

Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting
February 25, 2013 McCormick Room

Senators Present: ~~Senators Present:~~ Kristine Bartanen, Brad Dillman (Chair), Brian Ernst, Kathryn Ginsberg, Judith Kay, Alisa Kessel, Brendan Lanctot, Amanda Mifflin, Ann Putnam, Nila Wiese, Elise Richman, Amy Spivey, Maria Sampen, Mike Segawa, Shirley Skeel (Staff Senate Liaison), and Ariela Tubert

Guests: Steven Neshyba

Call to order: Chair Dillman called the meeting to order at 4:03pm

Announcements:

- Richman reminded senators about Paul Rucker's talk, "Education and Criminal Justice," February 25, 2013 at 7:00pm in Schneebeck Concert Hall
- Ginsberg commented that there had been a lot of rumbling among students about a publicly-accessible Facebook page called "University of Puget Sound Confessions," whose anonymous comments touch upon many of the issues that surfaced in the Campus Climate Survey, such as alienation, racism, exclusion, etc. She noted how it related to the recent branding conversation, as it presents the university logo in a defaming way. She announced that there would be a campus-wide conversation on these topics. Ernst added that he had e-mailed the student body about the various helplines already in place to address these issues.
- Kay announced the upcoming Swope lecture by Prof. Gabriella Lettini, which is to take place on March 5 at 7:30 p.m. in Schneebeck Concert Hall.

Approval of the Minutes:

M/S/P to accept the minutes from February 11 with minor revisions

Updates from Liaisons:

Sampen reported that the **UEC** was reviewing 10 applications for release time for next AY and 2 applications for Trimble Faculty Development awards, as well as incoming travel requests from faculty and students.

Mifflin attended the **Student Life Committee** meeting, which is discussing the Campus Climate Survey report.

Richman had not yet received minutes from the most recent **IEC** meeting, and made her report based on the minutes from its first spring meeting (Feb 1) and subsequent emails. She announced that Sally Sprenger's position has been filled by Allison Lindsley from PLU. The committee has completed the bulk of its program reviews and is currently looking at those in China and Taipei. Also, Ellen Peters is going to revise the current study abroad survey and a committee is being formed to work with CC on the criteria for short-term faculty led study abroad programs and how to integrate these into the curriculum. She also noted that there is a new application and that, for the first time, some students were denied admission to study abroad programs. This is in part due to budgetary constraints but also due to essay responses

on students' applications. The application process will be reviewed and possibly revised, which may include tailoring essay questions for particular programs.

Amy Spivey exchanged emails with the chair of the **Curriculum Committee**, who noted the committee was addressing the question of diversity as part of departmental reviews. While these were revised last year, there are further questions – such as recruitment – being asked by a working group of the CC, which has been in communication with the Committee on Diversity. Spivey cited this issue as a possible charge for the CC next year.

Ernst reported that the **ASUPS Senate** still needs a faculty liaison and even offered a meal in exchange for at least one monthly faculty attendance at the meeting.

Lanctot announced that the **ASC** is circulating a bereavement policy report. Segawa confirmed that a draft of the policy was being worked on.

Dillman mentioned that he would like committee chairs to make visible the publication date of minutes, so that the Senate would know the precise start of the 30 days it has to act on resolutions. Wiese noted that Jimmy McMichael would be the person to do this when posting minutes online. Dillman also requested that committees post their minutes as promptly as possible, and asked the liaisons' to communicate this to the chairs of committees.

Discussion of potential Senate role in three broad issues: 1) Budgeting Process, 2) Technology Use, and 3) Branding Initiative

Dillman began by noting these three areas had surfaced in conversations with Kessel and Wiese, the fall Senate retreat, and prior Senate meetings. The purpose of this discussion, then, was to have a conversation about ideas for future Senate business. He noted that we had seen the Budget Task Force report, but he wondered if the Senate should play a more active role in raising issues dealing with the budget, such as our relationship with the Faculty Salary Committee. He asked if it made sense to assume a more active role in this process.

