Faculty Senate Governance Council

Minutes

October 11, 2007

CTO at 4:18 by President Max Porter

Present: Martin (Design), Loy (Ag), Chacko (Bus), Porter (Human Sci), Mayfield (LAS), Ford (CommComm), Vrchota (Gov & Doc), Crase (Ex-officio, Senate President), Porter (Chair).

Guests: Nancy Grudens-Shuck (Secretary, Faculty Senate), Paul Tanaka (University Legal Counsel).

Delicious refreshments were provided by Clark Ford.

The minutes of the previous meeting, September 27, were approved.

New Business: The open meetings policy. The discussion was introduced by Chair Max Porter. University legal counsel, Paul Tanaka attended the meeting to serve as expert resource on the policy. Tanaka observed the open meetings policy was “mislocated” in the faculty handbook because (1) it applies to university councils and committees and other groups not faculty governed; (2) no one is in compliance with it. Tanaka also pointed out that only groups covered by state law are subject to the open meetings policy. At ISU, only the Athletic Council and the Leopold Advisory Council must comply with the open meetings policy and Tanaka felt neither of them needs to be included in the Faculty Handbook. Additionally, the state law does not apply to the Faculty Senate, thus the senate is not obligated to observe the open meetings policy. Tanaka also pointed out that a general policy is needed regarding open meetings, but it must be flexible. A university-wide policy that applies to everyone should not be in the Faculty Handbook. A senate-specific policy could reside either in the senate by-laws or in the procedures manual.

Following Tanaka’s comments there was a period of general discussion with council members and guests asking for clarification regarding the application of the open meeting law to specific senate and faculty circumstances.

Chair Porter asked for a motion to direct further action regarding the policy. The motion “Refer the issue of the open meetings policy as it is stated in the faculty handbook (8.4.8.3.) to the Faculty Senate Governance & Documents Committee” (Clark, Martin) PASSED.

Nancy Grudens-Shuck requested continued involvement in discussions on this topic and received confirming responses from the council members.

The Faculty Senate Attendance Policy was the second item for discussion. The policy was removed from the FS consent agenda on 10/9/07 because it was discovered at the last minute that the religious accommodation policy to which the attendance policy was linked had been changed. Council members asked questions about the event and explanations were provided by Chair Porter and Legal Counsel Tanaka. Opinions offered by council members ranged from the observation that the religious
accommodation policy is not senate policy, therefore not subject to senate approval to a concern for observing shared governance to the estimation that because the new language prescribed faculty-student relationship in the classroom that the changes were subject to, at the least, senate feedback.

These motions were offered in response to the points made during the discussion:

1. Place the issue on the Executive Board (Mayfield, Ford). PASSED.

The second motion was made following discussion that concluded with council members agreeing the Governance Council should take action regarding the changes made to the religious accommodation policy but without the nature of the actions designated:

2. The Governance Council will look at issues of shared governance with respect to procedures (Ford, Mayfield). PASSED.

Next Meeting: November 1 for sure; October 25 if there is business.

ADJ at 5:54.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Vrchota