

Minutes
Faculty Senate
Feb. 11 4 p.m.
Olin 124

Before calling the meeting to order, Dean Mark Krejci congratulated Connie Peterson (Nursing) for successfully defending her doctoral dissertation.

Minutes of the Jan. 21 Senate meeting and the agenda were both approved by unanimous voice vote.

On the agenda were two motions from Senate Coordinating Committee asking that Senate endorse changes to the Articles of the Faculty Constitution, and to the Bylaws of the Faculty Constitution.

Krejci noted that the Faculty of the Whole will vote on the motions, but because Faculty of a Whole meetings do not foster deliberation, the proposed revisions would first be discussed in Senate.

Cynthia Carver (CSTA) reminded Senate that currently the Senate Coordinating Committee serves as a sounding board for the dean, while the Executive Committee of the Faculty serves the same role for the president. She asked if folding the two committees into one Faculty Executive Committee would preclude the dean from calling meetings. Krejci and SCC member Heidi Manning (Physics) replied that only the committee's name would change, and that the dean would still be able to call meetings.

Mary Rice (Division Chair, Language, Literature and Culture/Spanish and Hispanic Studies) suggested electing Faculty Executive Committee members from Exploration areas, given the advisory function of the committee.

Polly Fassinger (Sociology) said she would favor that idea if the committee's work was focused only on curriculum, but that Faculty Executive Committee's charge is more holistic.

Connie Peterson (Nursing) asked if every department is represented by an Exploration area. Krejci replied that legislation would be forthcoming to assign departments to Exploration areas for purposes of governance. This is addressed in revised Article 7.1.3: "For purposes of representation on committees by Exploration area, every Department will be designated a core area with approval of Faculty Senate."

Sue Ellingson spoke in support of Rice's suggestion to elect FEC members by Exploration area.

Catherine McMullen (Faculty Secretary/English) said that given the difficulty of getting people to stand for election to the committee, electing members by Exploration area might make finding candidates even more difficult.

Carver said she shared Rice's concern but suggested finding another way to assure more representation on and access to the committee, especially since the revision would assign more responsibility to FEC.

In response to a question from James Aageson (Division Chair, Arts and Humanities/Religion), Krejci clarified that on those committees requiring members from each Exploration area, with both arts and humanities represented, religion would be assigned to one area, probably humanities.

Aageson said he had heard that Core Committee had wanted a religion slot on the committee, and that revised article 8.2 of the Bylaws states "Considers trends and makes

recommendations concerning the core curriculum.” Since the core includes two religion classes, Aageson said, he thought this ambiguity needed to be settled.

Doug Anderson (Mathematics/Core Committee) said that the Core Committee wanted specific representation from religion, “but then heard that no department should be guaranteed a slot,” and that religion faculty would be designated either arts or humanities. That would give religion faculty a chance to serve on Core, but it would not be guaranteed.

Manning said SCC’s rationale for not mandating a slot for religion on Core was that the religion department has to approve any religion course that comes to Core.

The reality, Aageson said, is that Core frequently asks a religion faculty member to attend meetings to deal with specific religion courses.

Maddy Burchill (Core/German) said she thought such specific consultation would work in the future.

Concerning the matter of whether FEC members should be elected from Exploration areas, Bryan Luther (Physics) said that the real question is whether Senate is representative of all areas, since FEC members are elected from Senate.

An advisory vote on Rice’s suggestion re: electing FEC members from Exploration areas indicated most senators were opposed to the idea .

Carver raised a question concerning revised Article 7.1.3: “For purposes of representation on committees by Exploration area, every Department will be designated a core area with approval of Faculty Senate.” She said in the case of CSTA, the department offers two majors, communications and theatre, in two different divisions. She asked if using the word “department” would hence be problematic.

Susan Larson (SCC/Psychology) asked if it would help to think about designating every major, rather than department, to an Exploration area.

Rice said that CSTA is unique, and that it made more sense to make an exception for CSTA.

Fassinger reminded Senate that a proposal outlining designations would be coming to Senate in the future and that Senate could solve this issue then.

Carol Pratt (Biology) asked if SCC had discussed having each division elect representatives to these committees.

Hank Tkachuk spoke in favor of that idea because of the high turnover rate of faculty in recent years. It is hard for faculty to know newcomers unless they work with them, he said, so it makes sense that faculty in a division should elect members to committees. Or, Tkachuk suggested, perhaps each Exploration area could bring names forward for nomination to committees.

Krejci explained that the current method of finding nominees for committees is to examine a list and determine who might be able and convinced to serve. Twedt said SCC sends out announcements asking for suggestions for nominations and does not get much response.

An advisory voice vote on the suggestion that Exploration areas should elect committee members indicated most senators were opposed to the idea.

Fassinger referred to revised Article 6.1.9, which says FEC “oversees the college’s long-range planning processes and monitors the implementation of their recommendations.” She said “oversees” seems optimistic, and wondered about the rationale for excluding students and staff from long-range planning. Krejci replied that

the President could call in anyone for consultation should FEC deal with long-range planning.

Fassinger then raised a question about revised Article 7.1.2, which includes the sentence: “In identifying the membership of committees or ad hoc task forces, participants from off-campus may be identified and referred to as at-large members.” She said “off-campus” is confusing, since we have an off-campus committee, and suggested changing the language.

Zach Kenz (SGA) asked why revised Article 8.3., Assessment Committee, reduced student membership from two to one. Krejci replied that the intention in eliminating committees or reducing their membership is to streamline governance and reduce workload.

Kenz noted that the revisions would downsize some committees, thereby assigning their duties to other committees. He expressed concern that some committee would hence be overloaded with work, which might make it even more difficult to find members.

Krejci said the revision tried not to give those committees that meet twice a week additional duties; others that meet only occasionally were assigned more duties and might have to meet more often.

On that topic, Linda Johnson (History) said she understood why the revision eliminated Curriculum Coordinating Committee, given its large time commitment, but reassigning its charges to Core and Curriculum Committees may overburden them. Yet it is important, she said, to study on an on-going basis how our curriculum follows current trends and needs.

Krejci suggested creating a third committee for curriculum planning and asked senators their opinions of eliminating the Curriculum Coordinating Committee.

Rice said serving on Curriculum Coordinating Committee was unpleasant and over time-consuming, and that she wondered if we need an on-going committee for regular review of the Core. Instead, perhaps an ad hoc task force or similar group could occasionally be charged with review.

Burchill suggested that such review need not be even that formal; perhaps, she said, committee chairs could meet once or twice a year and determine if any curricular matters need to be addressed.

Susan Larson commented that now that we have a Division Chair for Core and Academic Development, perhaps his role is to regularly review the Core and urge revision.

Fassinger raised a question about revised Article 8.5, Graduate Programs Committee, specifically the phrasing “...**approves** policies, procedures, course and curriculum changes...” She questioned whether the committee would truly approve policies or if policies should be brought to Senate.

Krejci replied that yes, the committee would approve policies because Graduate Programs have a different governance structure. Senate has never approved graduate program policies, Krejci said. Senate will continue to approve new graduate programs, Krejci said, but otherwise the Graduate Programs Committee would have autonomy. “Policies” refers to such matters as admission criteria, specifications for theses and dissertations, etc.

Kreji said SCC would consider Senate's feedback at its Feb. 13 meeting, and that Senate would discuss the motions further at its next meeting on Feb. 18.

Senate adjourned at 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine McMullen
Faculty Secretary