Faculty Senate

Minutes

10/21/2015 3:02 pm

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ROLL CALL

**Present:** Mary Kay Bauer, Bob Beaudet, David Belcher, Patricia Bricker, Linda Comer, Robert Crow, David Dorondo, David Henderson, Ian Hewer, Beth Huber, Cheryl Johnston, Leroy Kauffman, Will Lehman, Kae Livsey, L. Alvin Malesky Jr., David McCord, Erin McNelis, Katerina Spasovska, Zsolt Szabo, Jamie Vaske, Tonya M. Westbrook, John Whitmire, and Bill Yang

**Members with Proxies:** Jeanne R. Dulworth, Niall Michelsen, Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Mack Powell, Bill Richmond, Liz Skene, and Peter Tay

**Members Absent:** AJ Grube, and Robert Steffen

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES  **April 30th overflow minutes:**

* Errors on Page 3- faculty process has no results listed.
* There was a 30 minute discussion about internationalization certificate that could have been elaborated on.
* Decision to postpone for approval.

**August 27th minutes:**

* Changes needed: Erin McNelis is not chair of Gen Ed council.
* A pilot was conducted by the UNC system in the spring.
* Accepted with above changes.

**September 23rd minutes:**

* Changes needed: Provost Report did not mention follow up. David McCord will correct.
* Senate Council- CRC will review proposal on rewrite of the faculty handbook is noted. Eric McNelis will rewrite this portion.
* Decision to postpone for approval.

EXTERNAL REPORTS **Chancellor’s Report/David Belcher:**

Budget update- BOG meets next week and will make final decisions on allocations of revenues and cuts. System is recommending full enrollment growth funding. By Nov. 1 we should be able to make some budget decisions for this year. We will not receive any next year because of enrollment growth. It is now one time funding. We will take a small one time strategic cut this year and it will not be across the board. We need to make some budget investments that should result in enrollment growth. Numbers of deposits and applications are up. With strategic commitment of the University we will get back to a positive territory.

Oct. 1 we held a leadership summit on campus to talk about comprehensive fund raising campaign. The entire campus community contributed to the success.

Priorities:

* Natural Science Building and Bond Campaign. The Governor has signed the legislation. Election will be held on March 15. We have received direction on how we can be involved in the campaign. We have to get a simple majority vote. Our biggest impact will be getting our metropolitan area, student, and alumni to participate. Social media will be our avenue of choice. The republican primary will draw attention because of so many candidates. Need to coordinate with parks, recreation, and community colleges.
* Making connections with elected officials. Next legislative session begins in April. Trying to use the off season to get them out here. Greensboro house of capital appropriations committee was here- showed them the natural sciences building.
* Spending time in Development.
* Fundraising for endowed scholarships.
* We will have no additional money if we don’t go up in enrollment.
* Connections, contacts, deepening relationships with community colleges. Enrollment in all community colleges in the state are declined. Get as many community college transfers, who are qualified. Lots of great things happening here.
* New President of the system will be named on Friday. How best to onboard the new President. WCU mission, our passions and commitments and how we are growing is important. She will become our chief legislature.

Question- Assuming we know who it will be this Friday, what happens between the legislature and BOG?

Response- It is hard to know. What we have read, is concern from general assembly re: the process. They voted unanimously to have a closed search. They are going to have a press conference at 11am on Friday that will take effect after January 1st.

Question- New President, new strategic direction?

Response- Would be surprised if they don't revisit the mission. May not rewrite the document, but they may hone in on several things of importance and focus on those.

Discussion followed.

**Provost Report/Brandon Schwab:**

Request from GA, prompted by BOG to create a 4-6 person steering committee to look at Advising.

The committee would review:

* Key elements of campus advising programs
* Identify best practices in advising and to make recommendations to enhance and improve advising based on the institutions priority’s

Members:

* Lowell Davis
* Travis Bullock
* Andrew Adams
* Bruce Henderson
* Trina Orr
* Billy Hutchings
* Michael McDonald

Responsible for gathering and appropriating information.

Senate planning meeting requested information about Catalytics. It was rolled out to Deans, Department heads, and program directors. Delores Boone was present to answer any questions about rolling this out across campus.

Catalytics is a data driven program. They have started to release to Faculty. Registrar’s office approves access to data. It is centered around enrollment, graduation rates, retention, FTE, faculty workload, and Census data. New focus- Predictive analytics, to help with recruitment and retention.

Question- Does Faculty Senate have access to it?

Response- can mass enroll so you have access to it.

