**Faculty Senate Meeting 4/24/12**

**I: Roll Call: Present**

Michael Freeman, Bob Hautala, Amanda Smith, Erin Passehl, Keven Malkewitz, David Foster, David Doellinger, Maria Dantas-Whitney, Mark Van Steeter, Kathy Farrell, Tad Shannon, Michael Phillips, Cornelia Paraskevas, Claire Ferraris, Cat McGrew, Cheryl Beaver, Keller Coker, Katherine Schmidt, Kristin Latham

**II. Corrections to Minutes**

No corrections to minutes.

**Action:** Minutes approved.

**III. President’s Reports**

**Gavin Keulks, Faculty Senate –**

Executive committee took only a few independent actions at their last meeting. The first was the decision to not take action in regards to professors not holding exams during finals week, at their scheduled times. Classic case of policy vs. enforcement: a policy is already in place; the problem is that it is not being enforced.

The second was the language in the faculty handbook concerning how class time must be used, during finals week, for classes in which there is no final exam. Language is outdated, but Senate does not have oversight over the handbook.

Additionally, the executive committee, specifically Bob Hautala, has completed their annual review of FTE and senate representation, as required by the Senate bylaws. The formula for the number of Senators is that each tenure track faculty counts as one FTE and each non-tenure track faculty counts as 0.5 FTE. For every ten FTE, a department earns one senator. This year the creative arts division lost a Senator, while the natural science and math as well as psychology divisions both gained a Senator. This results in a net gain of one senator next year, meaning a shift in quorum from 14 to 15. Please elect your new Senators and have them attend Senate meetings. President Keulks will email division chairs in COE and LAS.

Question raised regarding how the number of Senators is calculated.

Answer: The number of faculty members in each department is counted, based on stats provided by college support staff (dean’s assistant). Then each tenure track faculty counts as one FTE and each non-tenure track faculty counts as 0.5 FTE. You then add up the numbers. If the total had a 0.5 you would round up. Then every ten FTE counts for one Senator. If a department had 20 FTE, they would receive two Senators.

The fourth item of business was the decision of whether to form a subcommittee regarding the issue of shrinking finals week from five to four days. Finals would then take place Monday-Thursday. Unclear whether there is any interest in this or if it would even work. It could be difficult, as the school is growing. Also, only one out of seven division chairs stated that they were in support. Please speak out if you have any strong opinions.

Additionally, as per the bylaws, a nominating committee for Senate officers will need to be formed at our next meeting. Committee will consist of the past Senate President, one executive committee member, and two at large senators. This is Keulks’s last term as President. For the past 4-5 years, it’s been near-impossible to find faculty willing to take on the responsibilities of senate president. Keulks will run again if no one is interested but would prefer that others take over, as he has served his two years. It is a big, important, bureacratic job consisting of a spot on SPOC, hierarchies, Portal, etc.

Question raised about what other positions are opening up.

Answer: Senate President, Vice President and Secretary.

Question raised regarding the timeline of the Nominating committee.

Answer: Elections are held the second meeting in May as per the bylaws.

Question raised about the positives attached to the Senate President position.

Answer: You become involved with all aspects of campus. You are one of the first people to know anything, and some people find that reassuring. If you are an organized person you get to play to that strength. It is a lot of work but Keulks enjoyed it.

As you know from distributed email, executive committee has also finished the revisions of both the bylaws and the charter. They were vetted through the past five Senate Presidents who approved of the changes. The revisions may be sent to Division Chairs or to all faculty.

Keulks met with the Provost last Thursday to discuss an upcoming Secretary of State audit. Assessment is now a nonstop constant on campus, and this new audit will focus on structural elements that we’ve put in place to complete a degree that may/may not qualify as “tuition cost drivers.” Two committee’s will work on a response: Strategic Priorities and Options Committee and Academic Requirements Committee. Of particular interest are such topics as: size of majors/minors, the minor requirement, 180 credits required for graduation, 62 upper-division credits required for graduation, the size and structure of the LACC etc. David McDonald is the point-person for this audit and is also the head of SPOC. A co-authored letter by Keulks and Provost Neely will be sent to faculty seeking input. The input could be anonymous or not. Anonymous feedback can be given on the feedback portion of the SPOC website. All proposals, if any, will need to route through Senate. There is a budget gap present and this information is important. Ideas are needed.

**Mark Weiss, Western Oregon University –**

Reports he is feeling well and is no longer in pain. The best-case scenario is that he will be back by Monday. He wanted to convey that we are in the midst of a new budgeting process. It is like building a plane in the air. It has been confusing for those who have had to prepare documents. As time goes forward, clarity will be achieved.

**Marshall Guthrie, Staff Senate –**

Had nominations for Staff Senate come in. Is excited for voting to begin next week.

**Jonathan Farmer, ASWOU –**

Voting will occur May 13-14. Wants to thank professors for letting students come into their classrooms to educate other students on registering to vote. Overall, 450 students registered to vote, surpassing their goal of 300. Spent weekend at Southern Oregon University discussing transitions and issues for next year. It is hard to convey student’s stance on certain ground because its been changing on a constant basis. Came to a conclusion that the main issue is the state and that action needs to be taken. HR3826 is a bill that would double the interest rate on student loans, raising them to 6.8%. This is the main focus to combat because student debt is now over a trillion dollars. Went to Washington DC over spring break and lobbied in front of Sally May’s office. Many students were arrested and most were from Oregon. We were well represented.

