Faculty Senate Meeting

Minutes from Meeting on Friday, April 25, 2014

Faculty Senate meeting was called to order by Ms. Amanda Urquhart, President, at 2:10 pm

Members present: Amanda Urquhart (Science/Math), James Galt-Brown (Liberal Arts), Heather Catheart (Science/Math), Diantha Ellis (Business), JoAnn Brannen (Business), Doug Waid (Agriculture), James McCrimmon (Agriculture), Chrissy Dent (Nursing), Susan Roe (Liberal Arts).

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

Also present: Dr. David Bridges (President) and Ms. Betty McCorvey (Director of Sponsored Programs).

Presentation of Minutes:

Sen. Pres. Urquhart presented the minutes from the meeting of Friday, 28 March 2014. Sen. Galt-Brown made a motion to accept the minutes as amended; Sen. Roe seconded. Minutes accepted unanimously as written.

President’s Address:

Dr. David Bridges, President, provided the Faculty Senate with an update of key issues. First of all, a general letter regarding the budget will be released from his office in the coming week. He noted ABAC had fared well in its allocation from the system, given the budget setbacks of the year. There was a 3% pool allotted for merit raises and a large number of raises for equity. All pay raises will go out July 1, not January 1. Travel adjustments were equalized for faculty across the board. Dr. Bridges noted that faculty should consult with their deans for explanation of the merit raise allocation. He also stated that no administrator, dean or above, received more than a 4% raise.

Noting that he and the Cabinet had received the Faculty Senate’s recommendations for Promotion and Tenure revisions, Dr. Bridges stated the revisions would be addressed at the start of the Fall 2014 semester so that they would be in place for the following cycle.

Dr. Bridges relayed a message from Dr. Reddick (VPAA) that the Faculty Senate recommendations for using Gravic Remark for student evaluations of faculty instruction were accepted.

Dr. Bridges also noted that the idea of a “Dead Day” between the end of classes and start of final exams was a good one. However, the calendar would need to be modified. This will take some consultations to see if it can indeed be changed in the near future.

Dr. Bridges stated he would send a formal charge to the Senate in the near future; but in the meantime, he requested that the Senate assess and evaluate D2L to see if it was indeed worth the money being spent on it.
Another issue needing to be addressed by the college in the near future will be the phone system currently in place. On 31 May 2014, the system ABAC is now using will no longer be supported by the manufacturer. Many computers across campus are tied to the phone system. Options are being weighed at this point, and a new system should be in place by the start of the Fall 2014 semester.

Dr. Bridges then entertained questions from the Faculty Senate.

Sen. Galt-Brown asked if the head of the Information Technology department would have control of the website, as it is not presently very user-friendly. Dr. Bridges responded that has not been discussed with the new head of IT but pointed out the college has “no capacity to do so internally.” He noted when the present website was designed it was done so for the purpose of prospective students first. However, he agreed there were definitely problems with the website and stated we needed to have a discussion concerning the missing elements and the reasoning behind information purposefully left out of the design.

Sen. Brannen asked about the issue of increasing class sizes. Dr. Bridges pointed out the cost of instruction at ABAC was among the highest in the system, even though the faculty is among the lowest paid in the system. At the end of day, though, load is purely a budget issue.

Dr. Bridges stated that what he foresees to be the strategic issues for the coming academic year are instruction cost as well as concerns about the future of the music and athletics programs.