A few notes:

* Every 2nd Thurs of month is a standard training session.
* Training library is on the web site with quick start guides and videos: catalytics.wcu.edu

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**SGA Representative/Katlyn Smith:**

* SGA is no longer looking into skateboarding policy. Skateboarding on campus is not tolerated.
* Several groups were given scholarship money for conferences.
* Forum on UC lawn- Suggestions for improvements.
* Program to get students registered before March to vote on Natural Science Building.

**Faculty Assembly Report/Linda Comer:**

* Reception on Thursday evening in President Ross home.
* Friday meet in Chapel Hill, TBD.
* Will have a press release and statement to read.

**Staff Senate/Annette Parris:**

* Staff survey had 371 respondents.
Pam Degraffenreid will take this to the Chancellor, and information will go to campus.
* Open forum Nov. 19, with HR, open to everyone in UC Theater. Topics: Changes to adverse weather policy, next steps in salary, disbursement of bonus, HSB 495

**SACSCOC Reaffirmation/Arthur Salido:**

QEP topic development committee met on Monday. 18 member committee representing every college and division.

We have 3 focus groups within the committee:

* collecting institutional data
* reviewing QEP from other university’s
* reviewing literature

Compliance is moving along. We have a self-imposed deadline to complete narratives on November 15th. We will then do a month or so of internal auditing while we develop an external audit and decide who we will involve in that.

SENATE COUNCIL REPORTS

**Faculty Affairs Council/Jeannie Dulworth:**

Sent out invitation for fixed term faculty task force. Have 20 volunteers currently, need a few more from the College of Business and Kimmel School.

Senate leadership will make decisions about that task force.

Will incorporate some from 2007 report and will focus on salary from non-tenured salaries. Extended term, rolling contracts, career ladder issue.

May see some updated in early spring.

Discussion followed.

**Charter for establishing a new center Proposal: Ed Lopez**
This proposal must be opened up to the faculty. It is straightforward and the idea is to add to, and contribute to, and further the University's mission by complimenting it with a Research Center.

Proposed name: WCU Center for The Study of Free Enterprise (CSFE)

Full proposal available on SharePoint.

Driven by the goal of wanting to better understand and communicate the role of free enterprise.

Question- What was the application process like?

Response- Authorization Plan overlaps, it has gone to Charles Koch Foundation and to the Budget. They are interested in making this a Grant because they have a long working relationship with Ed as well as other scholars across the world. We have received grants from the foundation for 6 years now. There has been ongoing opportunities of talking to them and the conversation quickly took off from there. This has come out of a long-standing personal relationship.

Suggestions:

* Center would need to incorporate multiple points of view.
* Be prepared to handle and anticipate the movement of the center based off recent center scrutiny.

Concerns:

* Organizational structure
* Intellectual honesty
* Economic Impact

John Whitmire read the following comments prepared ahead of time:

Comments on Proposed Center for Study of Free Enterprise

John F. Whitmire, Jr.

21 October 2015 Faculty Senate meeting

I have three major concerns here that I’d like to comment on, with respect to organizational structure and function, intellectual honesty, and symbolic value of this proposed action.

My first concern is structural. I appreciate the comments thus far, but I wasn’t entirely clear from the proposal (and specifically the Goals section), and I’m still not entirely so, exactly what the Center will be doing or the value added here, as it seems that a significant number of the proposed deliverables of the Center are (i.) research reports (e.g. the Tourism Economic Fact Sheets or Regional Outlook), (iii.) conferences (e.g. LEAD conferences), or (v). guest speaker series (e.g. the Free Enterprise Speakers Series) that are already ongoing.

Beyond that, I’m not really clear from the proposal on the relation of the activities of this Center with those of past and current Centers at WCU. So for instance is the Center meant to be furthering the work of the Institute for the Economy and the Future, a center that we shuttered 6 years ago, with no discussion of whether or how it would replicate or improve upon the work of a Center deemed not a priority at that point? If the work is envisioned to be primarily economic and community or business development (given the mission statement, reference to Goal 1.1 of the 2020 plan, and a Core faculty made up only of faculty from Economics, Management and Project Management), will it be overlapping that of the Small Business and Technology Development Center or our office for Millennial Initiatives? If it’s meant to be policy analysis, as the mission statement has it now and was also stated today (“sound social science informing public policy analysis”), will it be duplicating work already done in the Public Policy Institute?

Frankly, I'm pretty astounded that we would be proposing any new centers or programs at all right now in the present climate of skepticism surrounding the necessity of centers and institutes in the UNC system, and given the fact that we just conducted a prioritization process – the result of which was to close down whole programs in order to streamline focus on core university academic priorities. I’m therefore doubly confused given that the proposal is so vague regarding the actual work the Center will do or the value it will add to the work of existing Centers and departmental programs.

