UNK FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
March 5, 2015
Ockinga Conference Room
Faculty Senate Website: http://www.unk.edu/committees/faculty_senate/index.php

I. Call to order

II. Roll Call: 5FEB2015

At Large Senators: Present: Kelley, Sutherland
Absent:

CBT Senators: Present: Moore, Porter, Taylor, Tenkorang, Trewin
Absent: Konecny

COE Senators: Present: Brown, Gaskill, Hoehner, Mims, Moore
Absent:

CFAH Senators: Present: Burbul, Chavez, Jiang, Rogoff, Van Renen
Absent:

CNSS Senators: Present: Harms, Jhi, Louishomme, Pattabiraman, Reichart, Weiss, Wozniak
Absent: Davis, Sogar

Library Senator: Present: Mueller

III. Approval of Agenda

Senator Wozniak (Burbul) moved to adopt the agenda. Senator Rogoff (Wozniak) moved to amend the agenda with a presentation on the Faculty Morale Survey by Professor Jeremy Dillon (Chair, Faculty Senate Faculty Welfare Committee) added. The agenda as amended was adopted.

IV. Action on the Faculty Senate Minutes: 5FEB2015

Past-President Trantham (Rogoff) moved to approve the minutes. The minutes were approved as corrected.

V. Special Presentations

Professor Jeremy Dillon – Chair, Faculty Senate Faculty Welfare Committee
Professor Dillon – The Faculty Welfare Committee was given a charge to conduct a faculty morale survey. This was to address a growing perception that there was a faculty morale problem and to identify solutions between the faculty and administration. A rough draft of the survey was reviewed by the Faculty Senate last spring. The Committee looked at many
sample studies from business and academia. We now have the results in. 177 participated in the survey and 156 faculty made it through the entire survey. This is a return rate of over 50%, which is pretty good.

I want to make a brief presentation. We are looking for a data format that is presentable and useful. A number of tricky questions have arisen. The first figure are the results for question 51 [slide was displayed]. Overall it is a “blah” result. You might say it is slightly bimodal.

We can sort the results among demographic variables. I have hundreds of graphs and hundred of pages of figures. When we look at the results based upon rank, it shows actual patterns [slide was displayed]. There is a visually different result among various ranks. This is an example of what we can do with the data. We are look at over 1000 graphs.

The next figure shows results by college [slide was displayed]. As we look across the survey, there is data that could be really useful to the college deans. But a dean might say: “Why am I being targeted,” which may be the perception. We are not viewing this as an opportunity for a witch hunt or to “get” somebody. There is really useful data here.

We also had written responses as part of the survey. We have a vigorous debate going on about what to release among written responses. There are a couple of schools of thought. As faculty, we are reviewed by hundreds of students every semester, but our faculty reviews aren’t made public. There is a sentiment to release everything and differences of opinion would be valued and used positively. There is the idea that as we make this public, if we cherry-pick, it could be really unfair. The whole point was to come up with data useful to the administration and faculty alike.

The Faculty Welfare Committee was fulfilled its charge of conducting the survey. We are turning it over to the Senate for guidance about format and how it is to be released. President Taylor – I greatly appreciate all your hard work and the hard work of the committee. The survey has been in the making for a long time. The goal of it is to improve things. We want everyone to be better as a result, and figure out what is actionable and what we do to move forward. There are various possibilities for distribution. In any case, we want to withhold those with a sample size less than five so that it is not personally identifiable. We don’t want to slice and dice. Regarding the written comments, we are thinking not to distribute these beyond the Chancellor’s cabinet. The comments could be taken out of context. These were not necessarily written with the intention of sharing campus-wide.
Professor Dillon – We decided to leave the Library out the college-level results concerning the issue of anonymity.

Senator Harms – The purpose of the survey is to gather data and make change. Is there going to be any change or outcome from this?

President Taylor – We have met with the administration and will have another meeting next month. There is a real chance of seeing meaningful change come out of this. The administration was very enthusiastic about this opportunity for change.

