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FSEC Minutes April 21, 2015

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes #39

April 21, 2015

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2015 in Library Conference Room B, Chairperson Nassersharif presiding. Senators Rarick, Rollo Koster, Sullivan, and Welters were present; Senator Cerbo was absent.

2. Provost DeHayes, Vice Provost Beauvais, and Ms. Kelly Mahoney, Executive Director, External Relations and Communications, were welcomed to the meeting at 3:05 PM. Ms. Mahoney, appointed to her position in January 2015, provided the FSEC with an overview of her background, a summary of the responsibilities of her office, and aspects of her role as University liaison to the Rhode Island General Assembly, Office of the Governor, the Rhode Island Board of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education, and Rhode Island's U.S. Congressional Delegation. Ms. Mahoney said that the new gubernatorial administration is offering significant opportunities for URI: Governor Raimondo has made support of higher education a priority and, already, has had many interactions with President Dooley; state agency directors have made inquiries to the University for information, and are seeking expertise from the URI community to help address issues and make decisions; the University is viewed as a resource and the partnership potential is high. Ms. Mahoney is working with the academic deans to create a catalog of existing work and ideas for partnerships. She reported that key items in the General Assembly include the budget bill, performance-based funding, the development of a funding formula for higher education, and the pending pension settlement agreement. Discussion ensued regarding the performance-based funding legislation and the higher education funding formula. Ms. Mahoney reiterated what the Provost has reported, that (RI) Senate leadership was open to working with Commissioner Purcell to adjust the proposal so, ostensibly, URI would not be penalized for the gains it has made in recent years in student retention and graduation rates. Regarding the funding formula, the performance measures will be tailored to each state institution, the Commissioner will lead the process to develop the formula, and there will be opportunity for faculty and student involvement in the work. Ms. Mahoney said that her role includes connecting URI faculty who have state-level concerns to the appropriate Committee Chair(s) (or others) at the State House. She encouraged communication with her office regardless of the issue or viewpoint of the faculty relative to the viewpoint of the institution. The FSEC thanked Ms. Mahoney for her time and her work, and indicated that they would like to invite her to make a presentation at a Faculty Senate meeting in the fall. Ms. Mahoney left the meeting at 4:05 PM.

3. The FSEC asked the Provost if the Dean of the Graduate School had been asked to distribute widely to the URI community the announcement of the search for an Associate Dean of the Graduate School.

4. The FSEC discussed with the Provost and Vice Provost the possibility of merging some of the joint and standing committees, particularly those with charges that overlap with the responsibility of the Office for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning. Discussion ensued. Senate Chair-Elect Rollo Koster said that she would engage in a review of the many committee charges, consult the committee chairs, and work to propose more efficient committee structures. The Provost and Vice Provost left the meeting at 4:25 PM.

5. ONGOING BUSINESS

a. Senator Sullivan provided an update on the status of the Joint Classroom Steering Committee and a recent space request from the Department of Nutrition and Food Science.

b. Chairperson Nassersharif provided a report from the meeting of the Senate Chair and Vice Chair with the Provost of April 16.

c. Ms. Neff provided the FSEC with an update on the results of college elections and new appointments to the Senate for 2015-16. Ms. Neff was asked to assist the Chair in preparing a slide show of photos of the new Senators.

d. Chairperson Nassersharif reviewed agenda items for the upcoming meeting with the President scheduled for April 24. Ms. Neff provided the Committee with proposed University Manual language changes that would release the President from the requirement to approve new courses and course changes. The FSEC agreed to move forward with the proposal.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff