

**Faculty Senate Sept. 17 4 p.m.
Olin 124**

Faculty Senate discussed a motion detailing the administration of student evaluations of teaching at its first meeting of the academic year, suspending the meeting while discussing an amendment to the motion offered by Hank Tkachuk (Communication Studies Theatre Arts).

The amendment, pending approval, would add a sentence (in bold) to the last paragraph of the motion:

“Faculty should not collect student evaluations – they should be collected in a manila envelope by the departmental secretary, another colleague, or a student from the class and brought directly to the departmental office. The evaluations will then be taken to computer services to be scanned. After the evaluations have been returned to the departmental office, student comments should be typed and saved in a secure computer in the departmental office until they are distributed to the appropriate individuals. The evaluation forms should then be destroyed. Faculty are not permitted to examine either individual evaluation forms or summaries of the evaluations until after grades have been posted. **Summaries of evaluations may be provided to faculty who are the subject of regular, formal evaluation at the discretion of the evaluation committee.**”

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Discussion on the motion followed devotions by Roy Hammerling (Chair, Religion), approval of minutes and the agenda, and a report by Dean Mark Krejci about the recent decision by Krejci and President Jolicouer to change the name of the Department of Business, Accounting & Economics to the School of Business. He noted that the precedent for changing department names has been to announce such changes in Senate as a report rather than as an action item.

Krejci provided this background on the name change:

In 2000 the department brought to former Dean Elizabeth Danielson a proposal to invest more resources into the program in order to strengthen and render it a “destination program.” Some 20 percent of high school seniors indicate they plan to major in business, Krejci said, and business has been a popular major at Concordia for years. Consultants brought in to study the department found that the college was under investing in the program given the number of majors. To reach parity with the average faculty size of similar programs, Concordia would need to add seven positions, Krejci said. The department offers few electives because faculty are busy covering required courses.

When the department attempted to search for a new chair, two search firms declined the college’s offer because Concordia was searching for a department chair rather than for a dean, Krejci said; consultants said a dean-level position would attract the best candidates. To attract the kind of leader the college wants and needs, Krejci said, the position need to be a dean position with more budget and salary control than is given department chairs. The person in this position would do some teaching, but most of his or

her work would be administrative, and he or she would not rotate out of the position as does a department chair.

Krejci said further research indicated that liberal arts colleges with strong business programs generally call them Schools of Business rather than Colleges of Business.

Krejci then discussed the implications of the name change, which, pending Board of Regent approval, would take effect in August 2008:

Senate would still determine curriculum, he said, and faculty should not regard this change as a signal that the School of Business would “become its own entity and that its students would not be part of the liberal arts experience.” He said the department sees a huge advantage in being part of a liberal arts college. Further, he said, a School of Business would create a new opportunity for Development to find contributors who want to invest in the program; hence, resources would come from endowment, not operating revenue.

Krejci answered questions posed by several Senators:

- The dean of the School of Business would report to Krejci, and would function as a department chair in terms of governance.
- The School would not have sub-chairs; the Dean would, in some ways, operate as do Division Chairs, except he or she would not rotate out of the position.
- The change offers the opportunity for uniqueness within the MIAC, while making the department more akin to those of local state universities—with the exception that at Concordia the School would focus on undergraduate education.
- Krejci acknowledged the concern that such a change might be perceived to send a message that Concordia is moving away from a liberal arts model, but he said the department emphatically does not wish to move away from its liberal arts identity. He said he sees no reason that such a name change would set precedent for other departments to become “schools.”
- The college’s liberal arts nature would allow the School to meld humanities, language, global education and business to provide an education that most MBA programs cannot offer.
- Chief among the tasks of the School’s dean would be making connections with local and national business communities, supervising recruitment and hiring and doing programmatic work.

The Senate then turned its attention to the first of two motions from the Task Force on Student Evaluation of Teaching (David Moewes, Nick Ellig, Kay Schneider, Luanna Stroh, Mark Covey, Nichole Sorenson).

Covey (Division Chair, Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Psychology) said the Academic Procedures and Policies Committee formed the task force several years ago because of community dissatisfaction with the present teaching evaluation form and with procedures for its administration. The first motion attempts to make the evaluation process uniform, less subject to vagaries of administration and as free as possible from bias and manipulation.

Jim Aageson (Division Chair, Arts and Humanities; Religion) asked if the motion's procedures must be used only as part of formal evaluation, or if professors could deviate from procedures for informal evaluation.

Covey said the task force encourages the procedures to be used in all evaluations, formal or informal, in order to provide clarity and consistency.

Aageson asked for the task force's interpretation of whether professors could use informal evaluations from previous semesters in formal evaluations. Task force member Nick Ellig (Chair, Sociology) said that although the task force did not specifically address that question, the tightest interpretation would suggest "anything coming in would have to comply with those expectations."

Susan Larson (Chair, Psychology) spoke in favor of the motion, saying that it makes sense to follow these policies at all times.

Jonathan Clark (German) said that although he agrees that the procedures for administering evaluations should be consistent, he worries that "this kind of literature and negative language would go into the Faculty Handbook and reflect badly on faculty."

"I don't see why we have to micromanage at this level," Clark said.

David Sprunger (English) said he saw a potential logistical burden in the requirement to have all the open-ended comments typewritten. He said he could envision the time lag as making it hard to meet evaluation deadlines.

Covey said he did not see the turn-around time as being problematic.

Joan Kopperud (Chair, English) questioned the motion's last sentence that specifies faculty could not view the summaries until after grades are posted. This might mean that faculty being evaluated would not be able to see the summaries until the semester following evaluation, she said.

Krejci noted that the handbook states that the person being evaluated meet with the evaluation committee to respond to the report before it goes to the department chair, but that it does not specify that the summaries be shared with him or her.

Tkachuk then offered his amendment, which was seconded.

Larson spoke in favor of the amendment, saying it would protect junior faculty members who otherwise would have to sign off on the report without seeing the summaries.

Mike Bath (Chair, Political Science) asked if "discretion" would mean the committee would be required to share the summaries.

Tkachuk said the intention of the amendment is to leave that decision to the evaluation committee.

Michelle Lelwica (religion) said she was comfortable leaving it to the discretion of the evaluation committee, since “at least in theory the person being evaluated has selected the committee” and, hence, trusts its members. The comment was greeted by a low groan from several Senators.

Senate was suspended at 5 p.m.; discussion of the amended motion will continue at the next meeting, to be held at 4 p.m. Oct. 1 in Birkeland Lounge.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine McMullen
Secretary of the Faculty