Regular Meeting of the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Senate
Monday September 19th, 2011, 4:00 P.M.

Minutes

Present: Ackerman, Allen, Ardis, Batchis, Bellion, Boyer, Broadnax (for Murray), Budani, Cassman, Cherrin, Cleveland, Coulter, Criston, Doren, Gallileo (for Noble-Harvey), Gutman, Kaminski, Lennon, Montano, Morgan (for Evenson), Mycoff, Norris, Penix-Tadsen, Perez, Ridge, Selimov, Seraphin, Skeen, Smith, Szabo, Watson, Young

Absent: None
Excused: Bernhardt, Hasslett, McKenna, Okpotor, Payne

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. Consent Agenda
   a. Adoption of agenda for the September 19, 2011 meeting – approved unanimously as presented
   b. Approval of the minutes of the May 16th, 2011 meeting – approved unanimously as written

2. President’s Remarks (Tony Seraphin)
   President Seraphin welcomed new and returning senators, and thanked all present for the privilege of serving as this year’s President. He presented information about anticipated themes and areas of focus for the upcoming year. These themes include 1) issues related to recruitment, retention, and success of diverse students, 2) enhanced leadership roles of women within the CAS Faculty Senate, 3) and college initiatives to foster students’ development of communication skills. A speaker series has been planned to inform senators about various facets of the first area of focus. An ad hoc committee is being formed to address the third issue, co-chaired by Brian Ackerman and Eric Rise. Seraphin remarked on the current absence of a Senate Parliamentarian, and invited interested senators to contact him about serving in this role.

3. Dean’s Remarks (George Watson)

   Dean Watson invited Senators to attend a “state of the college event” on September 21, 2001 that will precede the new faculty reception in Gore Recital Hall, Center for the Arts. During this event, the Dean will introduce the CAS strategic plan, and President Harker will conduct a town hall meeting for CAS faculty.
The Dean presented a synopsis of the vision, values, mission and strategic goals that have been defined for CAS as the result of the recent strategic planning process. He highlighted the fact that given its size and mission, CAS intends to lead the way along the University’s path to prominence in all areas (academics, research, and public engagement). He noted that a number of the critically important themes for the college are well-aligned with the University’s Path to Prominence strategic plan, and that several were identified as areas in need of strengthening in the recently issued Middle States Commission on Higher Education report associated with reaffirmation of the University’s accreditation. The Dean invited suggestions and responses from CAS departments, in particular about the specific roles that they think they can play in achieving the strategic goals. A next step for CAS will also be to determine metrics that will enable CAS to periodically assess progress towards attainment of the goals.

4. Committee Reports

No committee reports were presented.

5. Unfinished Business

a. CAS Faculty Representation on University Faculty Senate (Apportionment)

President Seraphin noted that for the 2011-2012 academic year, since there are 25 CAS departments and 25 University Faculty Senate seats allotted to CAS, apportionment is not currently a problem. It will become an issue if these numbers change. We therefore need a formula for representation to address the issue in the event that things change. Lou Rossi is the chair of the ad hoc committee that will focus on this issue. Seraphin reiterated the need for the committee to continue its work, which could lead to a recommendation for change in the bylaws. John Morgan remarked that a motion was introduced at the last meeting of the University Faculty Senate to increase the number of senators, some of which would accrue to CAS.

b. Graduate committee

President Seraphin noted that another ongoing issue is whether there is a need for a Faculty Senate graduate committee (given the existence of the CAS council of graduate directors), and if so, what the responsibilities and duties of the committee would be if it were to coexist with the council. He remarked that he would like to see this issue resolved by end of semester.

6. New Business

a. Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) - Brian Ackerman/Eric Rise presentation
Co-chairs Ackerman and Rise of the ad hoc committee introduced an initiative to revisit the CAS writing requirement to come up with a WAC program. Given its clear connection to the CAS strategic plan and the Provost’s stated goals, the committee would like to make substantive progress this year – the timing is ideal for faculty to think about ways to improve students’ communication and critical thinking skills. In particular, the co-chairs commented on the missed opportunity to improve these skills presented by the large time gap between a typical student’s enrollment in the first and second writing courses, and the apparent lack of opportunities to improve beyond the level of the second course. Issues that need to be addressed include the roles that individual departments can play in addressing their own majors’ needs. The committee currently needs volunteers willing to serve. The committee will look at current practices, what is happening at peer institutions and at institutions that are our aspirational peers, and at the challenges that might be presented for various units in the CAS portfolio. Its charge is to formulate a plan that is both meaningful (substantially improves writing experiences of students) and workable – that is, possible given other demands on majors and departments. The co-chairs anticipate that the committee will issue recommendations for consideration by the faculty and Senate by next May.

b. Proposed amendment to CAS bylaws.

John Morgan noted that the by-laws did not currently provide for a time frame for distribution of the agenda prior to the regular meeting. There was a suggestion that an amendment to the bylaws is needed that would introduce the requirement to have the agenda distributed by e-mail and posted on the CAS website at least one week in advance of the meeting. The issue was sent to the steering committee for discussion.

7. Announcements - College of Arts & Sciences State of the College and New Faculty Reception on September 21st, 2011 from 4:00-6:00PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.