

FACULTY SENATE
Tuesday, April 6, 2010
3:30 – 5:15 pm
Senate Chamber, Old Capitol

MINUTES

- Senators Present: D. Anderson, N. Andreasen, J. Beckman, C. Bohannon, G. Buettner, H. Butcher, J. Fieselmann, P. Hanley, G. Jogerst, B. Justman, C. Kletzing, D. Macfarlane, T. Mangum, S. McGuire, B. McMurray, F. Mitros, P. Mobily, J. Pendergast, J. Polumbaum, J. Reist, L. Richman, L. Robertson, V. Sharp, P. Snyder, C. Sponsler, T. Stalter, H. Stecopoulos, N. Street, R. Valentine, T. Vaughn, S. Vincent, E. Wasserman, M. Wilson Kimber.
- Officers Present: E. Dove, D. Drake, M. O'Hara, K. Tachau.
- Senators Excused: S. Bishara, J. Garfinkel, J. Menninger, S. Schultz, L. Wang, J. Wilcox.
- Senators Absent: E. Anderson, J. Bertolatus, D. Black, A. Campbell, E. Ernst, M. Fang, S. Gardner, E. Gidal, T. Gross, D. Hammond, C. Helms, K. Kader, L. Kirsch, J. Kline, T. Kresowik, S. Kurtz, E. Lawrence, D. Look, C. McCarthy, D. Morris, R. Mutel, R. Rajagopal, B. Rakel, G. Russell, A. Sanchez, M. Sauder, T. Schnell, C. Scott-Conner, W. Sharp, S. Staggs, M. VanBeek, R. Wachtel, J. Wadsworth, R. Williams, S. Wilson, C. Woodman, N. Zavazava.
- Guests: D. Heldt (*Gazette*), B. Ingram (Office of the Provost), J. Keller (Graduate College), B. Morelli (*Press-Citizen*), T. Rice (Office of the Provost), C. Ringen (Linguistics), C. Rzonca (Office of the Provost), D. Thomas (Office of the Provost), E. (illegible last name) (DITV), L. Zaper (Faculty Senate).

I. Call to Order – President Drake called the meeting to order at 3:31 pm. He indicated that there would be a set time limit for discussing each of the Strategic Initiatives Task Force reports.

II. Discussion of Strategic Initiatives Task Force Reports

A. *Strategic Budgeting*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-budget.htm>

Past President O'Hara stated the charge to and the membership of this task force. He then read the ten final recommendations listed in the task force's report. Regarding the proposed strategic fund for new initiatives, Professor Mangum commented that while funding for new initiatives is somewhat available, it is extremely difficult to find funding to sustain a successful project that is already underway. Professor Kletzing added that it is difficult to obtain funding

to buy new equipment for an ongoing project. He also advocated for productivity-based incentives for faculty to be uniform across colleges. Professor Wasserman suggested that one method of providing incentives to faculty to carry out more externally funded research would be to return more indirect grant costs to the individual faculty members who have generated the grants. Professor Pendergast commented that she had previously worked at a university that did return such costs and that the practice generated some unintended, unpleasant consequences, as university politics at the lowest level became very petty. Professor Vaughn questioned by what methods and at what levels (collegiate, departmental, etc.) such incentives would be provided to faculty, and Professor Wasserman urged that any proposed incentive system be carefully thought through. Professor Kletzing noted that overhead returns come with responsibilities, giving faculty members greater self-determination regarding infrastructure. Turning to the Task Force's recommendation regarding awarding bonuses, Secretary Tachau identified two downsides for a system of bonuses: those who do not receive them may get little or no raises, and bonuses do not go into the base pay and therefore – unlike raises – do not result in increased TIAA-CREF contributions by the university. Faculty may therefore prefer return of indirect costs over bonuses. This, however, raises another problem: how then will the arts and humanities, for which little grant funding is available, be supported in the absence of indirect funds (which currently go into the university's overall budget). Past President O'Hara closed the discussion of this task force report by commenting on the serious changes that would affect the university if a new and different budget model were to be adopted by the university.

