

Loyola Marymount University

Faculty Senate Minutes

October 4, 2007

Hilton 100

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Present: Jeffery Davis, Charles Erven, Sonny Espinoza, Rudy Fleck, Vicki Graf, Paul Harris, Christina Hennessey, Jok Madut Jok, Blake Mellor, K. J. Peters, Damon Rago, Nina Reich, James Roe, Beth Serlin, Patrick Shanahan, and Seth Thompson.

Excused: Patricia Douglas, Chun Lee, Ellen Ensher, Amir Hussain, Lily Khadjavi, Gary Kuleck, Yvette Lapayese, Susan Scheibler, Mel Mendelson, Jonathan Rothchild, and Jennifer Offenberg.

Welcome

President Peters called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. He began by calling for approval of the September 20, 2007 meeting minutes.

Approval of Minutes

Motion 1: Approval of minutes from 09/20/07 Faculty Senate Meeting:

Motion passed: 15 for, 0 opposed, 0 abstain

A moment of silence was observed.

Announcements

Housekeeping

- The next regular senate meeting is October 18 at 3:00pm in the Collins Center.
- Vice President Paul Harris will keep a speakers list, unless senate votes to suspend rules of order. Priority will be given to those who haven't spoken on a topic.
- The senate will observe time limits on the agenda, however senators are encouraged to move for additional discussion time.

President's Address: Distraction Does Not Serve the Scholar or the Student.

President Peters began by addressing the issue of the senate's voice, and used Shakespeare to demonstrate "you may be given an audience, but you have to win the attention and consideration of an audience." The senate has attained a more prominent voice over the last several years but now a new challenge emerges which is "what do we have to say and how will the faculty achieve and maintain a hearing?" President Peters shared a few things he knows and the mission of the senate.

Some things I know:

- The senate is not a bulletin board where decisions made elsewhere are posted.
- We cannot exist solely as a department of faculty complaints.
- The senate is neither powerless nor independent of the institution that provides our intellectual home.

The mission of the senate is simply to:

- Amplify the voice of the faculty
- Give form and force to the curriculum
- Provide informed guidance through the administration of committees
- Defend academic freedom

This year the senate will remain focused on the theme Distraction Does Not Serve the Scholar or the Student to attend to the issues that reduce distraction so that professors can focus on research that serves teaching, and teaching that serves the community. The senate proposes the following agenda:

- Revision of the handbook as it shapes our academic life and defines our freedoms and obligations.

- Review Rank and Tenure procedures to protect the rights of our junior faculty, ensure the future of the professoriate, and thereby nurture the health of the university.
- Review senate committees to determine which are active, viable, and identify opportunities for reorganization.
- Work collaboratively to retain a diverse, dynamic faculty.
- Continue to explore our obligations and opportunities in shared governance.

President Peters acknowledged that the unexpected does happen and the senate cannot anticipate everything. He asked for the faculty's help:

- Senators, continue to bring the concerns and suggestions of your constituents to the senate.
- More importantly, share the good work you do and the things you learn in the senate with those you represent.
- Faculty, if you discover gaps or errors in the handbook, let us know.
- If you are aware of a committee that is drifting, tell us.
- If you see ways to hold the attention of our partners in shared governance, we need to hear it.

President Peters shared a final thought from Emerson who described the American scholar, and ended in his own words. The speech in its entirety can be found on the Faculty Senate website.

Solicit the Guidance of the Faculty

President Peters opened the floor to the faculty for comments and guidance on the senate's work for this year.

Discussion

Comment: I would like to thank President Peters for a fine speech.

Comment: My major concern is with Rank and Tenure.

Comment: I'm concerned about the issue of sick days as they have seemed to disappear. We need clarification.

Comment: I was not aware we had sick days.

Comment: Previously six days were accumulated per year and it was common to have a semester early retirement. We need clarification on the policy.

Q. How much face to face meeting time could be done through e-mail?

A. You never know what issue could potentially erupt and require much more discussion and interaction than what could be facilitated through e-mail.

Comment: Without face to face contact a sense of university community would not exist.

