

University of Nevada, Reno
2003-04 Faculty Senate

Meeting Minutes September 18, 2003

RSJ 304

Meeting 3

Present: Rafik Beekun (Business Administration), Glenn Biasi (Mines), Buddy Borden (Cooperative Extension), Pam Cantrell (Education), Bob Chaires (Human & Community Sciences), Arthur Chenin (Administration & Finance), Mike Collopy (Agriculture), Dana Edberg (Business Administration), Rita Escher (Student Services), Greg Gardella (Information Technology), Chaitan Gupta (Arts & Science), Jerry Johnson (Arts & Science), Trudy Larson (Medicine), Susan Lentz (Human & Community Sciences), John Louie (Mines), Manos Maragakis for Amy Childress (Engineering), Denise McKee (Medicine), Jessica Miller for Gretchen Bietz (Advancement), Bourne Morris (Journalism), Steve Oberg (Research), Mary Stewart (Arts & Science), Shelley Von Berg (Medicine). Absent: Jamie Anderson (Medicine), Rod Case (Education), Joe DeLappe (Arts & Science), Johanna Fricke (Medicine), Greg Pari (Medicine), Amy Shannon (Library), Paul Starrs (Arts & Science), Jill Wallace (Provost's Division), Leah Wilds (Arts & Science), Ken Wilson (President's Division).

1. **Introductions**

Jessica Muehlberg (GSA), Alex Newman (Sagebrush), Sandra Rodriguez (ASUN), Carly Sweder (ASUN).

2. **Meeting Minutes**

MOTION: Chaires/Edberg. To approve the minutes of the August 21, 2003 meeting, as published.

ACTION: Approved unanimously.

3. **Chair's Report**

Chair Trudy Larson reported the following. The executive board continued to work with the president to establish new procedures for employee evaluations of administrators (deans and above). The Nutrition Department reorganization proposal was undergoing review by the dean of the College of Human and Community Sciences, and the dean of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Renewable Resources. The executive board planned to assist the provost in creating a "check list" to ensure that appropriate procedures would be followed prior to reorganization proposals being submitted to the board. In response to Rafik Beekun's concerns that the executive board's process for appointing members and chairs to senate committees, and drafting charges to those committees, was not transparent or consultative, Larson submitted language from the Faculty Senate Bylaws and the senate committees' guidelines confirming the responsibilities of the executive board and that committee's were being consulted through their outgoing chairs. Having reviewed these documents and discussed the matter, the executive board agreed that the current process had worked for many years and it was still a good process. The proposed revisions to the UCCSN Code, discussed by the senate at the August meeting, were still being discussed by some system senates. Larson expected that all the senate's would discuss the revisions prior to the October regents meetings. At the regents meeting, the chairs

would relay comments to the chancellor. The chancellor planned to schedule a first reading of the revisions at the December regents' meeting. The primary focus of this year's UPC was to consider the "best ideas from faculty." To that end, the committee would be reviewing department plans. In the spring, the committee would recommend priorities for space and the next biennial budget.

4. **President's Report**

Referring to his State of the University Address, President John Lilley said that he was interested in employees' ideas for strategic planning. He encouraged faculty to submit their ideas to the administration, regardless of their cost. He said that good ideas that cost little to nothing could be implemented right away, and that the more costly ideas could be implemented over a period of time. Jerry Johnson asked the president to give an update on the discussion about merit policies. Lilley reported that he had not received a report or recommendations, but he thought the Merit Review Committee would be receiving recommendations from its subcommittee soon. Whatever else might be recommended, Lilley said he thought it essential that merit be tied to annual evaluations. Mary Stewart asked whether faculty ideas about strategic planning should include financial support, and whether the ideas that had financial support would receive more favorable consideration than those that didn't. Lilley said that the governor told the chancellor that he would not recommend any tax increases the next legislative session, and he (the president) expected student enrollment to "explode" next year. Thus, the university would have few resources to "throw around." Mike Collopy said that he was supportive of increasing "interdisciplinary opportunities" through centers. He asked the president how the university would maintain a balance between the goals of centers and the undergraduate and graduate experience. Lilley said that faculty would have to report department and unit needs. Dana Edberg expressed skepticism about there being any benefits to creating "centers" by simply applying the term to "what we are already doing." She asked if it wasn't creating more bureaucracy. Lilley said he thought the creation of centers would enhance research opportunities, because it would increase the university's visibility with the media and general public. He said he didn't think it would be more bureaucracy. Manos Maragakis agreed that programs would be highlighted by centers. He asked whether there would be criteria for determining whether proposals to create centers should be approved. Lilley said there was a taxonomy on the web, that included criteria. Beekun commented that the strategic plan focused on core competencies. He asked Lilley if he thought that the university might be going in a "bad direction," and whether the university would "strive for excellence in centers." The reply was that he thought the centers were comprehensive enough and that they would help

with research and the university's land-grant mission. Referring to the recent New York Times article that indicated state institutions receive only about 25% of their funding from their legislatures and 25% from enrollment, he asked Lilley how the university would acquire the other 50% of funding necessary to continue providing service. If the university can't find sufficient funding, would it cut services? Lilley said that, whatever the financial challenges, the university would "manage." Arthur Chenin asked the president to provide an update on the library fund-raising campaign. Lilley reported that the university was making "a lot of progress." He said it had been a challenge, but that the university had made some new friends. Bob Chaires commented that new centers and the implementation of new ideas might require significant funding, and that the cost benefits might not be apparent for some time. Lilley agreed. Rita Escher asked the president if he was interested in creating new student services-related centers. The reply was yes.

5. Student Services Report

Vice President for Student Service Shannon Ellis reported the following. As of this fall, 4,750 millennium scholars were enrolled at UNR. That was the highest "millie" enrollment in the system. One hundred percent of UNR's millies retain their eligibility, and UNR has the highest retention rate of millies in the system. Standards for millennium scholarship eligibility would increase beginning the next academic year. Currently, high school graduates had to have a 3.0 overall GPA to be eligible. In 2004-05, the GPA would increase to 3.1, in year 2005-06 it would increase to 3.2, and in year 2006-07 it would increase to 3.25. Starting this year, millies would have to maintain a 2.6 overall GPA to maintain eligibility, an increase from last year's 2.5 GPA, and it could increase again next year. UNR millies' GPAs range from 2.8-3.0. Last year, there were 108 reported cases of student plagiarism, as compared to 40 in 2001-02. Freshmen and sophomores made up the largest group of violators. The university tended to expel only repeat offenders, so few students were expelled. Shannon said that faculty could invoke one of four options if they thought a student had plagiarized: 1) cancel the student's enrollment in the course; 2) give the student an "F" for the test or paper; 3) give the student an "F" for the course; 4) allow the student to re-do the test or paper. It seems that the primary reason for the increase in plagiarism is the accessibility of information on the Internet. Students report they didn't think there was anything wrong in using someone's text without citation. If faculty need help or have questions, they should call Sally Morgan, Director of Student Judicial Affairs. Ellis gave a brief update on several topics: "The Ethnic Student Resource Center is now called The Center of Student Cultural Diversity." The university's alcoholic beverage policy instructs that alcoholic beverages are never allowed at

class functions, under any circumstances. The new dining hall is called the "Down Under Café." Counseling and Career Services have been merged into one department. "Recently, the state budget allocations provided funds to hire additional staff to work on DARS." A student survey about the new student union building was being conducted. The cost to construct the new building would be paid by students through increased fees. The new building would be located south of Lombardi Recreation, and north of the new library. It was unknown when construction of the new building would begin.

7. Legal Advisement Committee

An election was held to fill two at-large vacancies on the senate's Legal Advisement Committee. In accordance with senate bylaws, the committee's membership includes the executive board and two at-large members elected by and from the senate. The committee reviews and approves large expenditures from the senate's legal advisement fund. Chaires was nominated. Chaitan Gupta volunteered to serve.

MOTION: Stewart/Biasi. To close the nominations and appoint Chaires and Gupta to the Legal Advisement Committee.

ACTION. Approved unanimously

7. UCCSN Master Plan Goals

Referring senators to the handout that was included in the meeting agenda packet, Larson asked senators to comment on the proposed modifications to the UCCSN's master plan goals. She said she would submit the senate's comments to the chancellor. Stewart said she wasn't sure she understood item #7, but if it referred to the relationship between the university and how education was delivered in K-12, it should be a higher priority, given the problems the university seemed to have with poorly prepared entering students. Bourne Morris agreed, and said she thought it should be the system's second priority, not its seventh priority. Oberg said he thought that "sustainability and managing resources should be a priority. Glenn Biasi said that it was a nice idea (goal #2) to be "student friendly," but that he thought it was more important to provide students with a quality education that fostered the development of essential life-skills and admirable qualities, such as integrity and ethics. Chaires agreed, and suggested that critical thinking be added to the list. Gupta said he thought that goal #2 was an excuse to water down what should be the real business and priority of higher education—that is, to provide an excellent and meaningful education that prepares students for life outside the university setting. Escher said she thought that "socioeconomic" should be added to the groups listed in goal #3. John Louie said he thought that the effort to enhance the system's national, regional, and statewide reputation, was a good goal.

8. **Faculty Senate Bylaws**

Larson referred senators to the proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate Bylaws, that were originally submitted to the senate at the June 2003 meeting. In response to senators' comments in June, the executive board made further revisions.

MOTION: Gupta/Collopy. To approve the proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate Bylaws, as presented.

ACTION: Approved unanimously.

9. **UNR Bylaws**

Larson referred senators to the proposed revision to UNR Bylaws 34-35. She said the executive board was recommending that mediation as a first option in the university grievance process be eliminated. Mediation services were provided by a dispute resolution agency in California. For many years, that agency provided services at greatly reduced costs to the university. However, the agency notified the senate office that, if the university wanted to renew its contract, the agency would have to bring their fees in line with their normal practices. Because the cost of mediation would become prohibitive, and because mediation has failed to resolve any disputes for which faculty have filed grievances, the executive board recommended that mediation no longer served its purpose, if it ever did. In a lengthy discussion, some senators expressed concern about eliminating mediation since it was only an option, regardless of whether it proved successful. Larson and Morris explained that, by the time faculty file grievances on personnel matters, they would already have exhausted reconsideration. Reconsideration gives the adverse party the opportunity to reverse the decision or action in question, and includes review at the regular administrative channels in the faculty members unit, up to the president, who makes the final decision. In cases where reconsideration was not applicable, the disputes were typically based on a history of problems. Mediation was at the option of the grieving party, and the adverse party was required participate whether wanted to or not. Because the elimination of mediation was being recommended, in part, due to the cost, senators said they wanted to see the costs. Larson agreed to provide that information.

MOTION: Gardella/Collopy. To approve the proposed revisions to the UNR Bylaws, as presented.

ACTION: None.

MOTION: Biasi/Louie. To table the motion until the senate could review the costs of mediation services.

ACTION: Approved. (1 opposed)

10. **New Business**

Larson referred senators to two handouts regarding the tenure process that were distributed just prior to the meeting. She explained that, because tenure applications receives stringent institutional review, the long-standing practice of the regents was to approve, pro forma, the presidents' recommendations. The names of tenure applicants being recommended by the presidents were included in the regents' consent agenda. At the March 2003 Board of Regents meeting, regent Linda Howard asked that a name be removed from the roster of faculty who were applying for tenure. The regents' staff had to contact the faculty member to acquire permission to discuss the faculty's qualifications and eligibility for tenure during the meeting. In the end, there was no discussion. The faculty's name remained on the list and the consent agenda was approved. Subsequently, the chancellor sent a memo to each of the institution presidents mandating that at the time a tenure application was submitted, it must include a waiver signed by the applicant. The waiver would allow the regents to discuss their eligibility and qualifications of the applicant in public or closed meetings, without notice to the faculty. The system senate chairs vigorously opposed the waiver and change in the tenure process, and planned to discuss the matter with their senates. Larson was notified a few days prior to today's meeting that the system office rescinded the waiver mandate. Howard had also made the comment that she did not want to vote on anything about which she did not feel she was informed. Chair of the regents Stavros Anthony suggested that faculty include with their applications a brief summary of their accomplishments, which would be forwarded to the regents prior to voting on tenure. In general, the senate chairs were not opposed to this idea. The chairs planned to discuss the entire matter with the chancellor at the earliest opportunity.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.