B. *Internationalization and Diversity*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-int-div.htm>

Secretary Tachau gave an overview of the task force report's executive summary, noting that the report advocates continuing the university's unfinished work of recruiting faculty, staff and students from all historically underrepresented minority populations, among veterans and people with disabilities, as well as international students, particularly from less-represented parts of the world. The report does not advocate privileging a particular underrepresented population above others in recruitment efforts. The report also recommends preparing faculty, staff and students to live in a more multicultural and international world. Secretary Tachau drew the group's attention to the task force's proposal that new faculty and staff "draft memorandums of agreement with supervisors and mentors that acknowledge and specify the legitimate place in the portfolios of faculty and staff for effort in these areas" of increasing diversity (page 3, Goal #2, Strategy #2). This raised concern in her mind, and she suggested that the Senate may want to consider how explicitly agreements for new faculty should be crafted. She also advocated for two more of the report's goals, the enhancement of accessibility on campus, an effort that in her view appears to have stalled, and outreach to schools -- including the regents' special schools -- to recruit more minority students as well as those with disabilities.

Professor Wilson Kimber noted that, surprisingly, the report did not mention learning foreign languages as an aspect of multicultural learning. Professor Macfarland recommended that a stronger case be made as to why diversity in general is an advantage for the university. Secretary Tachau stressed that it is important to take a range of distinctive viewpoints into consideration in order to arrive at decisions that are wise ones for all humanity. Professor

Mangum commented that there should be discussion of requiring language and cultural studies in such UI colleges as business and engineering that do not traditionally require this, yet have a wide international reach. Returning to the need to make the campus accessible for people with disabilities, Professor Pendergast suggested that information and assistance be provided to departments on creating accessible websites, as this is a difficult task.

C. *Research and Creative Excellence*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-res.htm>

Past President O'Hara stated the charge to and the membership of this task force. Some of the issues explored by the task force include indirect cost recovery; areas of focus for the proposed interdisciplinary new faculty hires; infrastructure issues, including information technology systems, new structures, and grant administration support; support for interdisciplinary collaboration; and relations with external constituencies.

Professor Stecopoulos expressed surprise that the digital humanities were not emphasized in the report. Professor Kletzing noted a bias toward multi-disciplinary initiatives in the report, while the disciplines still produce solid work and should be supported. He added that the physical sciences were nearly excluded from the areas of multi-disciplinary focus. He commented further that a little-known aspect of economic development is the number of people employed by grant-funded research at the university. Professor Bohannon commented that faculty with disciplinary specialties are needed to teach students, even at the graduate level. Students' education suffers when there is emphasis on multi-disciplinarity over disciplinary specialty. Professor Wilson Kimber noted the surprising lack of discussion of libraries in the report, as well as a general lack of librarians on any of the task forces.

D. *Undergraduate Education and Success*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-ug.htm>

Vice President Dove read the task force's charge, which he then interpreted as creating a first-year experience at the university that is more similar to that at a small private college and finding ways to better assist students when they have problems. The committee was also charged with recommending an enrollment plan with the following components: increasing retention and the six-year graduation rate, reducing time to degree, increasing the university's performance on measures of student engagement, and increasing enrollment by 100 first-year students each year through 2014. Specific recommendations were made regarding first-year students (rigorous courses and living-learning communities) and upper-level students (capstone courses, service learning, etc.), as well as establishment of a student success center, an office of institutional research and assessment, and increased recruitment domestically and internationally.

Professor McMurray commented that the general thrust of the recommendations seems to be that students demand greater intellectual engagement, but in his experience those students who leave the university are not seeking this engagement. Vice President Dove responded that living-learning communities can foster intellectual engagement. Professor Kletzing expressed the view that the recommendations, while worthy, were "resource-hungry" and he wondered where the resources would come from to implement these initiatives. He added that students

should not be forced into living-learning communities against their will. Professor Mangum agreed with this last point and added that the recommendations implied an increase in expectations of faculty – that they should offer freshmen seminars as well as be available for living-learning communities, in addition to their other teaching duties; this might involve sacrifices in the area of faculty research. She noted that the CLAS Educational Policy Committee has discussed seeking suggestions from departments regarding what can be done to improve retention. This local approach would be a good balance to large-scale institutional initiatives.

E. *Graduate Education: Selective Excellence*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-grad.htm>

President Drake noted that this task force's report seemed to have elicited the most response from faculty. He reviewed the charge ("articulate a strategic vision and priorities for increased excellence in graduate education"), timeline and process of the task force's work. He stressed that the task force did not evaluate the departments, faculty or undergraduate programs associated with the graduate programs. Upon review of the data received, the task force had placed graduate programs in one of five categories: exemplary, high-quality, good, additional evaluation required, and too new to assess. The assessments were based on a variety of information and data: information on all programs provided by the Graduate College, strategic assessments provided by each of the graduate programs (mission, recruitment, outcomes, etc.), program characteristics such as size, comparison with other programs such as national rankings, and task force discussions with deans. President Drake concluded his presentation by indicating that the review process of the graduate programs has now moved to the collegiate level.