My second issue really has to do with intellectual honesty. While I hold academic freedom as an incredibly important value and therefore think it would be inappropriate for me personally to attempt to dictate other faculty members’ research agendas, engagement activities, or content of their classes – just as I would expect other faculty to respect my own – I think it’s fairly disingenuous to suggest, as the proposal’s statement does, that the center’s work will be "sound policy research -- not ideology, not advocacy." Perhaps that’s de jure true. But I see no reason whatsoever to believe there will not be a de facto ideological perspective embedded in the center's work, including its research, proposed new faculty hires, conferences, core and affiliate faculty and student support, given 1) past [hiring advertisements](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/10/16/new-paper-details-extent-bbt-banks-ayn-rand-inspired-grant-program) for the BB&T Distinguished Professor of Capitalism, 2) a mission statement that explicitly references policy analysis and thought leadership on issues of economic development based on "the role of free enterprise in a flourishing society," 3) the translation of the student Economics Club to the "Free Enterprise Club" last year, 4) the initial proposed source of funding, and 5) the College of Business "Free Enterprise Speakers" series already [jointly funded by the BB&T Professorship and the Charles Koch Foundation](http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/COBNewsletter2015June.pdf)  (p. 5), which have been dominated by a neoliberal economic perspective and/or libertarian political philosophy, and the absence of substantial, serious treatment of competing economic or philosophical perspectives.

It seems to me that the reasonable conclusion, instead, would be that a Center for Study of Free Enterprise with the proposed mission, direction and funding here is simply the next logical move to consolidate current WCU faculty research interests in Austrian economics and public choice theory à la George Mason University with the distinct philosophical perspective on government and Free Enterprise underlying the original BB&T gift. One might even venture to predict the research outcomes, educational activities and community outreach of a Center for Study of Free Enterprise based on the positions of past participants in the Free Enterprise Speakers series, given the identical naming, funding, and direction of the programs. In any event, it doesn't appear likely to me that a Center so-named, tasked, and directed, would be engaged in a great deal of activity that is premised on a more suspicious position regarding the influence of unrestrained markets on societal flourishing. If nothing else, the Center is going to have to contend with fruit of a poisoned tree issues, given the fact that some faculty you might expect to be involved in the work of a Center thus described (by virtue of their interests and background) have already indicated to me their unwillingness to take what they regard as tainted funding for their research and engagement activities.

Let me reiterate, I am not disputing anyone’s right, given the academic freedom we all cherish, to take such a perspective in one’s scholarship, teaching, or service and engagement, and even to attempt to establish a Center with such a perspective – though as I said, I do have serious doubts about the political wisdom of attempting to establish any new Centers right now, much less one that looks likely to replicate other current university initiatives. But I think we owe each other the courtesy of being intellectually honest about the fact that it will be folks like Hayek, von Mises and Rand – not, say, Piketty or Krugman – that are going to shape the research, teaching, and outreach of this proposed Center. I would also note that respect for academic freedom is primarily what ethicists would call a negative duty. That is, it means fellow faculty members and the University administration should generally refrain from intruding unless there’s some clear issue of incompetence of malfeasance. I think a robust respect for academic freedom probably also entails a weak positive duty – namely, standing up for others’ individual or collective rights to do research or teach courses on a subject or in a way or from a perspective that one doesn’t agree with, or even finds intellectually problematic or morally dubious. That said, academic freedom does not mean that I as an individual faculty member – or the University as an institution – have a positive duty to support such work, much less the founding of a Center whose stated purposes are vague or that replicates other work already being done on campus, *whatever* the ideological perspective underlying it actually is. And because we’re discussing not the work of an individual faculty member or collection thereof, but rather whether we should positively support the creation of a new institutional structure, what we should be talking about is whether there are enough compelling reasons – economic or otherwise, relative to potential problems, to support that Center’s founding.

Following from that last point – and this is really a comment directed to our upper administration, including our Provost and Chancellor – I would hope that beyond the potential economic impact of a couple million dollars of grant funding in times of austerity, we seriously consider not only the structural and functional problems and disingenuous nature of the proposal I’ve pointed to, but also the symbolic impact of establishing a Center with this mission and funding, hard on the heels of the UNC system closing Centers on Poverty, Work and Opportunity; and well as Civic Engagement and Social Change. Because that symbolic action is going to say something about our university priorities and values, and it’s going to have an impact on the way that the general public, our alumni and current students view this University. In light of those considerations, I am personally not persuaded that a compelling case for the support of our faculty Senate in establishing this Center has been made and would urge the administration to take that lack of support into consideration in making a final decision here.

Lengthy discussion followed.

*Monday at 3pm the conversation on opening a new center will continue in an open forum.*

*Next Wednesday, Faculty Senate will meet to continue regular business meeting items.*

MEETING RECESSED