

university

SENATE

March 26, 2008
Westside SC Ballroom

Meeting convened at 3:37 p.m.

Members present (alphabetical): Jamie Began, Marc Bourque, Daryle Brown, Eugene Buccini, Emilio Collar, Sara DeLoughy, Terrence Dwyer, Gancho Ganchev, Russell Gladstone, Carol Hawkes, Karen Koza, Leslie Lindenauer, Sam Lightwood (for Pres. Tara Kuther), Susan Maskel, Allen Morton, Duane Moser, James Munz, Zuohong Pan, Elizabeth Popiel, Imran Qazi, Jeffrey Schlicht, James Scrimgeour, S. Alba Skar, D. L. Stephenson, Cigdem Usekes

Guests present: Veronica Kenausis, Chuck Rocca, Linda Rinker

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sen Lightwood - I'm Sam Lightwood and Tara is not here and I'll start with announcements. For announcements, since you didn't know that Tara wouldn't be doing this, I will now ask if there are any announcements that anyone would like to share.

Sen. Gladstone – After the conversation that took place at the last Senate meeting concerning the training portals, some members of the WCSU AAUP executive committee gathered and met with some folks from the Administration to voice some concerns we had about the requirement on the training portal software that members had to take a quiz at the end of each one of the modules. We explored some possibilities and discussed our concerns with some folks from the administration and earlier in the week I wrote to Lorraine Capobianco one of the folks who attended our meeting to ask if there was any progress in looking at a potential alternatives to the quiz taking and she said that she would think that there was likely a way that the software might be amended or remedied to provide alternatives. She wrote back to me and said that Carolyn Lanier in Human Resources would research this. I got a message back from her today on email that said that she had spoken with the vendor of the training portal and that there may be a possibility of adding an optional self-assessment rather than a quiz and it appears that if this option is viable they would send back information to Carolyn about pricing and logistics to put it in place. That information has not yet made it back to us so we'll have to wait a little while for further developments. Cigdem was in this meeting as well.

Sen. Usekes – One of the other concerns we have expressed to the management at the time of this meeting was the GLBA does not cover many of the areas required as part of the training so our understanding right now is that the only training we're required to undertake is for the GLBA for Ethics. Many of you probably remember that you were required; we were told we were required to take 7-8 training portals and I don't think that is going to be true once the problem is fixed. I just wanted to let people know that.

Sen. Gladstone – It's unclear from the message what an optional self-assessment is. What we suggested and Lorraine had formulated a potential option was that she said that if we wanted to stop at some point where they said and I understand the information check quick or whatever,

then you could then exit that module having taken a look at it and you would not have to take a quiz and have three tries or five tries, etc., etc.

Sen. Lightwood – I have one Announcement from Nominations and Elections to Senators to convey to constituents and it has to do with signatures. Some people have signatures which are absolutely unreadable. They're wonderful for a check or something of that fashion, but when you vote you get your name checked off the voter registration and that's how they know who is voting. We don't have that, we rely on the signature and if the signature is unreadable we can't count the vote. Please convey to your constituents that we had to throw away seven votes – it's not a lot but I'm sure the people who placed those votes wished they had counted.

Sen. Schlicht – Can I ask a question, because I've often wondered this? My last name, as I sign it is usually not legible that well, but then I also write it down; I assume that that's fine.

Sen. Lightwood – Absolutely.

Unidentified – Could we ask on future ballots and nominations that you please print and sign your name?

Sen. Lightwood - I think it says something like that on the instructions. Moving onto minutes

II. MINUTES

Sen. Popiel – I apologize profusely for the delay in the minutes. They were embedded in my hard drive and my computer was not operational for several months. It's been fixed and I can now retrieve them but [I was] not in time for today's meeting. Sam or Tara will be posting them and forwarding them for the next meeting, I hope. I apologize profusely.

Sen. Qazi – Will we approve all the minutes at the April meeting?