**Kent Neely, Provosts’ Council –**

Have been dealing with changing budget over the last month. Are looking at investing in post secondary education. Think this will have some financial clout. There are proposals that served as the basis of legislative proposals that campus authored. We had five proposals comprised of funding for retention specialists, funding for project for WOU, funding for visit WOU, early alert system, etc. The first concerned the tuition promise that was passed by OUS in 2007. The elegance of this is that it guarantees that the student will have the same tuition rates across the board for four years at WOU. If state funding (which comprised 46% of WOU’s revenue base) continues to decrease, new students will front significant tuition rates. WOU would need to create revenue. Retention rates dropped significantly, raising a big red flag. The only reason we could gather was that a large amount of students are eligible for the Pell Grant, indicating that money issues could be the main reason behind dropping enrollment rates. An early alert system could be implemented to tell how often students attend class. The Chancellor’s office expressed that they would like to see a proposal concerning early childhood education degree. This demonstrated that we are in a climate that is extremely fast moving, and that rhetoric has grown and momentum has increased. The result of teacher effectiveness what that there were no results. We cannot turn away from this charge because it is new information.

Question raised regarding speaking publicly about the results to the research of what courses students were receiving the most D’s and F’s in. It is felt that including the CRN numbers in this information singles out professors and that this flags programs that are not retaining students. Why was this information distributed without any contest? Just want to discuss this to heal the chasm between faculty and administration and to instill some trust.

Answer: Has met with Dean Rosselli and Scheck about how they viewed this. This information has been looked at before in some sense. What was looked over was pre-reqs over scheduling. There was a rise in remedial courses, as well as a rise in students being poorly prepared coming out of high school. No correlations between courses and professors have been made. The number of A’s given by certain professors is also not being looked at. Grading is sacrosanct with faculty.

Question regarding why courses with ten percent of grades being D’s and F’s were looked at in regards to the subject of grade inflation. How can we guarantee that professors won’t be asked to soften grades?

Answer: Provost gave his word that they will not be asked to do so. Could look at literacy across the board and curriculum. Are we teaching these concepts well enough? It is not certain why the ten percent was used. As far as data collected, it may be that the ten percent is arbitrary. Is happy to share information with you but one would have to be respectful because you would be looking at your colleagues’ grades.

Question raised about if SAT scores and GPA have a correlation.

Answer: It was determined that the value, as predicted, significantly dropped after one year. One study found it had a 0.01 effect and was meaningless as an indicator. There are a large number of other factors that influence the correlation.

Question raised how this data will be used. It could be used to channel resources to the areas where students need the most help. When students fail classes they do feel unsuccessful and may need more support to stay in school.

Answer: Think this is a great practical idea. Things are happening so quickly that if he was in the classroom he would be asking himself what does this mean in terms of degrees. If we say that 180 credits are necessary to graduate we need to justify and say why.

Comment: Have made sure that tutoring is available and a priority for the courses with the highest failure rates. However, since WOU has grown so much this does provide a budget constraint.

Closing remark: One thing important to keep in mind is that we have very good leadership inside academic affairs.

**IV. Old Business**

**Eiken Proficiency Examination for International Student, ARC –**

Previously was asked to clarify the catalog language about what scores WOU would accept for the Eiken exam. An Eiken score of grade 1, respectively equivalent to the TOEFL scores of 550 and 600 will be accepted for undergraduate admission. Graduate admission requires a TOEFL score of 550 or an IELTS score of 6.

Question raised what the scores actually are for the Eiken exam.

Answer: Pre-1 and 1 are the actual scores.

**Action:** Motion made to approve. Motion seconded and approved. The Eiken exam now becomes an acceptable policy..

**V. New Business**

**Proposed Shift from 3- to 4-credit Classes, Art department –**

The Art department has restructured their program to fit a four-credit model. They made an effort to keep the total number of credits and content the same for the program. The total number of credits for majors is 84. Some credits have been cut and material will be distributed into other relevant courses. Motivation behind this is that all other universities in Oregon have already converted their programs to four credits, which has caused problems with transfer articulations. Would also relieve scheduling conflicts, while still providing the same quality of education. The art department would not need to hire more non-tenure track faculty. (see Article b. on Senate webpage)

Question raised if classes will be held more times a week or for more hours if content isn’t changing but credits are.

Answer: No. Found that other schools were teaching courses with the same content at four credits. Hours and content will not change but student expectations will.

Question raised on how this will impact the LACCs.

Answer: The courses will switch to 4 credits but 2 credit courses will also be offered. Requirements are not increasing and because there are so many options in the arts, with varying credit hours, that they did not foresee any issues.

Questions regarding that this shift does add one more credit to the teacher education major.

Answer: This can be discussed more if the one credit increase will cause problems. Chair pointed out that the Psychology department caps a course that has an impact on other divisions. Something similar could be done in this situation. There might also be a version of a 100 level prerequisite that would relieve this issue. This will be considered further to see if this can be resolved easily.

Question raised if this is an early proposal for next year or if these changes will be implemented for next fall term.

Answer: Most likely not in fall, but temporary course approvals will be made for Winter term. We’re trying to keep incoming freshman from being short two credits if they enroll in art. Best-case scenario is that this will be implemented by Winter term.

Comment from Curriculum Committee: This is a huge chunk of work that was done very well. It is very impressive considering the amounts of official documents.

Comment: Would like to use the Art department as an example that the curriculum process is not at fault. They decided to attempt to make this change in December, illustrating that it is possible for motivated faculty to rewrite their entire curriculum in four months and do a good job.

Comment: This also proves the truth of President Keulks’s comment a few meetings ago that the catalog deadline is potentially meaningless. If good ideas come forward, receive senate support, and the dean and provost agree to green-light those ideas, then the catalog deadline will not prevent their implementation – and that is a good thing. We do not work for the catalog.

**VI. Interinstitutional Faculty Senate Report**

None.

**VII. Committee Review**

None.

**VIII. Informational Presentations**

None.

**IX. Meeting Adjourned**