PRESENT: Andreopolous, Broome, Decker, Diamond, Dinan, Duffy, Ellis, Falk-Romaine, Furst, Gazzillo-Diaz, Griswold, Kearney, Kim, Kothenaraman, Ku, Levitan, Maduro, Magaldi, Makarec, Martin, Martus, O'Donnell, Owusu, Perez, Peterman (for Steinhart), Phelps, Polchak, Rosar, Sabogal, Sandmann, Schwartz, Sheffield, Simon, Smith, Snyder, Swanson, Tirado, Villar, K Wagner, Waldron, Wallace, Wicke, Yoo (for Lum)

ABSENT: Aktan, Alon, Avdeev, Cano, McNeal, Swanson, Verdicchio, GUESTS: Bambrick, Bolyai, Brenenson, Bundy, Burns, Cammarata, Chabayta, Ciliberti, Corso, Daniel-Robinson, de la Suaree, Diaz, Escobar, Ferguson, Fuller-Stanley, Godar, Goldstein, Liautaud, McCoy, McLaughlin-Vignier, Miller, Moore, Noonan, O’Brian, Rabbitt, Refsland, Rosenberg, Rosengart, Sandford, Schneider, Seal, Sherman, Shojai, Tiernan, Trelisky, V Wagner, Weisberg, Williams, Yucel, Zeff

PRELIMINARIES: Levitan called the Senate to order at 12:30PM. The Agenda, moved by Martus and Dinan, was approved unanimously. The Minutes of the 2/24/2015 meeting, moved by Martus and Snyder, were also approved unanimously (after Sheffield noted that grammatical errors must be corrected in resolutions passed last time).

CHAIR’S REPORT: Levitan and Polchak introduced the new SGA VP for Academic Affairs, Brandon Phelps, as a new member of the Senate.

The Academic Standards Council is redrafting its resolution on course repeats for discussion at the April 14th meeting.

A closed, Faculty and Professional Staff meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16th during Common Hour in Science East 3002. Administrative Evaluation documents will be distributed in advance to elected members of the Senate.

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL: MINOR IN WORLD LITERATURE: Roux and Duffy moved approval of this minor. After O’Brian briefly described the minor, Wallace noted an error that will be corrected. Dinan and Trelisky asked questions regarding scheduling and course listings, which de la Suaree addressed. The minor was then approved unanimously.


Weisberg presented a PowerPoint (archived in the Packet for this meeting) describing the timeline for developing assessment for UCC courses. College Writing is being used as the first and baseline course since it is the only course all students must take. Kim questioned the slow pace of the process, and Martus wanted to know when the campus could say “This is (or is not) working.” Phelps asked if cohorts of students were being tracked longitudinally. Weisberg said that is not possible since the same students don’t take the same courses year by year.
Kothandaraman suggested that if money is the issue, perhaps the process should be outsourced since we cannot wait too long for needed feedback. Perez agreed that the loop must be closed sooner rather than later. Andreopoulos asked if students have a role in the process. Williams replied that only faculty are involved at present, but that students will be surveyed later on. Zeff noted that the NSSE, which will be conducted again this spring, garners student input on these topics. Griswold stated assessment should not be outsourced, and that the College of Education has an assessment coordinator who handles the many tedious tasks inherent in this process. Martus and Perez called for greater granularity in an iterative assessment process to look at various elements that will lead to improvements.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM UPDATE: Liautaud, Sherman and Schneider reviewed their PowerPoint (archived in the Packet for this meeting). Schneider and Sherman spoke about the discussions at one of the SST fora regarding withdrawals. Students should be encouraged to speak with faculty or advisors before dropping courses. Tardi said that the faculty member teaching the class, who knows what is actually going on in the classroom, is better able to help a student than the advisor. An extensive list of factors students give as reasons for dropping courses was discussed. Kim questioned the sample size (409 of 11,000) and called for more follow-up. Andreopolous noted that several elements in the surveys are correlated (e.g., difficulty of material and inability to keep up with the work). Liautaud mentioned a number of initiatives that are being implemented for first year students, including more linked courses and more peer leaders in Freshman Seminar courses.

Schneider pointed to the increase in the frequency and better timing of communications with students. He also noted the success of the 30/3.0 scholarship program that rewards students who complete 30 credits during an academic year while maintaining a 3.0 GPA with a $1000 scholarship, renewable for three years. Tardi asked if the improvements in retention are due to the peer leaders or Supplemental Instruction. Liautaud replied that the SST is still drilling deeper into the data, especially in regards to at-risk students, but Sandmann assured the body that the other issues will be addressed as well. Kothandaraman called for greater use of social media and further research on goal-directed incentives promoting higher retention rates. Andreopoulos asked what courses are most successful, but Sherman replied that they don’t know that answer yet. At present more of the focus is on social support networks, but that the SST will be investigate soon.

Polchak said that the SGA supports better use of the pop-up windows (which should be copied to the advisor), but not that students be required to consult with faculty. Ellis wondered how peer leaders could be used more extensively. Schwartz suggested using procedures similar to what EOF uses for at-risk students. Phelps asked how many Freshman Seminar classes have peer leaders; Liautaud replied: more than 60%. Phelps also supports the use of pop-ups to advise students of the issues involved with dropping course, and the various options open to them. Sheffield emphasized that no one can legislate student responsibility, but she supported support groups and the use of technology to assist students in this process. Levitan invited the campus to attend the next Student Success Team Forum on April 17th.

UNIVERSITY CORE CURRICULUM COUNCIL: PROPOSAL ON AREAS 4, 5 AND 6: Weisberg and Duffy moved approval of the Council’s proposal, which would discontinue the prerequisite of taking an Area 4 course before a student can proceed to Areas 5 and 6. Extensive discussion (joined by Andreopoulos, Martus, Ellis, Tirado, Phelps, Sheffield, Peterman, Trelisky,
Levitan and others) focused primarily on the developmental aspects of the entire UCC program (which requires that courses be taken in a progressive order) and the scheduling difficulties students, departments and chairs have encountered when students have to take Area 4 courses before they can take any from Area 5 or 6.

ADJOURNMENT: Upon Perez’s motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:49pm.

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be on Tuesday, March 24th in Ballroom C.

Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary

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