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THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

FACULTY SENATE OFFICE

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting #12
October 14, 2015 2:30 PM

MINUTES

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:37 PM on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 in the President's Conference Room, Chairperson Rollo-Koster presiding. Senators Kusz, Rarick, Sullivan, Tsiatas, and Welters were present.
2. President Dooley was welcomed to the meeting and the following matters were discussed:
 - a. Chairperson Rollo-Koster asked the President to comment on developments at the state level. The President explained that, although URI's FY17 budget is based on tuition increases of 4% for residents and 3% for non-residents, he expects that the Council on Postsecondary Education will approve a FY17 tuition freeze. This, he said, will allow the Governor more time to consider funding of higher education. The President said that the Governor understands the need for URI to remain competitive in the non-resident market and he stated that unmet tuition revenues could be replaced with increased state appropriation. The President expressed confidence in the Governor's commitment to higher education. He said she and her staff understand the problem that the timeline of the state budgeting process presents for the university. Financial aid packages need to be awarded in March but the state budget is not finalized until late June.

The President said that the university is working with the Department of Administration to transfer purchasing authority to the institution to expedite expenditures, with the exception of large capital projects. The President indicated that the legislative finance committees understand the university's financial model and trust the University's ability to manage its model.

- b. Chairperson Rollo-Koster asked the President about efforts to improve the faculty search and hiring process. He said that Vice President Valentino and Associate Vice President Thompson were working to reduce barriers in the search and hire process and that building a modern IT operation in HRA is needed. The President affirmed that deans have budgets to support the cost of bringing qualified candidates to campus. He confirmed that the role of the Office of Affirmative Action is to ensure that the academic judgments made by departments and colleges are fair and unbiased.

- c. Chairperson Rollo-Koster informed the President that she and other members of the FSEC had met on campus with a representative of the management and IT consulting firm, BerryDunn. The Chair reported that the consultant was not familiar with the recommendations developed in April 2015 by IT consultants, Goldstein and Associates. The President indicated that engaging BerryDunn was the next step in developing an IT strategic plan, which was a recommendation made by the Administration and Management Review Committee (in 2013). Chairperson Rollo-Koster reported on many problems with classroom technology, SAKAI, and e-campus that many faculty members had recently experienced. Discussion ensued.

The President left the meeting at 3:30 PM.

- 3. Minutes of FSEC Meeting #11, October 7, 2015 were approved as amended.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

- a. Ms. Neff reported that Administrator Evaluation Coordinator, Professor Nassersharif, had contacted her to ask that evaluation committee members for the review of Vice Provost Beauvais and Dean Kirby be solicited soon.
- b. Chairperson Rollo-Koster reported that she had contacted Dean Brownell and Senator Euler to inquire about re-locating the meeting site of future Faculty Senate Meetings to the new Chemistry building. Their response had been positive. Senator Euler indicated that Beaupre 105 might meet the Senate needs. Ms. Neff said that she would follow up and inquire about the available technology in the room.

5. ONGOING BUSINESS

- a. The FSEC discussed concerns about classroom technology issues and other infrastructure problems reported to them as well as experienced first hand.
- b. The FSEC discussed the (October 14) email communication sent to faculty by General Education Implementation Steering Team (GEIST) Chair, Director Swift which provided an update on the status of course submissions, plans to develop assessment models, and a rationale to maintain a fall 2016 launch date of the new general education program. The Committee noted that GEIST members have indicated that they will end their work in December. The Committee said that they would continue discussions with the Provost about plans to hire a Director of General Education and to establish an institute for innovation in general education.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff