

Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting
Thursday, September 12, 2019
(Surbeck Center, Hardrocker Room)

Call to Order

Faculty Senate Chair Pro Term, Dr. William Cross, calls the meeting to order at 11:00am.

Roll Call

Senators present: Drs. Haley Armstrong (HUM), Xinhua Bai (PHYS), Karen Braman (MCS), Timothy Brenza (CBE), Andrea Brickey (MEM), William Cross (METE, Chair Pro Term), David Gilley (CABS), Frank Matejcik (IE), Thomas Montoya (EE), Kayla Pritchard (SS), Mengyu Qiao (CSE), Marc Robinson (CEE), Albert Romkes (ME, Secretary), Gokce Ustunisik (GEOL, GEOE), and Michael Vander Heyden (PE).

Also in attendance: Steven Johnson (Director, Cross Country/Track and Field).

Approval of Agenda

Motion made to approve the agenda, received a second, and passed by voice vote.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made to approve the minutes of the May 9, 2019, meeting, received a second, and passed by voice vote.

Change in Order of the Meeting Agenda -- Consideration of New Business item:

- A. Track & Field Team, SDSM&T Athletics, Steven Johnson (Director): proposal to allow qualifying students of the Track & Field Team to travel on the Thursday and Friday (May 7 and 8) of the spring semester finals week to attend NCAA competitions and reschedule their final examinations, if any, earlier in the week. The Athletics Department commits to verifying which specific students would qualify by April 26, 2020. Motion made to accept this proposal, which received a second. Subsequent discussion focused on what type of students is concerned by this proposal (mostly, junior and senior students). Motion passed by voice vote.

Report from the Chair

- Items from the University Cabinet meeting:
 - 2019-2020 Enrollment numbers are not as bad as expected. The total number of enrolled students is down, but the number of enrolled credit hours is up.
 - Last year's retention rates from the sophomore to junior year are approximately at 66%. Questions focused on whether university leadership has a plan to address this rather low rate? Currently, the administration is merely collecting

data and intends to use these results toward developing a plan to improve retention rates.

- The current 6 year graduation rate is at approximately 49%
- The current placement rate is at 97%.
- Senate Chair Election Nomination Committee – The current Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Thomas Montoya, had to step down as Chair, per the by-laws, due to his appointment to the University Administration as EE Interim Department Head. Thus, a new Chair has to be elected. Per the by-laws, in the event that the Chair is unable to complete the two-year term, “the replacement Chair is elected from the faculty at large if greater than six months of the Chair’s term remains to fill an unexpired term.” To start the election process, a Senate Chair Election Nomination Committee is to be formed, consisting (again, per the by-laws) of five faculty members. The election is to be conducted as soon as practically possible (1-2 months). Since Dr. Montoya’s term was to expire at the end of the spring semester, the newly elected Chair would have to serve for this academic year only and another election is to be held at the end of spring. Dr. Karen Braman volunteered to serve on the nomination committee and send out an email soliciting for four additional faculty members in an effort to get the nomination process started as soon as possible.
- New committee assignments:
 - Secretary: Dr. Albert Romkes volunteers to continue serving in this role this academic year.
 - Environmental Health and Safety: Dr. David Gilley volunteers.
 - Research Affairs: Drs. Timothy Brenza and Mengyu Qiao volunteer.
 - Finance Committee: Dr. Malek Ramezani (EE)
- New EE representative: Dr. Malek Ramezani (EE)
- Possibility of updating by-laws: it might be time to revisit what entities are to be represented on the Faculty Senate (e.g., programs vs. departments, graduate programs, etc.), the procedures for nomination and election of Faculty Senate Chair, etc. The by-laws committee (Drs. Romkes and Armstrong) agrees to revisit the by-laws and particularly look at these issues.
- Changing committee structure: some committees are very active (e.g., Academic affairs) whereas other only rarely are required to act (e.g., by-laws committee). Consensus is to revisit the committee structure and consider implementing changes.
- All-Faculty Meeting: this is to be held 4-5pm on Tuesday, September 24, in EEP252. President Rankin has been invited and asked if he would be willing to present an update on the Campus Master Plan as well as the University Strategic Plan.

Old Business

- A. Update on the COHE negotiations: these are still at an impasse. The disagreements center on issues relating to professor of practice positions as well as intellectual property (IP). The SD BoR puts broad claims on IP, though case law questions the legality of such claims. It is anticipated that the impasse will have to be adjudicated by the Courts. In other news: a (state) house bill to eliminate COHE failed on the senate floor. The American Enterprises Institute sponsors the introduction of such bills.
- B. Tuition reduction for children of faculty and staff: President Rankin expressed that he would follow up this issue at the SD BoR. Consensus within the Faculty Senate is to also have the Faculty Senate Chair contact the Chairs at the other SD BoR institutions in relation to this matter, as voiced at the May meeting of the Senate.

New Business

- A. President Rankin: proposes for the Faculty Senate to consider Mr. Dale Lamphere (<https://lampherestudio.com/dale-claude-lamphere/>) to be awarded an honorary doctorate (<https://www.sdbor.edu/policy/documents/2-18.pdf>) at fall 2019 commencement ceremony. A motion was made to award the honorary doctorate degree in Public Service to Mr. Lamphere, a second was received, and the motion subsequently passed by voice vote

Other Business:

- Scheduling of fall finals for graduating seniors: the fall finals week is split by the fall commencement ceremony and therefore there is a potential issue of graduating seniors who wish to complete all their finals before the commencement ceremony. The administration is allowing departments to address such requests as they see fit, on a case-by-case basis.
- The new Common Exam Policy: Many senators express concerns about the new policy, in particular the allotted 4-5pm Wednesday time slot in this new policy. Some departments have class scheduling conflicts at this particular time slot.
- Faculty parking lots: some of the changes of the faculty parking lots are affecting faculty and several senators question whether the decisions for these changes were made with input of faculty or the Faculty Senate. The consensus is that decisions, such as these, which affect faculty should include input from faculty or the Faculty Senate. It is felt that the Faculty Senate should seek out the administration in an effort to improve the communication between faculty, staff, and the administration. It seems in some recent decisions by the administration that there is an inherent and perhaps unintended lack of communication with the faculty.

Adjourn

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 12:25pm.