**Old Business:**

1. **Update on A GIG Recommendations:**
   
   Ms. Betty McCorvey presented the recommendations from the ABAC Grants Improvement Group (A GIG) comprised of three faculty members representing the schools of Science and Mathematics, Agriculture and Natural Resources and Business. The purpose of A GIG was to explore ways to increase faculty participation in grant writing (granting). The objectives for the A GIG conversations were:
   
   a. To identify roadblocks to “granting”
      
      i. Relevance and Suitability of Grants: Grants are perceived as “extra work,” major undertakings that are not integral to or supportive of teaching.
      
      ii. Release Time Unavailable: Grant-interested faculty do not expect to receive a reduction in course load equivalent to that needed to research, submit and implement grant programs.
   
   b. To identify solutions to these roadblocks
      
      i. Create an On-going Dialogue Directly among Faculty/Office of Sponsored Programs: Hold school-level meetings with interested faculty to ascertain their strategic needs and to identify relevant grants within the scope of those needs.
      
      ii. Advanced Authorization of Release Time: Create an agreement process whereby interested faculty can apply for and receive pre-approved release time contingent upon completion of a grant submission and/or implementation during that time.
   
   c. To identify incentives to promote “granting”
i. Internal Grant Program: Allocate $10,000 annually per school to be administered by an Internal Grant Committee who would accept and award faculty proposals for granting related expenses including, but not limited to, professional development registration fees and travel, visits to Program Officers, hosting Program Officers and grant writing/review experts and overseeing 1-3 credit hours of directed study/research by students.

ii. Recognition of Granters (submitters): Hold an annual function where the College Administration would recognize and reward granting faculty from the previous year. Consider presenting a certificate and nominal stipend, for example $50 for submitting a proposal-not-funded and $100 for submitting a proposal-funded.

Upon presenting the suggestions from the A GIG, Ms. McCorvey asked for feedback from the Faculty Senate.

Sen. Brannen asked what would be the average amount of time to work on a grant to warrant the release time. Ms. McCorvey shared an example of a grant she recently worked on in which it took over 40 hours to simply write the needs assessment. This did not include the time it took to research and write the grant. Sen. Galt-Brown stated the writing of a grant was the equivalent of a history major writing half of a master’s thesis.

Sen. Galt-Brown expressed his concern with release time was the potential for someone to start auditing the amount of time actually spent in researching and writing the grant, which could lead to repercussions for money paid in release time later on for all involved.

Sen. Waid stated that given the current problems with increasing class sizes and lack of enough adjunct instructors, someone else would be required to pick up the slack for another’s release time. He questioned whether or not it would be possible for something else besides release time to be used, such as compensation.

Sen. McCrimmon pointed out the Faculty Senate could spend hours in every meeting of the coming academic year discussing the fact that the biggest holdup of the suggestions for administration could be release time, or the Senate could simply send the A GIG suggestions on to see what actually gets kicked back.

Sen. Waid stated the Faculty Senate could support the suggestions for consideration by administration, noting in a disclaimer similar to the following: “The presentation of the suggestions is simply to open the dialogue on the subject of fostering more grant writing on campus. The Faculty Senate is fully aware there may be points on which faculty and administration need to have further discussion.”

Sen. Cathcart made the motion that the A GIG recommendations be sent forward as presented by Ms. McCorvey and the A GIG with the disclaimer noted. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **Revisions to P & T Guidelines:**

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

Sen. Brannen noted the suggestions she had for this section were of a mechanical nature: Section B.2. should not have a period at the end, and Section D. 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 should not have periods at the end.

Furthermore, all sections, including A, B, C, and D should have the second-level paragraph fall under the beginning text of the first line. The second-level paragraphs are indented too far at present.

Overall in the policy manual, it is recommended all bulleted and indented items be consistent, using the same spaces throughout. Currently, the items are randomly spaced.

*Section VI (Procedures for Tenure):*

Sen. Dent pointed out page 30 in the manual (page 4 of the section), line 2 notes an “Appendix C.” There is no “Appendix C” in the manual. Is the “Appendix C” the information found under Section VIII (currently listed as Section IX) on pages 42 and 43? Either the reference to “Appendix C” should be removed or there should be an “Appendix C.”

*Section VIII (Appendices)*

Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted anything that has changed in previous sections would obviously change corresponding forms in Section VIII (currently listed as Section IX).

The first change noted is that Section IX noted on page 35 of the manual should be changed to Section VIII (Appendices).

