

2013

## FSEC Minutes November 8, 2013

University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate

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# Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

## Minutes #16

**November 8, 2013**

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:06AM on November 8, 2013 in the Dorothy Vocino Conference Room in the URI Library, Chairperson Byrd presiding. Senators Brady, Cerbo, Nassersharif, and Rice were present. Senator Davis participated by phone.

2. There were no minutes for approval.

### 3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

a. Chairperson Byrd reported to the committee that Diane Goldsmith, Director of Learning, Assessment and Online Education and had contacted him. They met and discussed the plan to partner with an outside vendor to market some online degree programs at URI. Chairperson Byrd suggested that Director Goldsmith attend a regular FSEC meeting to inform the full Executive Committee about the plan.

b. Ms. Neff reported that Professor Jacqueline Webb, Chair of the Council for Research, had contacted her. Chairperson Webb said that she had met with the new Vice President for Research and Economic Development, Gerald Sonnenfeld. Their meeting had been very positive and productive. She had many questions for the Senate Office about the composition and charge of the Council for Research. She asked if she could meet briefly with the FSEC at some point soon.

c. Chairperson Byrd and Vice Chairperson Rice reported that they had visited the November 7th UCGE committee meeting to ask the committee for a final report of the revised general education program. Chairperson Byrd thanked the committee members for their hard work on a difficult task and they discussed with the committee the possibility of a forum at the January Senate meeting to be followed by the vote at the February meeting.

### 4. ONGOING BUSINESS

a. The FSEC discussed at length the current materials for the revised general education program, the Fall 2010 charge to the UCGE committee, and varying scenarios that could occur in the Senate. The FSEC expressed resolve to bring the revisions to a vote in early 2014.

b. Senator Brady updated the committee on the planning for the forum on non-violent conflict resolution/reducing safety risks on campus. From among the URI faculty and outside of the community, she has asked individuals to represent the aspects of mental health problems and nonviolent solutions. A URI faculty member has been asked to be the moderator. Representatives of emergency preparation and protocols have not yet been identified. The FSEC discussed the format of the proposed event.

5. Provost DeHayes and Vice Provost Beauvais joined the meeting at 11:05AM. The following matters were considered:

a. Ms. Neff had been informed that the President's approval of legislation passed by the Senate

at the October 17 meeting was pending the Provost's approval. The Provost was asked to look into the matter and he said that he would.

b. Chairperson Byrd and Vice Chairperson Rice informed the Provost of their visit on the previous day (Nov. 7) to the regular meeting of the UCGE committee to discuss the status of the committee's work to revise the general education program and to ask that they prepare a final report of the plan. The Provost was told that the purpose of the report is to be able to distribute information to senators well in advance of a Senate forum on the plan, possibly to be held in January, and that the forum will be followed at the subsequent Senate meeting by a vote on the plan. A discussion ensued regarding the many obstacles that delayed this committee's process and the delivery of its charge. The Provost and the FSEC agreed that perhaps an ad hoc committee, not a committee with ongoing important business, should have been given the charge to revise general education. The discussion continued about the larger implications to the way business is carried out within the structure of shared governance. Questions were raised about how to take on important issues that are the responsibility of the Senate when the fundamental process, involving turnover on standing or Senate committees, puts the issue in jeopardy of losing momentum. The Provost suggested that the FSEC give consideration to reviewing models of senates at other institutions for a better structure for the process.

c. Vice Provost Beauvais informed the FSEC that she is working with the Teaching Effectiveness Committee and Diane Goldsmith, Director of Learning, Assessment and Online Education, to establish a Center for Teaching and Learning. Dr. Goldsmith is drafting language for the proposal. It will bring together many units on campus that are focused on faculty development: the Online Office and its programs, the Assessment Office and its programs, the Instructional Development Program, Media and Technology Services, etc. The Center, which will report to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, would bring greater visibility to the groups that exist to support faculty. Faculty roles and shared governance issues were discussed. Chairperson Byrd mentioned that Director Goldsmith had contacted him to discuss the plan to hire a vendor to market online degree programs. The Provost said that URI is pursuing hiring Academic Partnerships, a company that would market the programs, recruit the students, and provide student support (technical and administrative support) through a call center. URI would still own the curriculum. There would be a 50-50 split of the tuition charged. Academic Partnerships carries out the market research and promotes only those programs that they think will be successful. The RN to BS in Nursing is a candidate program. There was discussion about the potential for the Library program to be offered in this manner. Certificate programs are also potential candidate programs.

Senator Nassersharif questioned the incentive for faculty to engage in online teaching when the method of instruction can be very demanding of time. The Provost expressed his support of online learning, because students are forced to be active learners. When appropriately designed and delivered, he said, online teaching does not have to be excessively time demanding, especially following the initial course design. There is now staff support that can assist faculty in online course design.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff