all areas in every field of study. Gen-Ed also discussed what to do regarding the “Proposed Revisions(Spring 2004).” Almost every single major already is doing some testing of critical thinking.

On the tactical issue of voting: There is a split in the SUNY system but community colleges have now turned around from their previous strong position of opposing, and there is an issue of whether our campus would appear alone or as one of two radical rejecters. We don’t know how the testing or assessment would be assessed. We should ask, “Why the rush regarding assessing the assessments”? We are seriously assessing and other campuses may or may not be. Would the assessment of the graduates of Nassau and Suffolk doing exit tests really tell us anything?

New business

1. Rich Brown, Vice President for Institutional Advancement: April 28 – 12th annual international luncheon to raise money for exchange programs. Strongly encourage faculty to attend to help raise the \$2500-3000 to help with scholarships. AIG, Sabarro & Audio Box from the community are now more represented than the faculty.

2. Candelario Franco – by now we should have received the ballots on the new contract.

UUP is co-sponsoring a Health & Safety Conference for universities and colleges. It will be held here at the college on May 5.