With respect to the branding initiative, he posed a similar question. Following Gayle McIntosh's report to the Senate in the previous meeting, he wondered if we needed to express or help shape the faculty's role in this process more clearly, in defining who we are.

Turning to technology use, he mentioned several issues: how do we use technology? how does this change the delivery of education online? How are we to recognize credits that students want to transfer from courses they have taken online? How will Optimize Puget Sound affect us? Which of these issues are likely to have an impact on our academic mission? How can these be addressed by the faculty as a whole?

Wiese noted that the issue of technology use is linked to the conversation about what it is that makes us distinctive.

Kessel agreed that these issues are interconnected, since we are trying to offer an effective educational experience in a difficult economic climate. Her takeaway from the conversation with McIntosh was the argument for a Puget Sound education and a liberal arts education. How can we make apparent how this is worth paying for, being aware of our national and institutional reality?

Sampen expressed gratitude that these initiatives are being brought up, particularly because she is in recruiting mode for the music program (over 200 prospective students) and she has been researching competing programs. In terms of tuition, these (including Wellesley and Bryn Mawr) seem equivalent, so the question is how to draw somebody here from other liberal arts colleges? How does our branding campaign capture our uniqueness, she wondered, and noted that “teaching” and “learning” are not in themselves distinguishing features.

Dillman asked a related question: is there a useful mechanism by which we may contribute to the branding initiative, given the interest we have in this? He stressed that we needed to communicate our ideas about what we stand for better.

Neshyba related an anecdote about a visit to the dentist. A technician with a college-age daughter asked him what Puget Sound was known for. He observed that the current logos (“To the Heights” & “One of a Kind”) speak to alumni, but it was hard for him to rely on these mottoes in the context of prospective students. These sentiments were hard to convey to a prospective student (or the parent of one). He stressed that faculty must be behind whatever it is that emerges, so that we can back such an initiative earnestly.

Bartanen cautioned against mixing up distinctiveness and personality, noting that the brand is about personality: the three primary themes emphasize teaching and learning, our location, and outcomes. . Yet the brand conversation is not about what makes us distinct. She noted that there will be additional work that brings the examples and the arguments into the larger framework about being distinct, such as our music program, a science program with independent undergraduate research, the PacRim study abroad program, etc. So if we’re expecting the personality to deliver this degree of specificity, we’re confusing two different things. She distributed a handout about the “who we are conversation” that has been ongoing over the past few years to emphasize the broad array of persons involved, including faculty. “To the Heights” is the slogan for the 125th anniversary and “One of a Kind” is the slogan for the capital campaign; neither is our brand. Furthermore, the concept “Journey, Boldly” is not a new tag line, for example, and will not appear on the homepage of the website. Disaggregating some of these components might lessen some of the concern about being reductive.

Neshyba acknowledged his confusion. He then shared a second insight about flipped classrooms. He mentioned that he had a student who aced his first Gen Chem exam (which has a 30% fail rate), and, when he asked his secret, the student replied that he was highly dyslexic but because the classroom has been flipped, he has learned by watching videos of Neshyba’s lectures. (This was not the intended purpose, Neshyba stressed.) A year ago this student most likely would have failed the class. There is, he concluded, a technology-

diversity connection that he had not imagined before. This was an example of unintended good consequences.

Wiese asked a clarification: was the ‘position’ identified in the conversation about the branding initiative a value proposition about bold intellectual discovery? Was this its essence? If so, she found this illuminating and helpful in her conversations with prospective students and parents. But, she wondered how many of the faculty think of a Puget Sound education in this way. How, she asked, do we build this image into everything we do? How do we portray this message when we talk to parents or students? How can we help shape the messaging that is going to reinforce these ideas through repetition?

