

The Executive Council of the Faculty Senate
October 12, 2009 – 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Booker House Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

Present: Robert Bloodgood, Martha Childress, Ann Hamric, Robert Kemp, Edmund Kitch, Pamela Norris, Martha Snell, Herbert (Chip) Tucker, Alfred (Alf) Weaver, Gweneth West, Daniel Willingham

Guests: James Hilton – Vice President and Chief Information Officer
Virginia Evans – Assistant Vice President for Integrated System Deployment
& Support
Arthur Garson, Jr., M.D. – Executive Vice President and Provost

Ann Hamric, chair of the Faculty Senate, called the meeting to order.

James Hilton, the Vice President and Chief Information Officer, discussed the Help Desk, which will now be handled by an outside company, Perceptis. Perceptis will manage help desks for ITC, SIS, and the Integrated System. So far, data say that the process is going well. Complaints and anecdotal information, however, suggest frustrated users. The Council discussed better ways for ITC to publicize and promote changes such as the new Help Desk technology and the Student Information System, perhaps via mass emails. It was suggested that the ITC website should be linked from the U.Va. homepage and should have an obvious link for comments.

Mr. Hilton was invited to give a short presentation at the next Faculty Senate meeting [October 29 – working meeting] of changes to the ITC website, if these could be made before that time.

Mr. Hilton next discussed the Student Information System, which has replaced ISIS. SIS is not tailored to the same extent that ISIS was, to avoid long-term maintenance costs when a new version comes out. So far there has been tremendous frustration. The question now is, What are things worth investing in to fix (raising the cost) and what are things people will get used to?

The Council suggested a statement on the SIS website calling for input on user problems. Now is the time to make comments and suggestions, since SIS is still a separate project until January, not handled by Perceptis. The Faculty Senate working meeting could be vehicle for communication between IT and faculty. Mr. Hilton could also make a brief presentation about UVACSE and SHANTI, which are intended to provide resources for faculty research, at that time. A suggestion was made to activate email trees that have been initiated for the consultation group so that people can come better prepared with comments and questions for James.

Arthur Garson, the Executive Vice President and Provost, reported that six initiatives are ongoing arising from the Commission on the Future of the University. Leaders of the different initiatives will give a presentation at the next Board of Visitors meeting, and could do the same for a Senate meeting.

Members would like to hear from Gowher Rizvi. Provost Garson recommended waiting a few more months; Mr. Rizvi is concentrating on China and India this year, working out what outcomes we are looking for in international studies.

An Arts & Sciences steering committee, chaired by Lou Bloomfield, wrote a letter to the presidential search committee that was signed by 620 faculty members. Ann Hamric will send a copy of it to Executive Council members via email.

Provost Garson said that Cornell's 5% budget cut changed how Cornell sees itself: no longer as rich and impregnable, but as potentially vulnerable, having to worry about where the money comes from. U.Va., on the other hand, has faced numerous budget cuts, but that doesn't change how we view ourselves.

Provost Garson recommended that anyone interested in the state of changes in tech transfer, personnel and policies watch Tom Skalak's presentation to the BOV. Mr. Skalak, the Vice President for Research, is conducting a search for an expert on tech transfer within his office. When that is in place, a permanent director of the Patent Foundation will be chosen. The Foundation will have a budget from the University, and will make decisions based on what the tech transfer advisory group puts in place.

Provost Garson recommended that Mr. Skalak be invited to address the Executive Council.

Other discussion

- Creating a more open and transparent climate of communication: Should the Faculty Senate aggressively pursue this now, or wait until the new president is in place?
- Open Access and Authors' Rights: A few senators are in opposition, including medical colleagues who foresee more demands on their time and conflicts with their primary publishers. Meetings have taken place or are planned in some schools and departments, but are needed in every school to present the facts. The decision was made to go forward with a vote at the next Full Faculty Senate meeting. At the working meeting on October 29, the Senate can see how the dissemination of information is going.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

Submitted by Kevin Lee, Secretary of the Faculty Senate