Sen. Popiel – You'll have them well before the meeting. You'll hopefully get them at the end of next week at the latest.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. EAP By-laws change

Sen. Lightwood – New Business there's an EAP By-law Change, I believe someone is here to speak to them. Motion to discuss? Gladstone/Schlicht

Sen. Gladstone – Can I ask what the change is?

Sen. Usekes – This is actually not part of the suggested amendment, but under conduct of business this committee has a total of 11 voting members, but for a quorum you only need 5 voting members, that's less than a majority. Is that a little strange?

Chuck Rocca – I only just started on this committee this year, so I'm not sure about that particular part of it. It was generally the feeling of the committee that right now one of the

reasons for the change on the table is that there is a great deal of trouble getting quorum and I think they may have seen that with the previous problem that cropped up when they added the new school is we had to add new members to the committee and they were reluctant to (inaudible) that number because as it is at least three meetings have not have quorum due to non-attendance.

Sen. Usekes – Should we maybe add a clause somewhere that says that if an elected member does not attend they will be removed from the committee?

Chuck Rocca – I personally would be in favor of that, but again it would have to go back to the committee.

Sen. Usekes – I had another actually comment about this. Under the rationale for amendment it says that it is important that the departments offering these courses have membership on the committee. The EAP Committee has asked that the English department develop a critical reading course for the EAP students.

Chuck Rocca – That is separate from the remedial courses that have been taught and are traditionally part of the EAP program. A number of these students are placed in Math 098 or Writing 098 and when rationale refers to these courses it is those courses that they're referring to. Those three credit courses that the BOT has mandated these students must have in the first 24 credit hours.

Sen. Usekes – You may not know this but how does a critical reading course fit into that? I understood from my communication with the Chair of the EAP Committee that they were only required to take a critical reading course.

Chuck Rocca – The critical reading core courses is part of the EAP program in the summer to help the students, in general, with their academic performance overall. Whereas these two courses are mandated by the University system that the students have to take, that all students placed into them have to take.

Sen. Lightwood – Further comments? Questions? This is a change of by laws it consequently cannot be voted upon before the next meeting. Moving on to:

B. CUCAS By-law change,

Sen Lightwood - I spoke to Michael Chappell this afternoon and he was not able to attend and asked that we (inaudible) Typically we ask somebody from the committee to be here to answer questions, this would be up to you whether you feel you have any questions, if you have no questions for him to answer his presence would not be necessary and if you chose you could also postpone this till next months meeting. If anyone has any questions

Sen. Maskel – I do have a question, I would ask that if he change, CUCAS meets at a particular time and some people have classes, so if anything changed (inaudible)

Sen. Lightwood – OK, so in as much as he's not here to address this what we should do is (inaudible). Let's move on to other business –

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Senate Committee/ Center Load Credit Release Clarity –

Sen. Schlicht – We're looking for feedback. You have two pieces of paper; let's look at the one that says to establish firm commitments from the administration for all faculty load credit release in Senate committees, programs, and centers by laws. This is a direct outcome of a conversation we had last meeting when we had the General Ed Committee's revised by laws and there was a question in the Senate about what had existed in the past which in the reading that I did (inaudible) we allude to the amount of release time that someone may get/could get/should get but they don't actually say "they get this". So I had some conversations about people about it and it seems to me that (inaudible) so that we have a value for it, for example, if you're running CELT, you're the Chairman of CELT, you're going to get whatever the release time is 3 credits per semester. This is where the discussion is, (inaudible). I'm curious as to if people think we should put some actual numbers on these.

Sen. Maskel – I would think that (inaudible) and if you're locked into a particular number of credits, then the person (inaudible)

Sen. Buccini – I'd like to speak about the past and it's exactly what Sue said very often depending on the faculty member and what they were involved in and what particular center was involved in it's like an accordion sometimes it was a lot of work and so the release time was up and sometimes either because not much activity was going to be going on or the faculty member didn't want to commit to that much activity it was less. So, as you go forward think about the flexibility of the faculty member as well.

Sen. Schlicht – Is there at least a minimum value that should be established? (Inaudible). Maybe you want to have this discussion with some of the people in your department.