Bartanen explained that this was exactly what was intended: Wiese could speak of business and leadership in that constellation; Sampen of music, Neshyba of undergraduate science research, etc. Phase 1 of this process would be to talk about this place in similar ways, convey a sense of personality that the many voices of this multi-year conversation made apparent.

Kay wanted to underscore how in the past the faculty heard about marketing and how this initiative was something new. It was not a reduction, not about a tagline. She believes we have a job as senators to help faculty understand the nature of this initiative. She wondered how might we go about this. Invite McIntosh to a faculty meeting? Referring to the minutes of the previous meeting, she mentioned that she wanted to emphasize how McIntosh insisted on the “fuzzy” nature of this language: these are broad themes that are meant to be wordsmithed; this was a conversation to be built on. She also noted that unlike older and more established liberal arts colleges, we do not have the same entrenched identity of an institution as a whole, though we can talk about our respective programs.

Kessel noted this was a kind of empty vessel that we can fill, in a positive sense. So how, she asked, in a “pioneering” kind of place, can we critically evaluate the use of technology in this experience? We need to think about these in broad terms, as they are interconnected.

Wiese stressed how it was hard to know what people were doing in other departments. Might there be many things being replicated? How do we have these conversations about distinction with faculty across disciplines so that we can be most efficient in advancing the current branding initiative?

Sampen stated the importance of Senate meetings as a forum to convey ideas to our home departments. She noted how there may be a common misunderstanding of these collective assets, experiences, and narrative.

Kay noted that McIntosh’s presentation had been organized chronologically, from identifying assets such as teaching and learning working up to the “Our Position” statement that integrates our experience, our personality, and our narrative. In the future, she could be encouraged to present the outcome “Our Position” first, and then show how that informs the description of how we teach and learn.

Dillman noted the importance of faculty conveying to prospective students and their parents the distinctiveness of the university. He added that international students would be an important change in what we look like and feel like as a campus, and this is something we ought to discuss. Are we all on board with this idea? How can faculty contribute in shaping our brand internationally? Also, with technology, do we promote ourselves as cutting edge? Or are we not aspiring to do this?

Segawa asked what we believed to be critical in fulfilling our mission: Is awareness of technology an essential part of a liberal arts skillset? What do we believe our students need to be able to be equipped with? Information literacy may be as important as writing, reading, etc. it has been argued.

Spivey noted that in physics this has been an ongoing debate, and suggested that technology does not always need to be up to date. She stressed the importance of low-tech, citing the pedagogical utility of students taking lab notes and doing calculations manually.

Business, Wiese suggested, tends to lean towards more openness towards integrating technology and innovative methods of analysis, which indicated how the answer to this question depends on the field.

Richman underscored how technology has become so fundamental to information literacy. She no longer uses slides in her classes, for example. Artists are now expected to have websites, because this is how people communicate with the public. Thinking about this question of personality versus distinctiveness, she commented how it is helpful to think about endeavors that work across disciplines; this helps us think about a community or culture as opposed to an island within their own kind of communities. She mentioned civic scholarship as something that exemplifies key aspects of our personality, as it can involve multiple disciplines, summer research in science, and wonderful forms of interdisciplinary collaborations. Arts at Puget Sound, she noted, are really infused into the academic setting, something which is not as wholeheartedly accepted elsewhere. Lastly she pointed to the nature of certain lecture series and campus initiatives, such as the Swope lecture and the Race and Pedagogy Conference.

Segawa stressed the importance of these keywords in Richman's comments as they reflect who we currently are; they are not aspirational. So, he asked, how can we do a better job of articulating this more broadly? What we are trying to prompt is those many, many narratives these keywords inspire.

Neshyba suggested we should engage students as to what they think about technology in the classroom.

Ginsberg mentioned how her residents were talking about Neshyba's flipped class. She also noted that a class-on-demand would help students learn the functions of Excel, for example – something that needs to be taught to students. Getting back to the confessions page, she commented that the university seems a bit behind on academic policy. What is policy on

academic integrity in digital age? How do we help students understand the implications of their internet usage?

