Academic Senate Council Meeting
August 30, 2011 – 12 noon

MINUTES

Members Attending: William Culp, Larry Suva, Ty Borders, Phil Breen, Carla Coley, Todd Nick, Tom Kelly, Jerry Ware, Howard Hendrickson, Dana Gaddy, Dana Gonzales, Paul Gottschall, Julia Goodwin, Gareth Tobler

Guests: Elizabeth Bard

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Bill Culp established that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order.

Old Business:
1. Agenda Item: Minutes from last meeting
   Action: Approved

New Business:
1. **Education RVUs / Reward and Incentives** – Bill Culp distributed a handout listing COM educational RVUs as part of a proposed pay scale for faculty. Approximately $.5 million is identified to fund performance-based increases related to education efforts.

   Dr. Culp said that he understood that plans to revise the current proposed RVU's would expand beyond the top 10% of top performers. He also said that the plan would cover not only regular faculty members but also post-docs and fellows, etc.

   Tom Kelly added that he had participated in a meeting of the Education Incentive Award Committee where Dick Wheeler answered some questions about the document/plan and he reported that the plan had arisen from the Council of Department Chairs.

   Dr. Culp asked that everyone review the plan and forward feedback to him so that he could draft a comprehensive response from the Academic Senate Council to submit to the Dean and Chancellor.

   Members also discussed practices for rewarding, recognizing and incentivizing education/teaching faculty in other colleges. CON has established practices whereby faculty can apply for bonus awards in one of three categories of service: teaching, research or service. CHRP has a college-based teaching awards program as well.

   Todd Nick suggested that the Council should compile a comprehensive set of awards and recognitions for faculty in each of the colleges and the Graduate School.

2. **BlackBoard / OED –** Larry Suva explained recent problems with Blackboard in COM, namely crashing during exams. The COM had elected to give paper exams since the cause of the crashes had not been determined. He said that while COP – whose exams are most comparable to COMs although not as lengthy / large in terms of images, etc. – had 3 full time staff to help with Blackboard.

Dana Gaddy added that she – as all other UAMS faculty – had received notices about the conversion to Blackboard 9, and that there were known issues, including:

- does not interface with OCS (optical character scanning), so faculty cannot use bubble sheets, as the previous version did
- does not allow for integrated exams between / among colleges and provide grades and scoring automatically, as the previous version did
- slower processing / response time
- can't scroll through the student names

Carla Coley reported that faculty in CHRP had experienced significant programs in converting files from version 8 to 9 in Blackboard, such as file specifications not transferring and other features such as the Table of Contents.

Dr. Gaddy reported that there was some interest in looking at alternatives for online exams due to the problems experienced and the loss of critical functionality in BB 9. Members also were unclear about the process that was used to decide to purchase and upgrade to the new version, and felt that faculty should have some input into those decisions going forward.

3. **Faculty Meeting Agendas --** Dr. Culp brought up the issue of Academic Senate representatives getting time on the agenda at each college's regular faculty meetings. COM now will allow an AS rep a spot on the agenda of its meetings. Other colleges were already allowing an AS rep that opportunity upon request.

4. **Faculty Exit Interview** - Dr. Culp reported that Paul Gottschall, Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee, had located a sample survey instrument to be used to conduct by Academic Senate officials to conduct exit interviews of departing faculty. Handouts of the University of Kentucky survey were distributed and members agreed that it was a good example of the type of questions that should be asked. Questions about the process to implement this initiative still need to be answered, such as whether to use an online or paper form; when in the exit process to try to conduct the interview, etc.; and working with administration so that AS can receive notices when faculty resign.

5. **Chancellor** - Dr. Culp reported that Chancellor Rahn had not supported some of its prior recommendations/requests with respect to: changing wording in the Strategic Plan to explicitly state the word "research" and handling unfunded faculty research at the department rather than college level. He has interest in faculty turnover, saying that "Turnover is costly and disruptive." And he "Looks forward to working with everyone on campus on faculty and staff recruitment and retention."

Several members said that they had read the book "The Fall of Faculty and Rise of Administration" which looked at the transformation of American universities over time into more bureaucratic and top heavy institutions, which tends to quell the freedoms of inquiry and expression that have been hallmarks of higher learning in America.