Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes from Meeting on Friday, February 21, 2014

Faculty Senate meeting was called to order by Ms. Amanda Urquhart, President, at 2:27 pm

Members present: Amanda Urquhart (Science/Math), James Galt-Brown (Liberal Arts), Heather Cathcart (Science/Math), Diantha Ellis (Business), Jordan Cofer (Liberal Arts), Doug Waid (Agriculture), James McCrimmon (Agriculture), Susan Roe (Liberal Arts).

Prior to the meeting, Chrissy Dent (Nursing) selected Heather Cathcart to vote as her proxy.

**Presentation of Minutes:**

Sen. Pres. Urquhart presented the minutes from the meeting of Friday, 31 January 2014. Sen. Galt-Brown made a motion to accept the minutes as written; Sen. Cofer seconded. Minutes accepted unanimously.

**Old Business:**

1. **Student Evaluation Tools:** Sen. Waid opened this discussion by stating that Faculty Senate had debated the various types of student evaluation tools to use in two previous incarnations and resolved nothing. He presented information obtained from his contact at Savannah State University along with information previously compiled for ABAC by Dr. Barry Milburo and noted the remarkable similarity between the two. He pointed out that Savannah State’s student evaluations are online, like ABAC’s, and are easy to navigate; yet the students are not participating. Therefore, Sen. Waid stated the real issue is not the evaluation tool but how to get students to respond. His suggestion was that we return to a scantron approach similar to the one used before. He stated the response rate was much higher when we used a manual system with a form that was completed when the instructor left the room. The information was tabulated and the results distributed to the departments and faculty.

   Sen. Cathcart broached the issue of who would compile the data. It was noted that in the past it was the Institutional Research office which did so.

   Sen. Cathcart presented her information from Gordon State College. GSC uses a Gravir Remark system. This system allows the college to create a paper questionnaire and read it much like the scantron method. The survey can be created and tabulated by the Gravir Remark machine. The cost is $1,000 up front and a $200 yearly maintenance fee.

   The cost of upkeep for scantron machines as well as the cost of the institution buying individual scantrons for each class evaluation was noted. Sen. Galt-Brown pointed out faculty could require in their syllabus that each individual student bring their own scantrons for exams as well as evaluations. Sen. Waid stated student activity fees could be increased to absorb the cost of purchasing scantrons.

   Sen. McCrimmon noted that we do not necessarily have to evaluate every class and instructor each semester. Rather, we could create a cycle of class and instructor
evaluation and lower the costs in that manner. He stated we are high tech now with low response rates, so we might need to return to low tech to increase the feedback.

Sen. Ellis stated that the School of Business used a low tech written evaluation of instruction in the Fall 2013 semester for the upper level classes only. The response rate was reported by the deans to be quite high. She also noted the email from Sen. Brannen sent to the Faculty Senate earlier extending the offer by Dr. Abul Sheikh (School of Business) to provide in-house software to capture the data. Students would still evaluate the courses/instructors online using a web form. Dr. Sheikh could have the software completed by the end of Summer 2014. Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted that might be a possible solution.

Sen. Waid urged Faculty Senate to strongly consider a return to the manual format since it is the response rate that is the issue. Sen. Cathcart stated the information Dr. Milburo tabulated previously could be used. Sen. Pres. Urquhart suggested a set of standard questions could be used for every class. Sen. McCrimmon pointed out if certain schools/departments desired, certain questions geared toward the nature of the classes could be added to the standard set of questions.

Sen. Cathcart made the motion that ABAC return to the paper and pencil (scantron) method of evaluation and look into implementing Gravic Remark (as used by Gordon State College). Sen. Galt-Brown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Dead Day(s):** Sen. Cathcart presented her survey results from the Science Department. The response was that Dead Day(s) would not necessarily be useful for the students but would be very helpful for the faculty.

Sen. Pres. Urquhart stated of those who responded from the Math Department the majority were in favor of at least one Dead Day between the end of classes and the beginning of finals. Like the Science Department, the only issue noted was student concerns (i.e. wanting to go home earlier). Sen. Cofer pointed out this should not be a major issue because a transcript is forever, so wanting to leave one day earlier is quite shortsighted.

Sen. Cathcart noted there should be no question that the day proposed between the last day of classes and the beginning of final exams would be a true Dead Day, which would mean no office hours would be required of faculty on that day. The Faculty Senate agreed.

Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion that the calendar should reflect at minimum one day (24 hours) between the end of regular classes and the beginning of final exams with said Dead Day applying to both students and faculty. Sen. Waid seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Changes to Summer Scheduling:** Sen. Galt-Brown stated most of the History and Political Science faculty like the format of a shorter summer session like MayMester; however, he is of the opinion that such a format does not lend itself to retention of knowledge.
Sen. Cathcart stated that the Science/Math Department tends to monopolize the summer schedule enough as it is because of the nature of classes requiring labs. The faculty of her department felt that a shortened schedule would worsen this situation and stated it was simply not practical to make these classes any shorter. She also noted that it was her understanding the Deans from the other schools were working with Science/Math in an effort to create a schedule which would accommodate the needs of students to enroll in more than one class.

4. Revisions to P & T Guidelines:

Section I (Procedures for Faculty Recruitment, Employment, and Appointment)

Sen. Waid questioned page 4 of the P & T Guidelines (second page of Section I), paragraph 4, last sentence: “…the dean will review the folders with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.” Is the VPAA actually reviewing all folders? Sen. Galt-Brown stated he was certain such was the case and cited due diligence.

Sen. Ellis noted the wording of this section is somewhat vague in whether or not administration should be a part of search committees for faculty. Sen. Waid highlighted paragraph 3, page 4 (second page of Section I), last sentence, parenthetical expression “whose chair will have been appointed by the department head/dean” as one resolution to that issue. Rewording of that parenthetical expression was thus suggested to be “whose chair, a member of the regular teaching faculty, will have been appointed by the department head/dean.”

Also noted was the beginning of the same paragraph “Screening committees will be appointed by the department head/dean and will consist of at least three faculty members.” Sen. Galt-Brown made the suggestion that a sentence should be added after the above highlighted sentence: “Administrators will not serve on Screening Committees.”

Sen. Waid pointed out page 4 of the Guidelines (second page of Section I), the first bulleted item, last sentence on the page: “Candidates should be able to choose from a variety of topics transmitted to them well in advance.” He noted this was not common practice across campus and made a motion the sentence be changed to “The subject matter of the colloquium, seminar, or presentation for candidates will be left up to the discretion of the Screening Committee.” Sen. Cofer seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Section II (Requirements for Ranks)

Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted Part E of Section II notes “appointment may occur at both the Instructor rank or the Lecturer rank.” While Part A references “Instructor” rank, there is no separate section for the “Lecturer” rank. She recommended that a separate section for “Lecturer” be added to clarify.
Also, there is mention in Part E of a “Senior Lecturer;” however, no indication as to what defines promotion to such position. What defines Lecturer and Senior Lecturer rank, exactly? And, what is required to move from one to the other. Therefore, suggestion that a separate section be noted for “Senior Lecturer” was made as well.

The following statement was suggested as an addition to this section: “Lecturer will be a non-tenured faculty teaching a full load without the attending duties of a tenured track faculty member.”

**Section III (Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure)**

Sen. McCrimmon requested that Faculty Senate wait until the next meeting to consider Section III due to the detail within the section and the need to confer with his team member, Sen. Brannen.

**Section IV (Promotion and Tenure Unit)**

Sen. Cathcart pointed out page 17 of the manual (2nd page of Section IV), end of paragraph carried over from page 16: “(see section VIII, Appendices).” She noted there is no Section VIII in the manual. Instead the manual skips from Section VII to Section IX (see page 35).

The wording of this section should also be clear that faculty evaluations by deans are only in place if there are no department heads.

Also, on page 17, 2nd paragraph “one level down” could be interpreted as only department heads will evaluate deans. The suggestion was made that “one level down” in reference to the evaluation of deans should be struck so that faculty may also evaluate deans. Mention was also made that if it is only “one level down,” the department heads are in a somewhat awkward position as there are only a few of them to evaluate the deans.

**Section V (Procedures for Promotion):**

No changes noted.

**Section VI (Procedures for Tenure):**

Discussion postponed to next meeting.

**Section VII (Appeals):**

Discussion postponed to next meeting.

**Section VIII (Appendices)**
See note in \textit{Section IV}

Due to limited time at this meeting, a hold was placed on further review of the P & T Guidelines. Faculty Senate will review Sections III (skipped in this meeting), VI, VII and VIII (which needs to be added as noted above) at the next meeting.

5. \textbf{Prerequisite Checks – Update from Registrar (if any)}: Sen. Cathcart updated the Faculty Senate on this issue, stating it was mostly a Science/Math issue which was being resolved with the Deans and respective departments and noted no real need to contact the Registrar concerning this issue as yet.

\textbf{New Business}

None noted.

Sen. Cofer made the motion to adjourn; Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion carried. The Senate adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

The next meeting will be held March 28, 2014.