

SENATE AGENDA FOR NOVEMBER 21, 2008
JBK Room 11

CALL TO ORDER: 12:17 PM

All members present except Russell Anderson, John Cooley, and Darlene Pulliam (Business), Perry Crafton (Fine Arts), Michael Meyers and NS Viswanath (NHS).

Minutes of November 14, 2008 motion to approve - Linda, second – Mo, approved

Committee Reports

Student absences from one class to attend service-learning for another:

Theresa Trela surveyed policies on attendance and community service and service learning from around the country. University of Delaware has the best-expressed policy, they have scheduled service-learning times so will not conflict with other classes. She suggests moving the discussion upward.

Bob Hansen spoke to Provost about this. One problem is how to define an excused absence. Provost suggested differentiating between externally-scheduled events (debate tournaments, sporting events) and internally-scheduled events (service learning). Externally-scheduled events should qualify if are of benefit to the students.

Our Faculty Handbook is unclear. Students should be able to make up work for excused absences but some professors do not. Students need a calendar at the beginning of the semester so professors will know when they will be gone. Advanced warning seems to increase collegiality when infringing on another's class. What do we do about participation grades? What do we do about field trips that cannot be done in class time? What do we do about last-minute activities?

Trela suggests that students communicate to professors that they are "On Call" for extracurricular activities.

Hansen asked- what is professor's obligation when students miss class? Some professors do not allow make-ups at all. Does university excuses impinge on academic freedom?

Hansen asked committee to draft a policy for Faculty Handbook. It is responsibility of faculty requiring absence to create letter for other classes as soon as possible, two weeks at least. [discussion ensued]

President's Semester-End Report

1. Distance learning fee – Administration was not aware of this, Provost does now recognize there is an issue, fee should be re-investigated; have James Webb talk to FS about the fee – where it goes, where it could go, etc.; might also be a good issue to discuss with Student Government
2. Student absences from class – see committee report above
3. Professional track and terminal degree status: Dr. O'Brien and Dr. Hallmark think that WT policy will probably define terminal degree differently or have exception to general rule of requiring terminal degree; Hansen wants Faculty Senate to provide input on policy; administration says need to keep numbers low to keep research expectations high [discussion ensued]

4. Promotion and Tenure standards – All departments still have not turned in standards to provost; College of business has College standards, Fine Arts has College Standards with specifics for different departments, etc.; Hansen wants them to be in handbook in Spring
5. Teaching load policy – have switched from what is in handbook to variety of experiences in terms of overloads and release time, real issue is not what is in handbook, first need to align what is on paper and what is really happening; need to recalculate how loads are counted; Wade Shaffer will be consulted; something needs to happen for those who have been teaching uncompensated overloads for a long time – either stop or compensate somehow; compensation is cheaper than a new faculty line; may be an action item for FS next year, include research demands in overload? Is it legal to pay extra for extra classes? IDS gets paid. It was suggested asking faculty to stop teaching overloads to send a message that we are overworked [discussion ensued]
6. Mentoring – Hallmark does not want this to be official, informal is better; O'Brien wants colleges to handle this [discussion ensued]. Most departments are not officially mentoring and only a few are doing peer-reviews.
7. Graduate faculty status – Tim Acheson has crafted recommendations
8. Schedule of Spring meetings: First meeting January 16, 2009

FORTHCOMING BUSINESS FOR SPRING:

1. Report from the ad hoc committee on the T&P policy. Perry Crafton is on University T&P Committee and will report on process. Hansen asked for faculty members to report experiences with this process. Need recommendations early next semester, need detailed and comprehensive reports on issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Provost's Chat December 10.
2. Harry Hueston reported on Diversity Committee meeting involving EEOC Officer talking about duties, regulations; are a number of inconsistencies in hiring process in some areas; committee sees need for clearer policies applied consistently; suggested we ask Mark Hiner (Human Resources) and Claudia Stuart (Chair of Diversity Committee) to come to a meeting to explain hiring practices, get Staff Council involved, too
3. Happy End of Semester and Happy Holidays

Adjourn (1:47 PM)