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Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes #35

March 24, 2015

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 in Library Conference Room B, Chairperson Nassersharif presiding. Senators Rarick, Sullivan, and Welters were present. Senators Cerbo and Rollo Koster were absent.

2. Provost DeHayes and Vice Provost Beauvais were welcomed to the meeting at 3:10 PM. The following matters were discussed:

a. The Provost suggested that the FSEC consider adding an open forum to an upcoming Faculty Senate meeting agenda to allow discussion of the subject of Open Access through the URI Digital Commons. He reported that the Library incurs a significant annual expense (current year \$300,000) for library holdings (databases, subscriptions, etc.). The discussion continued regarding the cultural shift taking place in the field of publications, changes within the HELIN consortium, and the advent of the integrated library system, *Ex Libris*. Chairperson Nassersharif indicated that he supported hosting a forum on this subject but that the responsibility might fall to the 2015-2016 Senate Chair and FSEC.

b. Chairperson Nassersharif suggested topics for discussion for the second workshop with the President and the Provost on improving shared governance at the University. Discussion ensued about streamlining the course approval process through the Curricular Affairs Committee. The Provost suggested developing a system that would disseminate proposals to colleges and departments for approval with opportunity for question or objection. After a given time period, proposals would be considered approved if no objections were raised. The Provost and the FSEC discussed the New Center and Center Renewal process carried out by the Council for Research. The Chair of the Council for Research had reported that, sometimes, center directors do not respond to requests (made every four years) for center renewal information. The FSEC indicated that it would like to work with the Provost and the Council to simplify the renewal form. Chairperson Nassersharif asked the Provost if he would consider increasing the stipend offered to FSEC members in the summer of their year of service and increasing the supplement offered to the Senate Chair and Vice Chair. Chairperson Nassersharif also asked the Provost to review streamlining responses to requests made to the Provost's Office.

c. The Provost reported that he had asked an individual to represent the Provost's Office on the newly formed Committee on Information Technologies, Infrastructure, Computing, Communications, and Networking. He would forward the response once received.

d. The Provost was asked to respond to the legislation pertaining to performance-based funding recently introduced in the RI General Assembly. The Provost said that because URI has been able to develop its own framework for this mechanism for funding Rhode Island's post-secondary state schools, and because URI has been advancing student achievement and retention for some years, the institution is well-positioned in this regard. He said that the national data on student debt has contributed to this movement and that some 38 states have already implemented performance-based funding in their higher education institutions. Discussion ensued about student retention.

e. Vice Provost Beauvais reported that the Academic Health Collaborative had been approved by the Curricular Affairs Committee (CAC) at its March 23 meeting the previous day.

Provost DeHayes and Vice Provost Beauvais left the meeting at 4:30 PM.

3. Minutes of FSEC Meetings #33, March 3, 2015 and #34, March 10, 2015 were approved as amended.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

- a. The Committee discussed the agenda for the upcoming March 27 meeting with the President.
- b. Ms. Neff was asked to arrange a meeting of the Senate Chair and Vice Chair with Vice Provost Katz to discuss including FSEC supplements and stipends in the Faculty Senate budget so that they are available every year on July 1.
- c. Chairperson Nassersharif reported that the Committee on Information Technologies, Infrastructure, Computing, Communications, and Networking had met earlier in the day and that he had been elected Chair of the Committee. He said that he would attempt to convene the committee again before the end of the semester.
- d. Ms. Neff reported on the discussion and subsequent approval of the Academic Health Collaborative by the CAC at its meeting of the previous day (March 23). The only concern raised in the CAC was the possible lack of clarity that the proposal comprises a structure and a vision, not programs.

5) ONGOING BUSINESS

- a. The Committee discussed the recent submission by the Graduate School to the FSEC of changes to the University Manual language defining Graduate Faculty Status. The same changes had been introduced in 2012-13 in the Senate but had not been approved at that time. The language, although not approved, has been included in the 2014 update of the Graduate School Manual. Chairperson Nassersharif indicated that he wanted to discuss the language and its implications with department and college level graduate directors and deans.
- b. Senator Sullivan provided an update on the Ad Hoc Senate Membership and Voting Committee. A final report of the committee is expected at the April Senate meeting. The report will include a recommendation that full-time non-tenure track faculty be eligible for election to the Faculty Senate after they have served for one academic year in their position and that the ratio of faculty members (in a college) to senators be changed from the current 10:1 to 12:1. Discussion ensued about the impact of these recommendations on college representation.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff