Faculty Senate September 6, 2012 3:00pm-5:00pm UHN McIntosh

Present: Hawley Almstedt, Laurel Burks, Franca Dell'Olio, Andrew Dilts, Elizabeth Drummond, Omar Es-Said, Véronique Flambard-Weisbart, Richard Fox, Michelle Hammers, Paul Harris, Jamie Hazlitt, George Hess, Diane Meyer, Mladen Milicevic, Katherine Noon, Patricia Oliver, John Parrish, Robert Rovetti, Sue Scheibler, Tim Shanahan, Carl Urbinati, and Thomas White

Excused: Jennifer Pate and Amy Woodson-Boulton

- Welcome to the 27<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate recognized and thanked Elizabeth Polidan for her contributions last year. Robert Houghtaling has returned to the university and will support the Senate's work this year.
- Professors Peter Ring and Nick Landay have resigned from the Faculty Senate and their seats will be filled through a special election. Professor Greg Ruzzin has also asked for a one semester leave of absence to work on a grant.

Motion 1: Approval of the April 27, 2012 minutes. By unanimous consent the line "John Parrish thanked the following people" was removed.

16 for, 1 against, 3 abstentions

## **Report from Joint Task Force on 4-Unit Courses**

- JTF Chair Dr. Mike O'Sullivan reported to the senate. The Joint Task Force has solicited information and listened to various constituencies on campus. The group has recommended moving forward with a focused discussion on the academic life, climate and rigor on campus. There will be opportunities for programs, departments, colleges/schools to transition to 4-unit courses, maintain primarily 3-unit courses or a combination of both. The JTF has recommended the university adopt the WASC definition of what defines a credit hour and follow a model recommending 30 minutes of extra classroom time. This would allow for 3 hours of class time for 4-unit courses.
- The process of moving toward 4-unit courses and how to promote and assess rigor still needs to be determined. Academic rigor is critically important and there is some concern about the potential for wasting the extra unit. The JTF recommends that current university and college/school approval processes be employed to ensure academic quality for courses/programs transitioning from 3-units to 4-units. How the transition happens in each college/school would be placed on the Dean and college/school curriculum committees with university input where appropriate.

#### Discussion:

- It was discussed whether if the APRC will be in charge of assessing the transition and how it may relate to the Core Curriculum. Several colleges /schools are still working out implementation plans. It was commented that many majors are currently constructed around 3 unit courses. Since the Core Curriculum is not computed by credit hours, but by number of courses this could potentially be working against the goals we had in mind.
- The report seems to lack a specific recommendation on the Core. A university guideline or
  policy clarifying if core courses can be 4-units could be useful before colleges/schools begin
  implementation.
- The impact on other colleges/schools is not clear until departments such as History and Theological Studies decide whether to pursue of 4 unit-courses. The recommendations fall heavily on ARPC which is responsible for every modification. The ARPC intends to draft suggestions on implementation.
- A change of schedule would impact the university and may have significant implications
  particularly if only a few departments convert. There are several potential costs to a new
  schedule such as eliminating class times.
- Substantial ongoing faculty input to these questions will be requested. Part time faculty who
  teach 4-units may need to be paid more and there is a question of whether this would be fully
  compensated by savings from reductions in total course offerings.
- It was suggested that departments, colleges/schools be provided one chance to make the transition and to provide evidence of academic rigor. Broad guidelines from Deans on the issue of academic rigor could be provided for converting departments to address.
- It was also noted that unit-level strategic plans are due on March 1, 2013 and this could have a great impact on this issue. A baseline would be useful before making further decisions.
- Many of the existing 4-unit courses do not impact the current schedule. The University Core
  Committee should also weigh in and provide insight on how to best to implement as the
  footprint of the core is based on 120 total undergraduate credit hours.

### **Resolution on 4-Unit Courses**

Based on retreat conversation, Senator Richard Fox has presented a resolution consisting of 7
points in an effort to provide a final disposition on this issue. (See Appendix 1)

- Senators considered adding a point restricting the teaching load to 18 credit hours per semester and limiting the number of majors and minors.
- It was discussed that identifying how many programs are interested in transitioning is a critical step which could help determine what the impact on scheduling and the Core Curriculum would be. It may be useful to strengthen the vision of the process by endorsing departments to explore conversion while the administration looks at how to implement and manage. The executive can represent the concerns of the faculty to the administration.
- The Faculty Senate could also suggest a process and mechanism to get an idea of how many
  departments, programs will transition. Each program going through APRC is examined, but not
  the collective impact. It may be useful to build in a step to examine the collective impact on the
  Core Curriculum and schedule. It was noted that the charge of JTF was to examine how to
  move to 4-units across the university.
- The language "through the process recommended in #4 below" was suggested as an addition to the end of point 2. The language "including specifically the ARPC, UCCC and College/School Curriculum committees was suggested as an addition to the end of point 5. It was also suggested that we switch the order of point 2 and 3 to allow the resolutions to flow better.