Sen. Usekes – I have a question. Have you done research about this? How many people would actually receive reassigned time to fill the need?

Sen. Schlicht – Inaudible

Sen. Qazi – Have you researched faculty in our sister schools?

Sen. Schlicht – (Inaudible)

Veronica Kenausis – Am I allowed to speak?

Sen. Schlicht – I guess.

Veronica Kenausis – There's a difference between, I think, what you might be thinking about and the proposal to change the by laws for the Gen. Ed Committee because it's not for the Chair

of the Gen. Ed Committee it would be for a separate position for the coordinator for the First Year Experience and we did do research and the other universities have full time coordinator for the first year experience. We were trying to – we didn't think we could achieve that so we're trying to establish the minimum number of release credits for someone to coordinate that program. We wanted to assure some kind of continuity from year to year and some baseline for someone to receive some compensation for acting in that position. So, we're feeling our way through this as well. That's basically why we brought it here, put it in the by laws, we weren't sure where to go with it so we thought it made sense there, but that's why we had the discussion. It's a little different than just saying by virtue of you being Chair of a Committee, which potentially could happen, I think that's what Jim was saying that a committee could propose every Chair of this committee could propose that. It's a little different than that being that it's a separate position for a particular program.

Sen. Schlicht – I guess I'm just asking (inaudible)

Sen. Ganchev – This can be seen from a different angle, it's already a sacrifice for some person to decide to do this work – Chair a committee – but having to give up their classes may be an additional sacrifice, depends on the energy of the person and their values. Some people may not want to get the release time.

Sen. Munz – I have no problem with Senators receiving reassigned time, That's roughly equivalent to ¼ of a full time teaching faculty members' load which is 15 hours of teaching +. I don't think we've ever looked at that issue. This is the first time this has been proposed for a standing committee, the Senate. It doesn't matter whether it's the Chair or someone else. (Inaudible) I think it's really an issue of the percentage of workload.

Sen. Schlicht – I guess to wrap that up I think it's a discussion we should have with the members of our departments and bring it back to senate to decide if we want to do something about it. The other one is strictly a discussion issue and I think for me it's about the beginning of us having a conversation. It starts with something that came up recently and affected me and that is we were talking about Faculty Development. What does it mean when we talk about Faculty Development? Is faculty at a university, only what we received our degree in? As an Exercise Scientist and faculty member here at Western, is that the majority of my role? The only thing that I should be held accountable for and be an expert in and therefore receive further training in as I go forth or is it more likely that my role as a faculty member at WestConn comes with some of my expertise as an exercise scientist but (inaudible), but beyond that and should we develop our faculty so that they are good faculty (inaudible). Maybe we should be broadening our own definition of what we think faculty development means. Maybe (inaudible) As opposed to maybe you're trying to develop your skills as a Senator. Maybe you'd like to take a workshop on that, learn more about it so you could be more effective on the Senate. Does it make sense for us to have Faculty Development money available for that? I think that we should begin to consider that what we're doing here is much more complicated than simply standing up here talking about our Ph.d, that we have a lot of other skill sets that we need to be able to balance and I would think that it would behoove the university to support the development of all the skill sets, to be better at a lot of things and not just become great at one thing. I was wondering what

other people had to say about what faculty development means. Be concerned with that first question, though, what does it mean to be a faculty?

Sen. Popiel - Just off the top of my head, I feel like the bottom part of the tenured based and promoted lie well outside our areas, I think what we talk about there is the part of having just gone through this, it's the part where it says service the community, service the university, where as the (inaudible) part on here, I think you were referring to professional activity as one of the tenured and promotion (inaudible). I think in my perception faculty development deals more with what I do professionally, in terms myself. You asked me what my own perception is of what it means, that's certainly what it means to me, when I see faculty development funds but that may actually fuel the fire of (inaudible), because I always assumed it had to be professional activity and things that relate to the things you do as a professional.

Sen. Schlicht - How many other people think that's what it means to them, professional development?

Sen. Popiel – it doesn't mean that I'm disagreeing with the concept of broadening it; I'm just saying that's what I feel it meant.

