



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY EST. 1826

Faculty Senate Newsletter

Synopsis of the April 27th, 2017 Faculty Senate Meeting (final meeting of the year)

More detailed information on all items included in this newsletter will be available in the draft minutes when they are posted on the Google site for the first Senate meeting of the 2017-2018 academic year (October 2, 2017). Once the minutes have been approved by the Senate, they will be posted on the Faculty Senate website along with all related documents.

Of Particular Importance to All University Faculty

Bias Reporting System

Professor Peter Harte, chair, reported that he and Professor Juscelino Colares, vice chair, had discussed issues raised by the Senate Committee on Faculty Personnel in their review of the Bias Reporting System (BRS) at a meeting with Lou Stark, Vice President for Student Affairs, and the presidents of USG and GSC. Issues discussed at that meeting included problems within the BRS, the vague and subjective nature of the term “bias”, and concerns over referrals of complaints about faculty to administrators in OIDE0 for possible disciplinary actions without faculty input. Similar concerns were expressed by members of the Senate Executive Committee at their April 20th meeting. The Executive Committee agreed that an ad hoc Committee of faculty, staff, and students should be established to discuss these issues further and to make appropriate changes. The Executive Committee considered whether the BRS should be deactivated while the ad hoc Committee discusses potential improvements. The Committee decided that the system could remain active but that all complaints received by the Office of Student Affairs involving faculty that would otherwise be referred to the OIDE0 office would be handled by the ad hoc Committee until such time as changes are made to the system.

FSCUE: Advising Feedback Recommendations

Professor Robin Dubin, chair of FSCUE, reported on FSCUE’s recommendations regarding the adoption of an advising feedback system. The original request for this type of system had come from USG. The feedback system would be administered once a year at the end of the spring semester, although first-year students would also be asked to evaluate their SAGES advisor at the end of the First Seminar. Students would evaluate the individual who has the authority to lift their registration advising holds. The results of the advisor evaluations would be available to the advisor (if the advisor has 3 or more advisees) and to those who oversee advising for the particular program. It will be up to the individual departments to determine what improvements, if any, to make based on information from the advising feedback evaluations. The purpose is to provide the departments with information that had not been available in the past. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the advising feedback system by a vote of 20 in favor and 10 against.

FSCUE: Recommendations on Offering Online Undergraduate Courses

Prof. Dubin reported on FSCUE's recommendations regarding online undergraduate courses. The university's practice has been not to offer online undergraduate courses during the fall and spring semesters. There have been a number of recent requests from departments/schools regarding online offerings. The topic was discussed by the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee and its recommendations were approved by FSCUE. In summary, the recommendations are to maintain a policy of not allowing courses to be taught completely in an online format during the regular academic year, but if offered during the regular academic year, the course could be offered only in an online format during the summer. Courses may be taught throughout the semester in a hybrid format with some degree of structured, in-person class interaction between students and the teaching staff. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the recommendations for online undergraduate courses.

Library Content and Resource Review Process for New Programs and Degrees

Professor Iversen, chair of the Faculty Senate Committee on University Libraries (FSCUL), presented a proposal from FSCUL for a Library Content and Resource Review Process for New Programs and Degrees. The proposal provides that when a school or the College plans to submit to the Faculty Senate for final approval a proposal for a new CWRU program or degree, the sponsor (e.g., the school or one of its departments) must include in its submission materials a "library resource assessment report" regarding the adequacy of library content and services to accommodate the academic requirements of the program or degree. Significant changes to existing degrees and programs would also require an assessment. If it is determined that there are insufficient resources for a program, it would not result in an automatic veto of the program and the sponsors would still have the option to submit the program for approval if they feel it is appropriate. The Faculty Senate approved the proposal for the resource review process.

FSCUL Statement Recommending a Comprehensive External Review of the CWRU Library System

Prof. Iversen presented a statement from FSCUL recommending a comprehensive external review of the CWRU Library System. The Faculty Senate voted to endorse the recommendation.