Motion 2: Move to table the Fox Resolution.

# 13 for, 3 against, 2 abstentions

## **Report from the Executive Committee on Administrator Reviews**

- The topic of administrator reviews is a sensitive issue and has a long history. In April, the Governance Committee recommended Deans should be reviewed in a 2<sup>nd</sup> year midterm and 4<sup>th</sup> year comprehensive review and that specific scaled questions should be designed with input from faculty and based on the Dean's job description. There still needs to be specification on what would be reported to faculty and if the 2<sup>nd</sup> year review would be strictly formative. There is an inclination that the midterm review could be formative and Deans could use the feedback to examine areas to improve and how to best work with faculty. It was suggested that midterm feedback should also go to the Provost and to the President.
- There seems to be some optimism on the first two points and more push back on what would be reported to faculty. President Parrish met with Rebecca Chandler, Vice President of Human Resources and discussed what can be shared without the consent of the subject of the review.
   She raised the idea of a chilling effect that could occur depending on what can be made public.
- The Faculty Senate has committed to start developing our own process by November 1, 2012 if there is not satisfactory response from the administration. It was commented that full disclosure could feel like public humiliation and it was suggested that the Executive Committee

could be privy to the results. It would be useful to evaluate last year's disclosure in the CBA Dean's evaluation process and see how to best move forward. It was suggested we could alternatively focus on evaluating the Dean's Office as opposed to solely the Dean. By/with unanimous consent this matter will be referred to the governance committee and we propose that Deans explain the governance process in their respective colleges/schools.

### **New Business**

• Nominations were solicited for two faculty members to serve as special representatives to the Provost's Council related to unit-level strategic planning.

Meeting adjourned at 5:03 pm

Submitted by: Franca Dell'Olio

Prepared by: Robert Houghtaling

- 1. The Faculty Senate gratefully accepts the final report from the Joint Task Force on 4-Unit Courses with appreciation for the members' careful study of this important issue and their significant investment of time and attention during Spring and Summer 2012.
- 2. The Faculty Senate strongly endorses the JTF report's central recommendation that moving to a curriculum based primarily on 4-unit courses is not desirable at this time for the university as a whole, but that academic programs that wish to offer 3-unit, 4-unit, or a mix of 3-unit and 4-unit courses should be permitted to do so.
- 3. The Faculty Senate affirms the JTF's recommendation that LMU adopt WASC's definition of a credit hour.
- 4. The Faculty Senate affirms the JTF's recommendation that "current university and school/college processes should be employed to ensure the academic quality and assessment plans for any courses/programs transitioning from 3-unit to 4-unit courses." (p. 2)
- 5. Based on recommendations both from the Joint Task Force and the Core Implementation Task Force, the Faculty Senate affirms the importance of moving directly ahead with the full implementation of the new core curriculum. It is assumed that initial implementation will be primarily based on 3-unit courses and that conversations about which academic programs may have an interest in offering some 4-unit courses in the core will unfold during unit-level strategic planning processes during the course of this year. College/School and University academic planning and review processes will ensure that proposed changes will not have an undue negative impact on other academic programs, including the core curriculum.
- 6. The Faculty Senate affirms the general purpose aimed at by the JTF's recommendation that the university should adjust its standard weekly course schedule to aid instructors who wish to increase the total number of contact hours per semester in their courses. The Senate emphasizes that any standard course schedule should be effective in promoting academic rigor and focus for students, and in facilitating the faculty's 40-40-20 (teaching research/creative activity-service) faculty workload structure. With these goals in mind, the Senate encourages the Provost to undertake, with substantial ongoing faculty consultation, further study of the specific feasibility of the model proposed by the JTF (or some variation thereof), and apprise the Senate of relevant findings by Spring 2013.
- 7. The Faculty Senate strongly affirms the JTF's recommendation that "the university community capitalize on this moment of focused campus-wide discussion of the meaning, nature, structure, and indicators of academic excellence, rigor, and climate taking definitive actions now to enhance and deepen campus academic life." (p. 2)