Past-President Trantham – This will be an iterative process. The conversation on the survey will continue until next fall.

Parliamentarian Wozniak – Regarding the comments, names were named. There is a thought that this should be redacted before distribution.

Professor Dillon – My impression of the comments is that there is nothing in there that is incendiary or controversial. There are pointed comments. We redacted a name if a person was named. There were three or four names out of twenty-six pages of comments. We are trying to be really careful to preserve anonymity and prevent individual comments being cherry-picked and hurting feelings.

President Taylor – My fear on the comments is them getting to the deans. I don’t have a problem showing them to the Chancellor’s cabinet with the understanding that they are not shared verbatim with the deans.

Senator Mueller – Is there a way we could publish the favorable comments? The positive comments concerning environment and morale?

Senator Brown – There were a lot of positive comments. It is not all negative.

President Taylor – My personal feeling is that you put out all of the comments or none of the comments.

Senator Mueller – In the summary, you could indicate that there are both positive and negative comments.

Parliamentarian Wozniak – If we are going to drill down, it could have the implication we are doing a witch-hunt. We have twenty-six pages in the comments because we have treated each question the same. We want to avoid it looking like we are trying to “get” someone. Who will judge what are the good comments?

Senator Louishomme – I think a report containing twenty-six pages of comments would be unreasonable. I don’t know how many of the faculty would read it. The substance of it is the exercise to see what faculty think and feel about morale on campus.
President Taylor – If comments are give to the administration and they are able to use them in a way that is instructive, then the comments are worth a lot.

President-Elect Kelley – I have read all twenty-six pages and there are some trends in there that everyone should know about. I think the Faculty Welfare Committee can pull out those comments that are repeated over and over.

Senator Pattabiraman – Do we know what peers are doing on their surveys?

Parliamentarian Wozniak – We don’t know. I don’t know if there would be any comparability.

Professor Dillon – There weren’t very many models out there.

Senator Pattabiraman – Are there areas where faculty feel more strongly about things they believe are good or bad?

President Taylor – It wouldn’t be fair to say at this point.

Past-President Trantham (Chavez) moved that graphs from the Faculty Welfare Committee analysis analyzed by college and rank separately (excluding the Library and those with sample size of five or less) be released to senators. The motion carried.

Parliamentarian Wozniak (Trewin) moved that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shares the comments (names redacted) with the Cabinet and then decide further steps for distribution. The motion carried.

Senator Brown – When we first met with the Cabinet about this, they were all very understanding that these were anonymous comments. They approached it professionally and respectfully.

X. New Business

A. Oversight Committee – Election of At-Large Senator

Parliamentarian Wozniak – Jacob Weiss is now representing the Math Department as their Senator. Senator Biggs had three absences. The Oversight Committee had two nominees to serve for the remainder of his term: Michael Sutherland and Lee Powell. Are there any further nominees? I would ask that the nominee who is present say a few words about himself.

Mr. Sutherland – I have been at UNK since October 2010 as Web Services Librarian. I maintain and develop the Library website. My research is in web accessibility. I am interested in intellectual freedom and access.
Past-President Trantham – Lee Powell is a third-year faculty member in my department. He is interested in Faculty Senate and departmental governance.

[An election was conducted by ballot vote. Sutherland was elected as Senator-At-Large.]

VI. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees

F. Academic Information and Technology Committee: 6FEB15

President-Elect Kelley – Would a Committee member please report further on item 3.a, the Open-Access Textbook Initiative?

Senator Mueller – NU Provost Fritz had asked for a pilot to create online textbooks. At UNK the pilot looks to have each college represented by selecting a course that has multiple sections with a required textbook. The pilot would develop an online textbook that would be open access. There is funding available for faculty in the pilot to develop the textbooks. The College of Business and Technology felt their courses did not qualify and chose not to participate in the pilot. General Biology (BIOL 103GS) will be the first this summer. Political Science has partnered with COE on TE 100. The Library has a concern that copyright and the rights of authors are respected. These issues will be followed up on by Library faculty. These are some of the questions from AIT. Where will the textbooks be stored? Would it be Blackboard? There are still a lot of questions.

