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Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes #29

February 3, 2015

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM on Tuesday, February 3, 2015 in the President's Conference Room, Chairperson Nassersharif presiding. Senators Cerbo, Rarick, Rollo Koster, Sullivan, and Welters were present.
2. The President joined the meeting at 3:05 PM. The following matters were discussed:
 - a. Chairperson Nassersharif asked the President about the Faculty Senate budget that had been previously discussed in September 2014. The Executive Committee had approached the President to ask if funds to compensate FSEC members could be made available at the time of appointment of the Senate officers. Obtaining transfer of funds from the Provost's Office every year requires repeated requests and, often, the funds are made available too late in the fiscal year to be of optimal use. The Executive Committee had also asked about funds for post-Senate meeting receptions. The President said that he would address these requests and asked for another copy of the draft budget.
 - b. Chairperson Nassersharif asked the President if there were any changes pending at the Board of Education given the new gubernatorial administration. He said that he expected a public announcement of changes soon.
 - c. Chairperson Nassersharif said that the workshop held in October with the President and the Provost to discuss shared governance had been productive. He asked the President if he were interested in holding another session to discuss the subject. The President agreed to another workshop. Ms. Neff was asked to schedule a time for the discussion.
 - d. The FSEC and the President discussed the academic reorganization that is under consideration at this time. FSEC members expressed their concern for the units in the College of Human Science and Services (HSS) that, as a consequence of the establishment of the health collaborative, will remain outside of the planned reorganization. The President said that the conversations between the School of Education and the College of Continuing Education (CCE) in Providence have been productive and positive. He believes that this merger will create a structure that makes sense and that will allow better programmatic use of the Shepard Building. The President said that establishing a greater presence in Providence is of interest to our external constituencies. He also said that he understood that the Department of Textiles, Fashion Merchandising, and Design (TMD) is considering aligning with the College of Business Administration (CBA). He said that the fact that the CBA is operating under the direction of an interim dean should not hinder the conversations about the re-alignment of TMD. Senator Welters noted that TMD is interdisciplinary as are other departments in HSS.

The discussion continued about the differences between (programs at) the Providence and Kingston campuses. Committee members recounted their challenges in expanding Kingston-based programs in Providence. They described structural and procedural barriers as well as perceived differences that inhibit program development at CCE. The President said that there is interest in expanding the impact of the programs at CCE. URI will be able to capitalize on the Nursing Education Center by connecting to health providers and others; these connections will create other opportunities. The President said that the overall strategic goal in Providence is a bigger URI profile and easier student access to programs. To be successful, he said, we need the right vision and the resources for the vision. Full integration of CCE into the rest of the institution will produce growth in enrollments, better partnerships with businesses, and enhanced revenues.

The President left the meeting at 4:04 PM.

3. Minutes from FSEC Meeting # 27, Jan. 20, 2015 were approved.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

a. The FSEC discussed the invitation from the IT Review Steering Committee to meet with their hired technology consultant regarding challenges and opportunities to governing IT services at URI. Senators Nassersharif, Rollo Koster, and Sullivan indicated that they would attend. MS. Neff was asked to follow up and provide the Senators with a date.

b. Ms. Neff was asked to reschedule the February 10 FSEC meeting with the Dean and Associate Dean of the Graduate School to allow Vice Chairperson Rollo Koster to participate in the meeting.

c. Chairperson Nassersharif reported that he had been contacted by Vice President Sonnenfeld who informed him that the President was planning to review the overhead expenditure model because of a shortfall in overhead revenues.

d. Assistant Vice President Gonzales had contacted the Senate Office seeking two additional faculty members for the Student Rights and Responsibilities Committee to assist in review and revision of the Student Handbook. Ms. Neff was asked to solicit volunteers from the current Senators.

e. The FSEC had been asked to appoint two faculty members to the President's Web Policy Council. Chairperson Nassersharif said he would solicit volunteers from among the new members of the Committee on Information Technologies, Infrastructure, Computing, Communications, and Networking (CITICCN).

5. ONGOING BUSINESS

a. The FSEC discussed the proposed changes to the By-Laws regarding elections of officers, the new term, Vice Chair/Chair-elect, and the process to make corresponding changes to the Constitution of the Faculty Senate. Changes to the Constitution require a referendum of the General Faculty. This can be executed electronically.

b. Ms. Neff provided the FSEC with an update on the meeting of the ad hoc committee on Senate membership and voting rights that had taken place on January 30. The committee had proposed changes on voting rights that they intended to present at the February 19, 2015 meeting of the Faculty Senate. Discussion ensued. Ms. Neff was asked to communicate to the ad hoc committee that the FSEC would like the committee to address all aspects of its charge (voting rights, Senate membership, the role of tenure-track faculty in the governance of the University and the meaning and intent of "continuing faculty" in the University Manual) and propose comprehensive changes covering all the aspects of the issue in a single recommendation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff