

Loyola Marymount University

Faculty Senate Minutes

November 29, 2007

Collins Center

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Present: John Dorsey, Patricia Douglas, Charles Erven, Sonny Espinoza, Rudy Fleck, Paul Harris, Christina Hennessey, Amir Hussain, Lily Khadjavi, Yvette Lapayese, Blake Mellor, K. J. Peters, Damon Rago, Nina Reich, James Roe, Jonathan Rothchild, Patrick Shanahan, and Seth Thompson.

Excused: Jeffery Davis, Vicki Graf, Jok Madut Jok, Chun Lee, Ellen Ensher, Gary Kulek, Susan Scheibler, Beth Serlin, Mel Mendelson, and Jennifer Offenber.

Welcome

President Peters called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. A moment of silence was observed for Scott Odom.

Call for approval of the November 15, 2007 meeting minutes.

Approval of Minutes

Motion 1: Approval of 11/15/07 minutes.

Motion passed: 16 for, 0 opposed, 1 abstain

Announcements

- The LMU Staff Senate 2007 Staff Holiday Party Survey results are available on the Staff Senate channel on ManeGate and on the main LMU site. On the left column will be a prompt titled, 2007 Staff Holiday Party Survey Results. Click it! You may also simply cut and paste the following link into your browser: <http://www.lmu.edu/PageFactory.aspx?PageID=40945>.
- VP for Undergraduate Education open forums:

Rae Linda Brown	Ricardo Machón
December 10	December 14
3:30-4:15	1:00-2:00
- The Greek Council Faculty Wine and Cheese will be held November 29, 2007, 5:30pm, in McIntosh and is open to all faculty.
- Software home use discussion will take place in the Academic Technology Committee.
- The Faculty Christmas Social will be held on November 30, 4:30 in the Collins Center.
- The Handbook Revision Committee now met three times and has made structural changes to the document. The goal is to have a draft for the Senate by Spring followed by a vote by the full faculty.

Reports

1) Department Chairs: Selection and Support

- President Peters announced that Vicki Graf is working with the Department Chair Focus Group and will be able to update the Senate on the progress of that group. The floor was opened to senators for an open discussion about the selection and support of department chairs.

Discussion

Q. Is there a fixed chair stipend?

A. One check per semester is provided and the amount is determined by the Dean's perspective of the workload.

Comment: The amount varies greatly between many schools and departments.

Comment: The compensation is not motivation to become chair. Department Chairs also often times must be around during the summer which is likely not as lucrative as other summer opportunities.

Comment: The increased amount of 'administrivia' has added a whole new facet to the job. In the past missing a day may have resulted catching up with a couple of voicemails, however now chairs could have 160 e-mails waiting.

Comment: There is also now a much larger number of Faculty. Chairs also oversee part time faculty which is a huge responsibility considering nearly 50% of courses are now taught by part time faculty.

Comment: Having chairs change regularly is also not beneficial. Departments need a more consistent leader who is working towards program goals.

Comment: There is a need to also look at the structure of the associate chair. There are simply too many administrative tasks and the workload needs to be shared.

Comment: The more we accept this workload, the more of a potential to add another level of bureaucracy. There needs to be a decision on how to disseminate this workload now.

Comment: In the past an administrative assistant was provided specifically for chairs, now the position is just for the department.

Comment: The inclusion of training for new chairs is also important as there are all kinds of variation in term of individual skill level.

Comment: My department has increased from 13 to 18 faculty members, and we still have the same amount of administrative support.

Comment: Ambition to become chair is now linked to administrative work and serving the upper administration. It is hard to think of any incentives for individuals to want this position.

Comment: One route is to remove the administrative work and return the chair to a more traditional role. We can utilize the term "administrivia" as it is becoming used more often.

Comment: Eventually we will run out of full professors to serve as chair.

Comment: The School of Education would not support number five, as untenured faculty members can not be chair.

Comment: I suggest we table the conversation until Vicki Graf can be here to also provide input. She will also be able to go back and work on our behalf.

Q. Will Vicki be reporting back to the Senate?

A. Yes, there have been three listening sessions to date.

Action Item: Come up collectively with questions/comments about Department Chair selection and support for Vicki Graf.

- o How are chairs selected/appointed?
- o Find a better way to formalize the selection process utilizing an evaluation process.
- o Identify some of the specific tasks that should be removed from the chair's workload. (i.e. schedule of classes)
- o Why do few assistant and associate professors see the chair position as a career path?
- o When becoming chair an individual's research output drops dramatically. This needs to be considered in Rank and Tenure.
- o I prefer transparent compensation for chairs so it is better understood university wide.
- o Instead of compensation numbers, what about providing percentages or a set of questions/categories in which each chair's role was evaluated. This may help respect differences in departments and colleges.

- Development of a survey of chairs handled at the HR level (as an opportunity to educate and inform)
- There are no procedures in the handbook for the removal of chairs.
- Chairs are tending to be more vocal about the change in workload which is deterring young faculty from considering the position.

2) Faculty Leave Policy

- There are two objectives one to get people outside of senate to take handbook seriously, which is why we need to vote to approve it so that the Senate is not bypassed in future processes. Secondly, Human Resources has been open to the revisions and we want to affirm that their effort to reach out has been worth it.

