

Minutes of the Academic Senate Meeting

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Members present: Nancy Schur, Kelly Locke, Jennifer Fellguth, Dr. Suzanne Flannigan, Steven Triano, Tony Anderson, Janet Pessagno, Sunita Lanka, Alejandra Gutierrez and Mark Roberts

The meeting was called to order.

The agenda was adopted.

Public Comments:

Suzanne announced details of the mandatory meeting on 30th September and the importance of participating in it. The purpose of the meeting is to involve faculty in program planning and assessment, SLOs, curriculum review and the work necessary to complete accreditation requirements and to embed these practices into our day-to-day activities.

The President's report:

Nancy gave the history of senate's participation in recommending the Division Chair responsibilities. Our recommendations were forwarded to the Union and currently the future role of Division Chairs is under negotiation. The registration for the plenary session was open and this was a good opportunity to learn the role and issues of the Senate.

Action Items

A) Committee appointments

1) Curriculum Committee Members - Math, Science, Engineering and Nursing
Debra Kaczmar, Janeen Whitmore and Mary Cousineau from the nursing department evinced interest in serving as members, but it was agreed upon that the three faculty members could share the two positions, with one person acting as an alternate. The Senate decided the three faculty could work out who the alternate is based on their semester assignments.

2) Senate Members: There are still vacancies to be filled and Janet will send a note to all faculty members in this regard.

There was a general consensus that steps needed to be taken to generate more participation of the faculty in enrolling as members or playing an active role in the Senate.

- B) Approval of Peer Reviewers / Evaluators: Ann Wright for Steven Triano, Nancy Schur for Loveasia Bey, Joe Welch for John Anderson, Jim Butler for Melisa Hornstein, Pimol Moth for Brooke Haag, Andy Watt for Matt Collins.
- C) Formulate and elect chairs for sub-committees to begin work on 2010-2011 goals

The President's suggestion to formulate and elect chairs for sub committees in order to work on 2010-2011 goals and that we prioritize the second, third and fourth goals this semester received a positive response from the members.

- 2) Second goal: Revise Policy of Equivalency and Minimum Qualifications – Kelly
- 3) Third goal: Implementation of Information Competency – Jennifer, Peggy/ Tony .
- 4) Fourth goal:
 - a) Develop and recommend policy for adjunct hiring and evaluation process – Nancy
 - b) Recommendation to HCFA on Adjunct Evaluation – Tony Anderson
- 5) Senate Communication:
 - a) It was agreed that more measures were required to disseminate information from the senators to the faculty members of the Division. All senators are urged to facilitate information dissemination and gathering between the departments they represent and the Senate.
- 6) Amend Constitution:
 - a) Amend membership
 - b) Senators need to be fully aware of the contents of the Constitution and discuss it with peers prior to future Senate meetings, as any alteration in the Constitution requires 2/3 vote of the entire faculty, including the proposed alteration of the membership.

Discussion Items:

- A. Current Equivalency policy: Nancy discussed the history and the criteria of the Minimum Qualifications by Discipline document from the state wide academic senate and the "or equivalent" qualifier. Historically, Hartnell's policy states that in order to teach at Hartnell, the equivalent to a Master's degree is 12 upper and 12 graduate units in the discipline. Additionally the "or equivalent" can be applied to disciplines in which a Master's is not generally required (e.g., Vocational Education). Generally a BS with two years or an AA with 6 years of experience is offered but there is still an "or equivalent" option. A couple of years ago our local senate stated that in order to have an equivalent to an associate's degree, the candidate for hire must show competency in the 6 graduation competency areas adopted for Hartnell graduates. The faculty evaluating candidates for equivalency currently attempts to glean the evidence from the application, with no clear direction to the candidate on how to provide and demonstrate evidence of equivalence to AA, BS or Master's degrees. Nancy accentuated the need for

our local Senate to develop a strong policy with greater clarity to review “equivalency” and place it before the Board of Trustees for approval. A brief discussion of policies put forth by other community colleges was presented. The question was how rigorous does the Hartnell Academic Senate want to be and which ideas needed to be implemented to overcome the weaknesses in our current process. Several questions were discussed. What criteria would determine the right qualifications? What needed to be shown to the minimum qualifications committee? How would we inform and place the burden of providing evidence on the candidate? Most Senators agreed that 24 units seemed insufficient to prove equivalent to a Master’s degree and that course work be required to grant equivalency for any degree. Experience alone could not substitute for reliable proof like college transcripts. Requiring increased documentation and burden of proof on the candidate seeing equivalency should be made a requirement. Alejandra brought up the issue of equivalency for Non-Credit Courses and that it was something to be examined as well. Kelly Locke will lead the subcommittee to recommend a policy for determining equivalency that is stronger than our current policy.

B) The Impact of the Current Administrative Structure: The increase in shared governance is a positive outcome of the present administrative structure. Several senators expressed concern that the current structure is not conducive to effective communication. Electronic communication is good, but it eliminates personal interaction and fails to bond faculty or encourage and ensure rigorous faculty participation in college activities, especially without the opportunity to meet regularly face to face. Others felt that now there is either a duplication and/or dissemination of conflicting information, or a lack of communication altogether. Disciplines need to be organized, on an ongoing basis, into their respective divisions with similar construct to ensure effective communication. Also an unintended consequence is not knowing how to function with regard to routine activities, such as obtaining office supplies, unlocking classrooms, or knowing the contact person in case of absence.

Senate meeting structure:

Nancy suggested a new structure of Senate meetings. The senate will have a combined meeting for the first half of the session and then the members divide up to work in sub-committees. Everyone would reconvene at the end of 45 minutes and report on the discussions held and goals achieved.

Agenda for the next meeting: Email suggestions before the next meeting on pervasive issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.