



FACULTY SENATE

Minutes

Thursday, February 28, 2008
Taylor 306

In attendance: Andre, Borg, Castle, Cancienne-Acgtblu, Cote, Fiegenger, Finkelstein (substitute for Hall) Frederick, Garren, Gilliam (substitute for Greene) Gilje, Harris, Hobson, Jerome, Larson, Macgillivray, Maiewski, McGraw, Mitri, Parsons, Riordan, Rudman, Sierra, Slade, Spear, Szmagaj, Wright. *Guests:* Gonzalez, Wheeler, Soenksen, and (briefly) Dean, Romano (Student), Brooks (Student and SGA president).

Called to Order 3:32pm

Marshall's Report:

*We need the names of next year's senators by the March meeting; please remember to follow Faculty Senate policy on elections

Brief Guest Announcements:

*Alicia Romano (student) informed the Senate that Relay for Life will be on April 5-6. She asked that we share the information about this 12-hour cancer walk with our departments. The website for further information is <http://www.jmurelayforlife.com>, and questions may addressed to jmurelay@gmail.com. The organizers offer to give information presentations, if invited.

* SGA President Lee Brooks and Mr. Art Dean spoke to the senate, requesting that faculty help support a planned civil rights monument that will be specifically memorializing Virginians. They are also asking student organizations for contributions. Senators and their colleagues may email Lee Brooks with questions.

Approval of the Minutes: approved

Provost's Report:

*The deans have received and passed on to department heads the evaluations of departmental policies on faculty evaluations to correct as needed. The provost's office will look at them all again.

*Faculty senate members are invited to the centennial ceremony (in regalia).

* PBK visit went very well. The PBK representatives were impressed.

*Legislature update – There are at least three different plans, and all are still changing

*The provost still thinks a small raise (2-3%) is likely next November

*Q- What happens to our internal processes if the timing of raises changes?

A- Good point. This will need to be considered

*The Honor Council's proposed XF notation for some honor code violations has been under discussion, and a new proposal is probably forthcoming to allow a student to have the notation removed by completing a certain number of hours of community service. There is also now a proposal that

permanent notation should go on the transcript in cases of expulsion.

Q- How would this work with graduating seniors given that there's no time for community service but there also is no effective penalty without this notation if he/she was going to fail the course anyway.

A- That's an issue they're still trying to work out.

Old Business:

none

New Business:

none

Speaker's Report:

*We would like volunteers from each of the colleges to serve on the Ombudsman search committee. Senate representatives are encouraged to see if they have any interested colleagues.

* Reminder –The guest lecture “Stealth Totalitarianism,” a presentation on academic freedom, will be at 5pm on March 19th.

*Senate representatives are asked to get feedback on possible revisions to Senate terms of office designed to allow more long-term goals and better institutional memory. One proposal is that officers should be elected by the Senate for 2-year terms with a possible second term, and that all senators should be elected by their programs for 3-year terms with a possible second term.

*The revised Thanksgiving break schedule, which eliminates the one-day fall break and gives the whole Thanksgiving week as a holiday, has been approved and will be implemented fall 2008.

Comment – Could we make these dates and other scheduled dates available earlier for departmental planning purposes (on the online academic calendar)?

Comment – We should consider this further for the future because of the discrepancy in length between the spring and fall semesters.

Report of the Academic Policies Committee:

*The proposed excused absence policy (available on the documents page of the faculty website) was presented for a first meeting. The committee was asked to develop a proposed policy, the motivations for the request being the reportedly very small number of faculty who will not, under any circumstances, make accommodations for students who miss class and the fact that other colleges as currently considering this issue. In proposing a policy, the committee members wanted to maintain faculty flexibility while encouraging cooperation where possible and promoting good communication. Dr. Roger Soenksen, JMU's faculty athletic representative, offered additional detail on these motivations.

Q -Should we added “JMU” in front of academics on bullet point four?

Q-What about scheduled service trips?

General discussion – including where the policy (or various parts of it) would be published and how the policy might be interpreted by students (perhaps incorrectly as limiting faculty authority) , whether the language directed at students should also be changed to recommendations/guidelines, whether the policy should be stronger. The proposal was tabled by vote. (We will, therefore, require a motion to take it off the table next time.) Senators should get input from their departments.

Susan Wheeler also noted that, when this issue comes up for discussion again, we may want to meld the language with the faculty handbook's existing language on religious observances and such.

Treasurer's Report:

*Please consider whether you or your colleagues have any suggestions for possible uses of the Flower Fund surplus.

Report of the Faculty Concerns Committee:

*The committee received little response to the proposed faculty FAQ website. Senate representatives can still send responses to the committee this month.

Report of the Faculty Appeals Committee:

(no report)

Report of the Student Relations Committee:

(no report)

Report of the Budget Committee:

(no report)

Meeting Adjourned at 5:09pm.