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### Faculty Senate Minutes

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## SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2021,

Via Zoom: 1:00p.m. – 3:00pm

**Voting Members Present:** Lisa Abbott (CAH), Cheryl Aasheim (PCEC), Diana Botnaru (WCHP), Cary Christian (CBSS), President-Elect, Jessica Garner (LIB), Dee Liston (COE), Jeffery Secrest (COSM), Bill Wells (PCOB)

**Non-Voting Members Present:** Amanda Konkle (CAH), Secretary, Barbara King (CBSS), Librarian, Megan Small, Graduate Assistant

**Absent:** Trish Holt (COE), President, Helen Bland (JPHCOPH), Parliamentarian

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Cary Christian called the meeting to order at 1:20 following technical difficulties.

#### II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda was approved.

The title on the Agenda under III.B. Librarian's Report was changed from Core Committee to General Education and Core Curriculum Committee.

Amanda Konkle, as the secretary, brought forward a request she had received to add information to the minutes, citing Robert's Rules, which require any addition (as opposed to a minor correction) to the minutes to be stated at the next meeting to go in those minutes. Discussants stated that minutes serve as a record of what was said, not of what would have or should have been said. The SEC recommended that concerned parties need to find a senator to suggest any additional information as an addendum to the record when we are approving the minutes at the Senate meeting, to go into the February Senate meeting minutes. There was also discussion of whether this process would bypass the proper channels and if this information should be submitted as an RFI or a DI.

Bill Wells moved that addendums to minutes of prior meetings will not be made; rather any addendums should be brought up in the approval of the minutes at the next meeting to go into those meeting minutes. In the future, additional information should proceed through the proper channels, as an RFI or DI, to be discussed and become part of the next meeting's minutes.

The issue of faculty forwarding questions through the SEC was stated as needing to stop, with the FS President arguing in a written statement that the practice of bringing questions forward disenfranchises senators and circumvents the Senate committees. The written statement added that if senators are afraid to pose their own questions through chairs and deans, that speaks to a larger issue. Discussion centered around clarifying the statement and the concern it

represents. Members of the SEC are elected as representatives of their faculty and thereby not disenfranchising senators when they bring forward senators' or faculty's concerns. There was discussion regarding whether this was about senators sending questions to Trish as Senate President or to the SEC as a body as opposed to SEC members as individuals bringing these questions forward. SEC members clarified that this statement could be referencing the list of questions SEC members compiled to ask administration in the last biweekly meeting with them. It was stated that the President and Provost initially asked SEC members to bring forward faculty questions at these biweekly meetings. It was then asked if we need to revisit the purpose of these biweekly meetings with administration and the RFI/DI process, and stated that information could be sent to committee after we receive the initial response or request to direct a particular questions elsewhere. Furthermore, if the answers received from administration then lead to the need for additional discussion, faculty will be prepared with some information to develop RFIs or DIs. Discussion also stated that SEC had previously noted that the process went more smoothly when the administration receives questions ahead of time. It was also stated that we are all senators, so the point of disenfranchising senators doesn't make sense. It was also pointed out that Senate Executive Committee often asks faculty to redirect something if it needs to be an RFI or DI. It was stated that the President said at the last meeting that he is comfortable to continue with this format, and that the Provost and the President do have the right to say they can't answer something or it needs to go to a committee or through an RFI or DI. It was stated that these biweekly meetings are the SEC's meetings with administration; if we don't get to ask questions, we could receive updates in an email instead. President Marrero projects an image of caring what faculty think and opening a conversation with faculty. Discussion centered around consent to continue to send questions forward, and that if something else is implied in the statement, it will need to be addressed later.

Dee Liston moved that the FS Secretary will create a shared google document to gather questions from the SEC, and forward these questions to the President and Provost at least 3 days prior to the biweekly meetings, for the President and Provost to answer and direct the questions as they see fit. Once we have those documents, we can also track the responses and send it forward through committees as needed. Reminders can be given to the SEC members to double-check the questions to make sure that questions that might have already been answered can be removed. This motion was passed unanimously.

The Inclusive Excellence Action plan was discussed, with Cary Christian reporting a written statement from the FS President that many of the SEC's portions of the plan were not completed prior to the deadline. Discussion centered around members not understanding how to complete the plans despite having attended meetings about this. It was further stated that goals are great goals, but the document asks for very specific information, and in some cases the categories, such as diversifying administration, are out of the hands and purview of faculty Senate or individual committees on Senate. It was elaborated that making a plan and being responsible for it increases our workload exponentially in a time when we are all overtaxed by Covid. In addition, the plan is so large and seems unlikely to produce actual actions from an overworked faculty. The work Dr. Tajuana Wilson is doing is appreciated, but perhaps not suited in the form of the current plan for successfully eliciting faculty's contributions to the work of

Inclusive Excellence. It was added that each college, department, and the Senate, among others, are developing plans. This could be more effective if there is one plan, and then individual units determine how to implement the spirit of what exists in the plan. Concern that this would be an exercise in checking boxes as opposed to implementing action and questions about what happens if various plans contradict each other were raised. It was added that if administration wants to develop an inclusivity and diversity program on this campus, it needs to be funded and include a full staff rather than depend on faculty and staff doing the work of developing plans. The current process seems likely to make this plan fail to produce results. It was reiterated that the committee supports social justice efforts, but this document seems unlikely to provide truly effective support to those efforts. The point was raised that we might simply need to send the plan back and suggest that it does not allow nor encourage faculty to make meaningful contributions. It was stated the SEC was supposed to vote on the entire plan to move to the Senate floor for a vote. SEC did not receive the plan until late last night, so no one is prepared to vote for it.

