
GUESTS: Arevalo, Bambrick, Baron, Berg, Bolyai, Burns, Chabayta, Ciliberti, Crick, Daniel-Robinson, Davis, Feola, Gardner, Gilley, Godar, Goldstein, Hahn, Jones, Malindretos, McLaughlin-Vignier, McMahon, Miller, Mongillo, Moore, Nagaraj, Onaivi, Refsland, Ross, Sandford, Seal, Theus, Trelisky, Vovchuk, V.Wagner, Warner, Weiland, Williams, Wolf, Zhang, and one unintelligible

ABSENT: Alon, Avdeev, Dinan, Phelps, Polchak, Smith, Swanson, Villar

VICE CHAIRS REPORT: In Dinan’s absence, Makarec moved (Martus seconded) the proposed membership grid for next year’s Senate councils (archived in the Packet for this meeting). She pointed out that there are vacancies for Arts & Comm, Professional Staff and Adjuncts. The nominees were approved unanimously.

GOVERNANCE COUNCIL: EMERITUS STATUS FOR ROBERT CHESNEY: Nagaraj moved (Sheffield seconded) and read the Council’s nomination. Gardner and Onaivi spoke warmly about Chesney. The resolution was approved unanimously.

GOVERNANCE COUNCIL: EMERITA STATUS FOR DAPHNE JOSLIN: Levitan moved (Sheffield seconded) and read the Council’s nomination, which was approved unanimously.
GRADUATE POLICY COUNCIL: Diamond and Martus moved acceptance of the Principles and Practices for Online Graduate Courses report (archived in this meeting’s Packet), which was approved without discussion.

Diamond and Martus also moved the Council’s resolution calling for a change in the maximum time for completion of a graduate degree. The current policy allows six years to complete a masters degree. After debate including remarks by Kim, Diamond, Martus, Wicke and Kothandaraman, a slightly revised motion was approved unanimously: The maximum time for the completion of a doctoral degree will be ten years.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COUNCIL: SURVEY RESULTS: Arevalo and Gilley moved acceptance (Sheffield seconded) of the Council’s reports. Instead of postponing the presentation until the next meeting, they gave a very abbreviated synopsis of the reports (which are archived in today’s Packet).

ACADEMIC STANDARDS COUNCIL: COURSE REPEAT POLICY: Sandford introduced a slightly modified version of the policy presented at prior meetings. The major change is that the repeat option can be exercised no more than five times. The earlier wording could be interpreted as saying that every course could be repeated five times. Sheffield noted that her motion (A student can repeat any course with a grade below C) had been approved at an earlier Senate meeting, and she spoke against this motion. Magaldi asked why there should be five repeats, since this could result in pumped-up GPAs. Simon noted that if students use all five WDs for personal or health problems, they’d have none to use for academic reasons. Sandford noted that there are already exceptions available for such circumstances. Verdicchio reported that his department had discussed the earlier version, and thought that the revised version might engender different opinions. He further suggested that perhaps there should be two policies: one for grade repeats and another for WDs. Steinhart stated that the Philosophy Department opposes this policy since the number five seems arbitrary and the deans can always override in specific situations. Diamond agreed with much of what Magaldi and Verdicchio said.

Martin noted that Biology was concerned about the overuse of repeats, and he moved (Martus seconded) an amendment: This policy will not affect any program policy that puts additional restrictions on the ability of students to retake courses. [Debate on the amendment filled the remainder of the meeting, which adjourned without a vote on the amendment.]

Tardi pointed out that this is a university policy and that departments should not establish their own policies. Aktan, Gazzillo-Diaz and Snyder countered that programs need flexibility in this regard. McNeal questioned whether this would interfere with academic standards and agreed with Tardi that there must be only one University policy, as did Makarec. Trelisky asked that if a policy like this were geared to individual majors, which policy would apply when a student changes majors?

Andreopoulos supported the motion and noted that students sometimes need to raise their GPAs in order to obtain internships, etc. Malindretos said that the freedom to repeat courses enhances retention and the quality of the system. Levitan’s department doesn’t want students to retake their internships. She also suggested that next year’s Executive Committee make this issue of a single university-wide policy vs programmatic needs and individual departmental policies a top priority item.
ADJOURNMENT: Upon Martus and Maduro’s motion, the Senate adjourned at 1:45pm.

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate – the first meeting of the 2015-2016 Senate – will be on Tuesday, April, 28th in Ballroom C. Elections for next year’s Executive Committee will be the first major item of business.

Respectfully Submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary

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