Sen. Maskel – I didn't realize funds weren't available for AAUP people to go to conference on how to run AAUP; I was surprised when (inaudible)

Sen. Schlicht - I think it might, let me say that I'm on that committee all I can say is (inaudible) it seems to me it's the perception of others that (inaudible) One of the big issues that we have to deal with is beyond the scope of this conversation and that's the limited amount of money that is not helping us develop our faculty. If I'm saying faculty development is for an area that I want, that means we have to have a lot more money available. (Inaudible)

Sen. Gladstone – Generally the university individual the faculty and the department of the member who gains training would benefit from training that's perhaps more diverse than the training that they would seek to further their discipline. The world is a complicated place and information is abundant everywhere, there's lots of dynamics, politically and socially that affect what happens to us when we come to work, when we teach students, when we see students, when we work on our own projects, technologically, intellectually and I think it occurs to me often as a Librarian I see more different folks from different disciplines every day than most people and it is helpful to have a more expansive introduction in many ways, to many things than to only concentrate on information science or research process in support of faculty students and staff. I would certainly support a wider reading of faculty development funds to let people explore what would be useful and beneficial not only to themselves but I think the whole academy.

Sen. Buccini - Jeff you can expand the definition but the reality has been and apparently still is that because of the limited funds each member on the committee has to make a judgment and when you wind up having a proposal when you have such a limited amount of money, and you have two proposals and one is for one of our science professors to do something in Science and someone else to do something that would broaden the knowledge, I think invariably the individual member winds up supporting the person that's doing something in his or her field.

The area you might want to explore is the contract that calls for a certain funding of faculty development funds and faculty retraining funds. Invariably there is always a surplus in the faculty retraining funds. If there was more flexibility in the use of those, you might be able to get additional funds in the faculty training and if you have a larger pot then it allows a broader definition in reality.

Sen. Schlicht - (Inaudible) I would try to increase the likelihood of improving ourselves in our area of expertise. I agree with you, Gene. (Inaudible)

Sen. Pan – I don't know if this can be initiated by a Senator or if this is something that should be initiated by (inaudible).

Sen. Schlicht – I'm not asking anybody to do anything today other than to open up our minds to the possibility of change. I'm not saying that faculty development needs a change in their definition, I'm saying let's talk about it, if everybody in this room goes back to their departments and has a conversation, then it changes our way of thinking. (Inaudible) It's something that I'd like to see us start to talk about. (Inaudible)

Sen. Ganchev – You have a quote here – and it says to improve your capacity as classroom teacher either as classroom teacher, scholar, or provider of public service and/or information to others.

Sen. Schlicht – This is from the application that you can download. I really think that some language, somehow, (inaudible)

Sen. Buccini – If you went to take it to the next step, Sen. Pan's suggestion is a good one. (A) If your committee could come to the Senate with we are interpreting it broadly, (B), if they could discuss some priorities that they would give so effective teaching might be priority (1) your field (2) something to do with the involvement of the university working the university (3) that at least gives some guidelines to the members and the same time gives a broad definition that the Senate can react to. It's a good idea.

Sen. Usekes – How about the money we have access to through the Dean? Could that be used for the purposes that you have in mind?

Sen. Schlicht – Some of it (inaudible)

Sen. Alba Skar – It seems clear that the issue is a lack of funding in general given the increased expectations upon faculty for promotion and tenure both in terms of service as Sen. Popiel mentioned as well as in terms of increased research for activity. The funding is insufficient for travel to conferences I know that some faculty appeal to this funding for that and are denied because this funding is not intended for travel to conferences because there is an AAUP fund for that. I would second the excellent suggestion by Senator Buccini to request that this committee establish this as a priority for discussion by the Senate and the clarification of how this money is distributed.

Sen. Schlicht – I'm going to leave you with an idea for us to take this discussion back to our departments (inaudible) Thank you.

Meeting adjourned 4:30pm [Munz/Scrimgeour]

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Popiel – Senate Secretary
Linda D'Aurio – Recording Secretary

SENATE RESOLUTIONS

None