Sampen asked Ginsberg what students think about Puget Sound's distinctiveness. Ginsberg noted that, when giving tours to prospective students and parents, she often mentions how faculty talk about students and how students talk about faculty – the notion of accessibility as an important notion of our personality. It made her sad to see the Facebook page that goes against the grain of the work that has been done by those who don't know how to "self-police" their actions. She confessed she might be biased to the marketing side of things, but stressed again that accessibility is what students feel.

Segawa emphasized how ethics was the other side of the coin. As with medicine, technology has outpaced our abilities to adapt how we use it.

Kessel suggested thinking of this issue in the broader context of the liberal arts as embattled, to think how a liberal arts institution can respond to the issues that arise from new technologies.

Lanctot stressed that faculty had an obligation to historicize this debate, noting that the rhetoric of novelty was hardly something new, but central to the experience of modernity.

Wiese noted this is something that we can link to our ongoing teaching and learning; this idea of teaching students how to adopt or adapt technology, how to create new knowledge, etc.

Sampen observed that we cannot compete with major research institutions in terms of technology, but we can do something additional, which has to do with the ethics.

Segawa insisted that technological change is something that we have to embrace; we must demonstrate that we are not afraid of it, but embrace it in a way that reflects our values.

Kessel recalled a conversation with Ellen Peters, in which she asked what a Puget Sound version of this might look like. We have a language to talk about it already, she noted.

Wiese called attention to the sometimes erroneous perception that incorporating technology is equivalent to teaching 'technical' skills which do not fit 'into a liberal arts institution.' She recalled, for example, the cold response the School of Business received several years ago when trying to find support outside the school for the teaching of Excel.

Neshyba added to the story about the 97% student he mentioned above. He recounted a conversation with his daughter, who had mentioned a lab mate who also knew someone very dyslexic. In describing their study habits, she recalled how they had to verbalize concepts when talking about chemistry – everything that we should do at a great liberal arts college. And the non-dyslexic student benefited from the other student. This was revelatory, Neshyba admitted because what we would treat as an inconvenience suddenly becomes a wonderful possibility.

Dillman commented that it would be nice to survey what people do with technology and announced that in the May board meeting some of that would be articulated.

Wiese, referring back to earlier comments, wondered if there were ways we could help inform our colleagues, get them engaged in more in-depth conversations? In terms of process, where should we go next? Should we schedule some open conversation hours? Discuss these issues at a faculty meeting?

Segawa, taking up on Kay's earlier suggestion, proposed department-based conversations.

Bartanen suggested inviting McIntosh to the next faculty meeting.

Kay suggested that every department ought to have a representative at the meeting in hopes of initiating intra-departmental conversations. Or, for more informal conversation, we could hold a gathering at the faculty club.

Kessel also suggest using the faculty governance listserv as a way of increasing opportunities to reach out.

Richman asked how these conversations could infiltrate department websites, affecting how they present themselves.

Kay touched on ethics and technology again, and noted that another dimension to the conversation would be knowing what risks to take and what risks not to take, and referring to Lewis and Clark as pioneers who had to rely on every bit of wisdom they had when choosing forks on an uncharted river.

Lanctot pointed out that there was something Socratic about the self-questioning that is consistent in internal and external conversations about the institution's identity.

Other business:

Dillman asked who would like to participate in the presentation to the full faculty meeting to talk about faculty governance. He also reminded Senators that we had talked about how giving guidance to committees in drafting their final reports, particularly with regard to how they might better articulate possible future charges from the Senate. Finally, he mentioned the handbook, and noted that he would follow up with an email to those who had volunteered to work on this document. It would be ideal, he commented, to get a bit more done before April.

The meeting adjourned at 5:27 pm

Respectfully submitted by Brendan Lanctot