It was stated that we might want a plan developed by administration, which would allow various departments, colleges, and committees to buy into the parts that apply to them and that they think they can develop actionable plans around. It was added that the SEC's role is to serve as a voice for the faculty throughout the university. Maybe the place to start is to invite Dr. Wilson to discuss with the SEC the sense that this document is not faculty-friendly, and to suggest that we might be given a plan with some specific and tangible actions provided, and then allow faculty to state how their work contributes to the goals of that plan. Administration can then do the needed work of conducting research on various aspects of the plan. It was added that Senate does not have the authority to enforce action plans, so anything we do is advisory. The Inclusive Excellence plan is an instance that should come from top down, with the opportunity for faculty to provide input before it is finalized, and then ask departments and colleges to develop goals specific to their units in relation to the plan. Dee Liston spoke to the ongoing work in the College of Education in developing a plan; maybe that college could share their plan to allow faculty in other colleges to build on that work. There was discussion of whether more time is needed, and it was agreed that faculty could have a year to do this and would still be confused about what to do to support inclusivity.

The SEC discussed feasible solutions for faculty to participate in the Inclusive Excellence Plan. Faculty don't work well in the way the action plan has currently been passed down, but if administration completed the work of the plan, faculty could identify areas where their committees, departments, or colleges could contribute to goals and actions related to inclusive excellence through teaching, research, and service. Individual units could then perhaps contribute a paragraph or two regarding what, for example, the SEC, a department, etc. could do to advance the spirit of this plan. Barb King reported that the Senate Elections Committee had some ideas for diversifying the Senate, but those ideas didn't respond to the assigned items on the overall plan. Asking faculty for ideas related to the spirit of the document would be more likely to result in actions that faculty would be willing and able to undertake. The current form of the plan was compared to program accreditation, where everyone can check off items that

they contribute to, with the hope that everything is covered and that administration can address any holes and determine how unchecked needs can be met.

Lisa Abbott moved that the SEC respectfully recommends returning the plan back to Dr. Wilson's office incomplete, and requests a meeting with Dr. Wilson to discuss faculty confusion, what is needed from faculty, and to develop a strategy more in line with faculty abilities and contributions. Further discussion centered around the work faculty are charged to do with lecturing and researching and how faculty would be more enthusiastic about celebrating what they already do in the areas of inclusive excellence and their ideas for advancing inclusive excellence, such as contributing a paragraph or two of goals in response to the plan. This motion was unanimously approved.

A committee on SRIs that had only two volunteers was discussed. The inaccuracy of SRIs was discussed briefly. Lisa Abbott volunteered to serve on this committee. Diana Botnaru asked if it was ok to post a request for volunteers on the Senate listserv. The committee approved. No one has volunteered to serve as the SGA representative. This will be included in the email requesting volunteers.

Changes to Senate bylaws were discussed. It has been suggested that changes be brought forward to the SEC as they arise so they can be voted on rather than saved until the work is finished. Diana Botnaru reported that the only major change was to the policy for motions from the floor, but these could be brought forward for the next SEC meeting.

No RFIs, motions, or Dis were made during this month.

A suggestion was made to post the Zoom link for attendees to the home page of the Senate website, so that guests could find the link easily if they want to attend. While this opens up the possibility of anyone attending, Faculty Senate is an open meeting and anyone can attend. This does not include voice or video access, and the chat is available to attendees to view but not type into. Megan Small said that she is in charge of website content, and she can easily put the attendee link on the website. It was stated that this is the same as posting where we met and what time when we met physically. Safety concerns with the link being open were discussed. The attendees' link does not allow for guests to "zoom bomb."

Dee Liston moved that the attendee link for viewing only be added to the webpage for as long as we do zooms. The motion was unanimously approved.

Dee Liston moved that all SEC representatives and the grad student assistant be made co-hosts for future SEC meetings so that we can all get into the meeting on time. The motion unanimously passed.

Campus Chatter began. Bill Wells was asked to bring forward a concern about a local high school holding its prom in the Williams Center. There was a discussion of whether community members were prohibited from being on campus during Covid. There was also a discussion of

whether any university staff would be working the event and would then be at high risk of being exposed to Covid. This was discussed as a question to add to the document of questions for administration.

The SEC went off the record to discuss the Faculty Wellbeing Committee formed by the Provost.

The SEC returned to the record. Lisa Abbott moved that a voting member of the SEC be added to any and all Faculty Wellbeing Committees from now on. This motion was approved, to be sent to the Provost, Dr. Telfair, and Dustin Anderson.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20p.m.