Professor McMurray commented that the recommendations for closing or merging departments seemed surprisingly detailed in the absence of input from faculty members of those departments. He added that it would be premature to recommend merging programs in a specific way without having detailed knowledge of these programs, which the task force presumably did not have. President Drake responded that it was his understanding that the task force engaged in extensive discussion regarding the assessments. He added that the recommendations will go through additional scrutiny at the collegiate and university level prior to any action being taken. Professor Stecopoulos observed that the Graduate College appears to be already making decisions about fellowship funding, etc., for next year based on the task force recommendations before this process has concluded. Dean Keller responded that the Graduate College had to make some decisions quickly regarding student fellowships following the release of the task force report. There was consultation with directors of graduate study and the Graduate Council prior to making those decisions. Fellowship funding was suspended for one year only for the programs in the category "additional evaluation required." He added that all programs, however, are eligible to apply for the new strategic funding opportunities. The report had recommended a hierarchy of resource allocation based on program category, but the Graduate College took a modified approach and chose not to allocate resources strictly in this way. Dean Keller noted that decisions about resource allocation are also being made at the collegiate level.

Professor Macfarland commented that the most accurate ratings of a department come from external reviews as well as from looking at the success of program graduates. Professor Wilson Kimber asked how the departmental responses to the evaluations were taken into consideration by the task force. She had found some of the responses compelling. She also questioned the heavy emphasis on time to degree, especially if a program's time to degree may compare favorably to that of its peers. President Drake commented that he had recently read a

report by the American Historical Association that strongly advocated for shortening time to degree. Professor Mangum observed that graduate students who haven't yet found jobs may intentionally slow their progress to degree if only to keep their teaching assistantships and accompanying health insurance. She added that since many students in the sciences move into post-doctoral positions immediately after graduation, their time to their first teaching job is similar to that for students in the humanities. The establishment of post-doctoral positions in the humanities may be one solution to the issue of time to degree.

Professor Ringen reiterated that not only is it difficult to compare across departments, but that the data for small departments can become skewed through the actions of one or two students. Professor Bohannon remarked upon the discussion of time to degree and wondered why that seems to be such an important measurement of program success. Professor Mangum noted that more funding for graduate students can lead to shorter time to degree. President Drake responded that the report suggests providing several years of non-teaching financial support to graduate students as a way of shortening time to degree. Professor Kletzing commented that while faculty may have been able to respond on the departmental level to this task force's report, whether or not those responses were taken into consideration, the campus seems to have had little opportunity for input on the other five task force reports. In his view, the campus remains unaware of the potential impact of these reports. President Drake observed that major cultural changes could arise from these reports and the university needs to be better informed.

F. *Public Outreach and Civic Engagement*, <http://provost.uiowa.edu/work/strategic-initiatives/tf-outreach.htm>

President Drake stated that this task force was charged with articulating "a strategic vision and priorities for the University to form partnerships with communities and organizations in the state..." He highlighted two initiatives identified by the task force, building a culture of and infrastructure for engagement and expanding partnerships with community colleges.

Professor Wilson Kimber, citing financial concerns about adding high-level staff, suggested that the duties of the proposed position of director of engagement be distributed among existing staff within the office of the Vice President of Strategic Communication. She also noted that the activities of the Division of Performing Arts were not mentioned in the report. Professor McMurray commented on the tendency of the task force reports to increase the workload of the already busy faculty. Professor Kletzing concurred. Professor Pendergast noted that there has been little mention of providing faculty with additional support staff as they take on these proposed new tasks. Professor Wilson Kimber highlighted some contradictions among the reports. Professor Vaughn noted that they also contained some positive synergies. Professor Macfarland suggested learning what the state of Iowa needs from the university, in addition to cultural opportunities, such as expertise regarding flood recovery or the mortgage crisis. President Drake responded that it is important to get the message out to Iowans regarding all of the university's positive contributions to the state. This will be a major responsibility of the Vice President for Strategic Communication.

III. *Adjournment* –President Drake adjourned the meeting at 5:15 pm.