Q. Did we have a chat room at one time?

A. Yes, this was attempted and questions were posted, however there was never much of a response.

Comment: I think a lot of critical issues have been put on the table. Especially the issue surrounding workloads and Rank and Tenure, as nearly every college has had concerns about Junior Faculty and the Rank and Tenure procedures.

Comment: One of WASC's criticisms is that the university seems to be becoming increasingly "top heavy" with the addition of new Vice Presidents where resources could be put elsewhere.

Comment: I would like to see the new Freshman Academic Convocation geared more towards academics. It has shifted more towards a pep rally format in the last three years.

Comment: There is a historic tension between student life and academics.

Q. Can President Peter's introductory speech be made available?

A. Yes, it will be posted on the Faculty Senate website.

Comment: I would like to address compensation for faculty for independent studies. Some departments cancel classes that have six or fewer students enrolled. Faculty should be compensated for independent studies or classes with few students should not be cancelled.

Comment: The academic convocation is held on a Sunday, and is not appropriate for those with families. Other events are also held on a weekends which is incongruent with the concern of the whole person.

Comment: There have been changes to travel budget and there seems to be inequity between departments. Junior Faculty have a difficult time paying for travel to presentations which can also affect tenure. I think this is worth discussing and find out who determines these budgets.

Comment: The FACHEX system is an utter sham and disaster. I would like to press for more transparency and explore other possible models, as the current system is a financial wash.

Comment: The next faculty senate meeting will include a report back on the FACHEX system.

Comment: The upper administration is becoming more receptive to housing issues. CAO Ernie Rose and Tom Fleming are on a university committee discussing new options.

Q. Is one of the options that the school could become a bank?

A. They are currently considering this, and a number of options including grants, and two year rental assistance programs.

Comment: Is there a chance of a junior faculty sabbatical program where junior faculty doesn't have to wait until the tenth year before taking a full year. Let's revisit this now.

Comment: The Faculty Workload Committee may look at this.

Comment: In the School of Education many junior faculty will not take the sabbatical and opt for the college fellowship instead. However, many are not aware of this helpful option as it is not well communicated.

Comment: The junior faculty sabbatical was never embraced by the administration. Some departments used it as a marketing tool while others did not.

Comment: The college fellowship is not time really off, and you can't substitute one for the other.

Comment: I would appreciate if the Faculty Senate could produce a year end report outlining their achievements for the year.

Comment: We will be creating a searchable database of all Faculty Senate Business.

Comment: Academically there have been a number of recent visible senate achievements. The process of determining a method of receiving feedback for deans and the CAO began 15 years ago. Currently Tom Fleming's review and his responses are posted on ManeGate. All deans have met with Rebecca Chandler to discuss their review, and a public discussion will be held with department faculty surrounding these reviews. Additionally, the CAO will provide his evaluation results to the Faculty Senate this semester.

Comment: The main purpose of the reviews is accountability, not to put people in the hot seat.

Comment: The budget committee previously consisted of twenty members, it now has seven members with the Faculty Senate providing a voice in budgeting.

Comment: There was also a quick response surrounding the issue of all faculty e-mail, and now the Faculty Senate President may communicate with the entire faculty through e-mail.

Comment: There is also an emerging trend of academics taking a lead in budgeting and aligning budgeting with the mission of the university.

Comment: I would like to remind everyone that next Thursday October 11, 2007 the CAO will host an open faculty forum which will include a summary of the academic leadership retreat.

Q. I would like more specifics on how we can advert the “disaster” of the Rank and Tenure this year, as I have some concerns about some of my colleagues. What is the plan?

A. The new position created as an assistant to the CAO will work to review and audit the current process and determine what should be standardized. Several issues will be reviewed including standards and expectations for teaching, scholarship or artistry, and service across Colleges/Schools, junior faculty reviews

Q. Are you a part of the Rank and Tenure Committee?

A. No, this position is separate from the committee.

Comment: Next year perhaps a printed invitation will be made to make the faculty more aware of the convocation.

President Peters reiterated that any concerns, problems and suggestions should be communicated to the Faculty Senate. All faculty attendees were invited to the Collins Center for a reception.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07pm.

Submitted by: Patrick Shanahan

Prepared by: Robert Houghtaling