

MINUTES
University Committee

Present:
Steven Meyer
Illene Noppe
Terence O'Grady
Laura Riddle
Kevin Roeder
Dean Von Dras (Chair)
Dan McIver (Academic Staff Representative)

5 September 2007
3:00 pm, CL 825

Previous meeting:
28 August 2007

Guest: Provost Sue Hammersmith; Secretary of the Faculty and Academic Staff Cliff Abbott

1) The minutes of 28 August 2007 were approved.

2) Information Exchange with Provost Hammersmith

The Provost updated the UC on a number of issues, including the status of strategic goals in the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan for 2006-09; continuing progress in attempts to create a planning model that would more completely integrate the activities of Business and Finance, Facilities, Human Resources, University Communications, Advancement and other areas of the university; continuing progress on the HLC Self-Study; progress on the implementation of the 14-week semester model; and further streamlining of the hiring process, including a reduction of paperwork and increased use of on-line communication. Other items referenced by the Provost included the initiation of searches for possible new faculty positions associated with the growth agenda. The Provost also asked whether the UC would grant support for the appointment of a provisional executive committee for the Global Studies minor, with permanent appointments to be made when the appropriate faculty bodies meet to officially establish such a body. Aware that student needs require immediate action in this matter, the UC granted its permission for the formation of a provisional executive committee for Global Studies.

3) Continuing business

a) Proposal on contextualizing GPAs

The UC's discussion focused on the information provided by Registrar Mike Herrity and by Debbie Furlong, the director of institutional research. Since Ms. Furlong indicated that "contextualizing information" such as a student's rank within a major was already available to the student on request, and since members of the UC considered comparisons of grade point averages across programs to be fraught with difficulties, the decision was made not to pursue the idea further but to report back to the Senate that contextualizing information was in fact already available to students upon their request..

4) New Business

a) Election of UC chair for 2007-08.

Professor Riddle nominated Professor Von Dras for the position. Professor O'Grady seconded. The vote to elect Professor Von Dras chair for the 2007-08 academic year was unanimous.

b) Possible replacements for positions on the Senate Planning and Budget Committee were discussed.

c) Professor Abbott, in his capacity as Secretary of the Faculty and Academic Staff, led a preliminary discussion about possible alternatives to the traditional program review format based on a document which he authored. There was general agreement that program reviews did not now always have a significant impact on budget planning or curricular planning. It was also noted that we must have widespread agreement about what we hope program reviews will accomplish before we can determine how best they can be structured. Although a number of points were raised in this connection, there was a general consensus that one of the most important functions a program review can have is to inform colleagues in other academic areas about what a program's activities, goals and aspirations are. It was agreed that this would be a future topic of conversation with the AAC and perhaps eventually a topic for a Senate forum.

The UC meeting was changed to 3:15 p.m. to better accommodate all of the members.

The next UC meeting will be September 12 at 3:15 p.m. in CL 825.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terence O'Grady, secretary pro tempore