Postdoctoral Association and Graduate Student Council-Proposed Revisions to Faculty Handbook

Professor Kenneth Ledford, chair of the Senate By-Laws Committee, presented proposed revisions to Chapter 2 of the Faculty Handbook and By-Law IV of the Faculty Senate By-Laws. The proposed revisions add a representative from the CWRU Post-Doctoral Association as a voting member of the Senate and change the name of the Graduate Student Senate to the Graduate Student Council (GSC) to reflect its current title. Also, since the Professional Student Association recently merged with the GSC, the language relating to the professional student senator has been removed and the GSC Vice President for Academic Affairs is designated as the student to represent the graduate and professional student population on the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the revisions to Chapter 2 and approved the revisions to the By-Laws contingent upon the approval of the Chapter 2 revisions by the University Faculty in the fall of 2017.

Other Items from the Meeting

FSCUE: PRIME Program

Professor Jill Korbin, CAS, and Professor Cheryl Thompson, SOM, presented the Post-baccalaureate Readiness Instruction for bioMedical Education (PRIME) program. The program, which is the result of several years of collaborative work between the CAS and the SOM, is designed to qualify and prepare post-baccalaureate students for admission to highly-ranked medical schools. Successful students will be awarded a non-degree post-baccalaureate certificate. Two types of students will benefit from this program: those who want to improve their undergraduate science GPA for admission to medical school, and/or those who want to take courses that they did not take at the undergraduate level.

The program was reviewed by both the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies as well as the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education. Both committees approved the program but had concerns and suggestions. Of greatest concern to a number of faculty was the fact that the program could add more students to classes that are already overcrowded. There is also insufficient lab space on campus. Prof. Thompson indicated that they expect only a few students to enroll who need to take the larger science classes and that undergraduate students will be given priority for these classes when registering. The program will also have a dedicated advisor to work with enrolled students on class schedules and a steering/advising group to monitor the success of the program. The program will be continually evaluated and formally re-evaluated in two years to assess its resources, and to ensure that it is working well for the School of Medicine, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the PRIME students. The Faculty Senate voted to approve the PRIME program.

Minor in Bioethics and Medical Humanities

Professors Eileen Anderson-Fye, SOM, and Mark Aulisio, SOM, presented a proposal for a minor in Bioethics and Medical Humanities, which was approved by the Faculty Senate.

Minor in Public Health

Professor Mendel Singer, SOM, presented a proposal for a minor in Public Health, which was approved by the Faculty Senate.

FSCUE: Recommendations on CSE Sages Proposal

Prof. Robin Dubin reported on a proposal submitted by the School of Engineering regarding first-year engineering classes and advisors. The CSE proposed that first-year students planning to pursue a CSE major be required to take an engineering-designated SAGES First Seminar or University Seminar during their first year at the university. The Curriculum Subcommittee's recommendation, which was confirmed by FSCUE, was to encourage this, but not make it a requirement. The CSE had also proposed that incoming first-year students interested in a CSE major who were not enrolled in a First Seminar taught by an engineering faculty member, have an engineering advisor in addition to the First Seminar advisor. FSCUE endorsed this recommendation.

Report from Finance Committee

Professor Glenn Starkman, chair of the Faculty Senate Finance Committee, reported on the activities of the Committee during the 2016-2017 academic year.

Nominating Committee Report

Professor Maureen McEnery, chair of the Faculty Senate Nominating Committee, presented the 2017-2018 Senate Executive Committee, standing committee chairs, and slate of standing committee members. The Faculty Senate approved the new Executive Committee members and slate of standing committee members. The chairs of the standing committees had been approved previously by the Senate Executive Committee as required under the Faculty Handbook.

Passing of the Gavel

The Faculty Senate gavel was passed from Prof. Harte to Prof. Colares who will assume the position of Faculty Senate chair following Commencement on May 21st.