Sen. Cathcart noted the form on page 37 (School Action Plan), block three references “Time Line.” This should be “Timeline,” no space.

Sen. Cathcart also noted the form on page 36 (School Summary Report) lists “(be specific)” under each section. There are tabbing errors here. The parenthetical expression should consistently be on one line instead of broken up in some places.

Sen. Galt-Brown noted that some schools on campus are of the opinion that the forms cannot go to the second page, only what can fit in the box on one page is allowed. Sen. Waid agreed this is definitely a problem. Sen. Galt-Brown made a motion that a note be made beside “be specific,” such as “render as attached.” This would allow the school committee to “be specific” but also keep the form to one page.

Sen. Brannen noted there is a license with Adobe Acrobat that allows one to fill in PDF forms and edit them as the boxes expand.
Sen. Pres. Urquhart asked who would be responsible for creating these forms in that format. Sen. Brannen volunteered to do so.

Sen. Galt-Brown withdrew his motion to add “render as attached.”

Sen. Dent made a motion for the forms to be created using the software indicated by Sen. Brannen so that the boxes expand into one fluid form. Sen. Waid seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sen. Pres. Urquhart noted the following forms on pages 40 & 41 of Section IX (VIII): Recommendation for Tenure and Recommendation for Promotion. For both forms, the summary of action section has asterisk beside “Not Approved.” To which section of the manual does the asterisk point? The forms are not clear on this. The Faculty Senate interprets the asterisk to point toward Section VII Appeals, specifically the appeals process noted on pages 33 and 34. Sen. Roe made a motion that it be clearly stated on the form that the asterisk on the forms for recommendation for tenure and recommendation for promotion point clearly to Section VII (Appeals). Sen. Galt-Brown seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Sen. Brannen presented a recommended list of index labels for the portfolio:

**Example Labels for Portfolio**
*(see details in Guideline for Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure)*

**Area A: Contributions to Teaching and Advising**
1) Honor/Recognitions
2) Development
3) Evaluations
4) Advising
5) Peer/Supervisor Evaluations
6) Publication Activities
7) Grants Related to Instruction
8) Elections to Offices/Committee Activities
9) Academic Policy/Procedure Dev
10) Integration of Teaching/Research
11) Certification

**Area B: Contributions to Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity, or Academic Achievement**
1) Research and/or Publications
2) Creative Products
3) Board Memberships
4) Reviews
5) Project/Grants
6) Presentation
7) Other Evidence
8) Record of Participation
9) Expertise
10) Program Development
11) Computer Program Development
12) Scholarly Honor/Awards
13) Grants/Contracts for Instruction
14) Application of Research
15) Technology Transferred
16) Technical Assistance Provided
17) Other Evidence
18) Elections

**Area C: Contributions in Professional Service to the Institution and/or the Community**
1) Honors Service-based Activities
2) Program/Project Development
3) Service-Based Instructional Activities
4) Consultation and Technical Assistance
5) Applied Research
6) Service Products
7) Copyright, Service Activities
8) Contracts, Grants, Gifts
9) Other Service Activities
10) Documentation of Participation

**Area D: Contributions in Professional Growth and Development**
1) Professional Conferences
2) Presentations
3) Grants
4) Panel Membership
5) Teaching Related Elections
6) Certification of Expertise
7) Special Teaching Activities
8) Membership Special Bodies
9) Creative Products
10) Membership on Editorial Boards
11) Funded Project
12) Presentation of Research Papers
13) Other Evidence of Research
14) Record of Participation
15) Research related Election
Sen. Pres. Urquhart suggested the addition of the recommended index labels in Section VIII (Appendices) of the manual between pages 42 and 43 as an example of a Table of Contents with the note that is was not required the suggested table of contents be followed to the letter. Mention was also made that each section of the portfolio should have its own Table of Contents to encourage some degree of continuity in portfolios across campus so that the campus-wide Promotion and Tenure Committee would be able to evaluate all portfolios evenly with greater ease.