Senator Tami Moore – As UNK creates its own textbooks, this concerns me as a textbook author. I hope we don’t end up pulling things from all over the place.

President Taylor – I would expect the level of quality to be the same as a for-profit textbook.

Senator Sutherland – I can represent the Library as its liaison with Political Science. There is potential here looking at an institutional repository for the campus. We could have open-access textbooks and student research and faculty research and have it available to the world. UNL, UNO, and UNMC all have this. UNL has the second-largest in the country behind the University of Michigan. This is an opportunity to highlight the research being done at UNK.

Senator Pattabiraman – If a colleague develops an online book, then am I required to use that book?

Senator Louishomme – No, this would not be required. It is just for the current folks participating in the pilot. We have a course reader and use articles that are available.
Senator Pattabiraman – Our department has an organic chemistry manual and it is not going to be as good as some others out there—there are limitations.

All further reports distributed in VI. Reports of Faculty Non-Senate Committees were approved without discussion.

VII. Reports of Senate Representatives to Non-Senate Committees

All reports distributed in VII. Reports of Senate Representatives to Non-Senate Committees were approved without discussion.

VIII. Reports from Academic Councils

All reports distributed in VIII. Reports from Academic Councils were approved without discussion.

IX. Unfinished Business

A. MOOC Ad-Hoc Committee Report

Secretary Rogoff (Trantham) moved to postpone this item to the next meeting in consideration of the MOOC Committee Chair being unable to attend this meeting. The motion carried.

President-Elect Kelley (Trantham) moved to forward the MOOC Report to the administration. The motion carried.

X. New Business

B. Oversight Committee – Regular Committee Meeting Times

President-Elect Kelley – I sent an email out to the chairs of the standing committees to give me a regular meeting time. Members of the Executive Committee call the first committee meetings to go over the committee charge. Determining the meeting time is a pain with a lot of emails back and forth. Just send me the first meeting time—you may choose as a committee in the future to change the time. It also may help the student representatives.

Parliamentarian Wozniak – There are two committees currently with regular meeting times and three commitments so far from committees.
XI. General Faculty Comments

Parliamentarian Wozniak – In talking to the chair of our college Educational Policy Committee, he noted a couple of things related to General Studies portal and capstone courses. Once a department has one course in, new topics do not go through the approval process, and there are surprising things that pop-up on the schedule. It might be a question of academic freedom in developing 188GS and 388GS, and approving new topics. Maybe Academic Affairs should discuss this.

President Taylor – General Studies is currently looking at their processes, so the timing may be just right.

President-Elect Kelley – I will take this to the General Studies Committee as well.

Senator Louishomme – The Ethnic Studies Program is hosting a presentation by Dr. Grace Hale (University of Virginia) titled “Making Whiteness” on March 9 at 7 PM in the NSU Ponderosa Room. It will be well-publicized and is a public event.

President Taylor – Staff Senate will be hosting Faculty/Staff Club tomorrow.

Senator Brown – Coach Chaney [Women’s Basketball] was fired today. The way it was handled was not appropriate, I don’t think. The students were called to a meeting at 1:30 PM regardless of whether they were in class or not and informed that the coach was going a different way. I am concerned that this is the way things are going now. These basketball players have missed a week of class already. I think the priorities are incorrect.

Senator Porter – We are trying to rebrand ITEC. We have recently heard that we are not allowed to use Louie the Loper, is that correct? Is Athletics dictating what Academics may or may not use?

Senator Sutherland – It is my understanding that it is Creative Services was is doing that. They made Residence Life scrape Louie the Loper and/or the Loperhead off some windows. They said it was exclusively for Athletics.

President-Elect Kelley – We have already collected two or three instances of situations like this. If you hear of others, please let an Executive Committee member know because we would like to address this further.
XI. Adjournment

Parliamentarian Wozniak (Trewin) moved for adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Rogoff
Secretary