Discussion

Comment: There are still questions on some of the details, but it seems reasonable and 80%-90% of what we want. It is infinitely better than nothing at all and open to future revision.

Comment: It is definitely a living document and Human Resources may be open to look at any revisions each year.

Comment: It is also a good idea to get feedback from department members, and regardless of the vote, the policy is already in place this semester.

Comment: I view this policy as a right and have some reservations on thanking Human Resources.

Q. What about sick days?

A. It was determined there are no sick days as this would require faculty to punch a clock in order to accumulate days.

Motion 2: Move that the Faculty Senate accept the Human Resources Faculty leave policy and that the Faculty Senate looks forward to further consultations with Human Resources regarding future and previous suggestions for revisions of the policy. The Senate appreciates the cooperative attitude of Human Resources.

Motion passed: 15 for, 0 opposed, 3 abstain

Comment: I appreciate the collegiality, but I think this was the responsibility of Human Resources not something to be applauded.

3) Academic Calendar

- There has not been much feedback on the academic calendar to date so we could take time to discuss and formulate questions. Looking at the membership of the calendar committee, President Peters is listed but was not invited to the first meeting. There is no language about what a credit hour is and WASC has not updated language in 10 years.
- There is also talk about possibly bringing back a Holiday Interim semester of intensive courses. Some advantages may include service learning and student travel, while disadvantages to faculty research.
- We need to look at the average, and determine if a semester is 70 or 75 days? Currently finals week is not considered as instructional days. Is there consensus that we need 15, 16, 17 weeks and have any faculty complained about not enough days? The biggest complaint is not having enough time between semesters for course preparation and travel.

Discussion

Q. What is the role of the academic calendar committee?

A. It is a new committee; my opinion is that the calendar is curricular.

Q. Are our contracts based on a 15 week semester?

A. This question brings us back to the argument if finals week is considered instructional.

Comment: Doesn't the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off effectively give students the entire week off?

Comment: We need consistency in schedules, this is titled the academic calendar therefore academics must drive the calendar.

Comment: The longer semester does provide more wiggle room for faculty.

Q. What was the winter term like before was it required and who was teaching?

A. It was treated as a summer session.

Q. Has this committee formally endorsed the calendar?

A. The CAO will make the final decision.

Comment: I support including finals week as an instructional week as we are working with students during that time on projects.

Comment: I'm worried about the shortening of the time between semesters. Many faculty are required to be here for other reasons before the semester begins. This is not a family friendly policy.

Comment: More faculty duty days are also creeping up on the weekends.

Comment: Committee membership represents the administration and not the faculty.

Comment: I question if this is financially driven, or driven by curriculum.

Comment: I'm concerned that exams are not considered instruction, as for my department I want to reiterate that finals is a week of instruction.

Comment: Reading days are helpful for undergraduates, but having it on the weekend is redundant.

Rosenia St. Onge-Registrar

There was some discussion with WASC, they don't mandate, rather they set guidelines. Universities generally agree on 17 weeks with 15 weeks of instruction.

Q. What is the difference between instruction and the other weeks?

A. One week is exams, another is like Spring break. We need to take into account time patterns, like Monday only classes as you need to have enough Mondays in a semester.

Q. Is next Fall is a week longer?

A. Correct. We have gone from as low as 62 to a high of 75 academic days (which is the ideal). It's difficult because of irregularities in calendars in general (when Easter falls etc). This coming year has the highest amount of academic days in seven years based on shortened winter break.

Q. According to who is 75 academic days ideal?

A. Best practices.

Comment: If you strive for consistency then why 75 not 72 which is close to the average over the past years.

Q. Is finals week considered an instructional week? We recommendation that finals week be included as an instructional week.

A. WASC defines that most courses have finals that are not considered instructional.

Comment: I suggest LMU be more progressive and look at including finals as an instructional week.

Comment: It's during finals week we have the highest instructional contact, faculty definitely view it as instructional. This calendar was made in absence of faculty input. Would the registrar's office have a problem with a 72 day calendar if it were the opinion of the CAO?

Comment: The faculty is concerned that the administration and athletics are responsible for determining what constitutes a semester.

Comment: Associate Deans and tenured faculty wanted to go to a minute count.

Comment: Most Associate Deans are no longer teaching, nor are they the keepers of quality or representative of faculty concerns.

Comment: I want to emphasize that the Faculty resistance is not about doing extra work it's about quality of faculty work in teaching and research.

Comment: The registrar will start working on a three year calendar in the Spring and I think a faculty member from each college needs to be on the committee.

Q. Is it a misprint that the Reading Days are on a weekend?

A. No, it is listed for students to mentally see it as a reading day.

Q. The insularity of the committee is exemplified by the reaction of faculty. Having we been doing something wrong all these years?

A. Yes, we have been short on the number of academic days and the new administration want to increase.

Q. What is the Monday problem and what percentage of students are affected?

A. The issue is the semester beginning on a Wednesday. There are a large number of Monday classes in the graduate program, School of Education and MBA program. The MBA program in particular has always complained about the shortage on Mondays.

Q. Why not add 15 minutes to these Monday courses?

A. They are already long and in many cases this issue also affects MWF courses.

Motion 3: Move to adjourn

Motion passed: 11 for, 0 opposed, 0 abstain

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02pm.

Submitted by: Patrick Shanahan

Prepared by: Robert Houghtaling