Sen. Pres. Urquhart recommended that a completely new section be added to the manual, which would include recommendations for assembly of portfolios. She stated this could also be included on the Faculty Senate website.

Sen. Brannen noted that if the recommendations were in the manual, they would be considered to be official. Therefore, she suggested that the recommendations for assembly be listed on the Faculty Senate website.

Sen. Waid made a motion that the Faculty Senate add to future business a compilation of Section VIII so that all suggestions are added and a new Section IX become the appendices. Further discussion on the issue of adding suggestions to the manual would thus be tabled to the first meeting of the Fall 2014 semester. Sen. Galt-Brown seconded. Motion to table unanimous.

Sen. Galt-Brown moved that the policy of the Faculty Senate of ABAC be that no new versions of Promotion and Tenure Guidelines be published until voted on and approved by the Faculty Senate. Sen. Waid seconded. Motion unanimous.

Sen. Dent made the motion for all changes noted to the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines in this meeting to be accepted. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion unanimous.

3. Amendment to Senate By-Laws:

Sen. Galt-Brown noted that ABAC’s Faculty Senate is in need of a specific proxy provision within its bylaws. This should reference absentee voting and proxy voting. He presented the following suggestions:

Absentee Voting / Proxy Voting:

The Faculty Senate and Administration of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College recognize that absentee voting, or voting by proxy is, under normal circumstances “… incompatible with the essential characteristics of a deliberative assembly in which membership is individual, personal, and nontransferable.”


The ABAC Faculty Senate and Administration also recognize however, that both the curricular and extra-curricular obligations of full-time faculty members are such that occasional absence from regularly scheduled sessions of the Faculty Senate is inevitable. Concurrent with existing and applicable rules of Parliamentary procedure, the following provision for Absentee or Proxy voting by members of the ABAC Faculty Senate is hereby proposed:
Absentee/Proxy Voting:
On such occasions that members of the Faculty Senate are incapable of attending regularly scheduled sessions, said Senators will have the authority to appoint a proxy *pro hoc vice* (for this occasion or turn). A Proxy will serve in all capacities as a Senator for the duration of the proxy, including, but not limited to:
- Establishing a quorum
- Proposing measures to be considered by the Senate
- Amending said measures
- Voting on said measures

Requirements for a Proxy shall be as follows:
- It is the exclusive obligation of a Faculty Senator to obtain a proxy.
- Any member of the regular teaching faculty of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (anyone eligible to be elected) shall be eligible to serve as a Senate Proxy.
- The proxy authorization MUST be in writing (typed or electronic).
- The proxy must name both the proxy and the principal, and be presented before any Senate business is conducted.

The Senator appointing a proxy shall be responsible for all conduct of their proxy, relative to the business of the Senate.
No person may hold more than one proxy at a time.
Any Senator appointing more than three proxies in a given academic year must obtain permission from the President of the Faculty Senate.
Any person serving as a proxy will be provided written recognition for such service by the President of the Senate, (or their designee) with the aforementioned constituting a specific element of Service to the Institution, as defined in Section III, Part C of the Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion & Tenure.

Sen. Galt-Brown made the motion that the proposition for absentee/proxy voting for the Faculty Senate be considered by the senators over the summer and be an element of old business for the first meeting of the Fall 2014 semester. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion to table unanimous.

**New Business:**

Sen. Pres. Urquhart asked if there were any changes to Senate representatives and/or officers to be addressed for the Fall 2014-Spring 2015 year. Sen. Waid noted his position would be open in the coming academic year.

Sen. Galt-Brown made a motion that the Faculty Senate of ABAC recognize the long contributions of Senator Doug Waid to both the Faculty Senate and to ABAC. Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Sen. Waid made the motion to adjourn; Sen. McCrimmon seconded. Motion carried. The Senate adjourned at 4:50 p.m. The next meeting will be held August 29, 2014.