

Summary of Points from June 11, 2014 SC Retreat

**Relations between Senate Council and Fellow Faculty**

- How can SC make relations between the SC and fellow faculty less antagonistic, assuming it is antagonistic, and can there be more transparency in the review process?
- What is the SC's tone and should it be changed?
- Does SC feel safe expressing opinions about proposals and can SC do a better job of anticipating potential problems and dealing with them prior to the meeting?

Background:

SC members agreed that if reviews of proposals by prior committees and councils were more thorough, there would be no need for SC to have to perform such granular reviews of proposals. This, in turn, would do much to change the tone of SC meetings. SC members offered anecdotal evidence of various problems with past proposals, as well as anecdotes of frustrations by proposal contact persons who were routinely asked to make multiple revisions for different reviewing bodies and who felt that the review process was overly long and difficult. SC members offered a variety of comments and suggestions on how to improve the process for proposing new programs as well as changes to both academic organization and structure, and changes to admissions and academic standards).

Summary:

The Chair said he thought there was a general consensus formed around instituting a facilitator position. There were no objections from SC members.

**RESULTS:**

- *Three senators identified to serve as liaisons between Senate and the three academic councils.*
- *Began work on revising forms to ensure necessary information is submitted in standardized format.*
  - *Revised new undergraduate degree program form.*
  - *Created form for new graduate certificates.*
  - *Remaining program forms to be revised in summer 2015.*
- *SC members and senators encouraged to review meeting agendas in advance to interact with proposal contact persons prior to the discussion on the Senate floor.*

**Getting the Best Senators**

The Chair explained that most faculty did not understand what the Senate does, unless the faculty member had been a senator in the past. The Senate needs excellent faculty to be senators and needs those faculty to perform University-level service on behalf of the faculty, instead of those faculty being tapped to perform departmental- or college-level service. Senators are useful members of a college and can help sort out issues prior to them being on the Senate floor. The Chair commented that there was little to no uniformity regarding how service effort was documented on distribution of effort forms (DOEs) across colleges; sometimes faculty have to argue with their department chair that service at the University level should indeed count towards "service" similar to department- and college-level service.

#### Summary:

The Chair said that one issue pertained to how DOEs should reflect University-level service in a very explicit way so that deans and chairs know that SC and Senate service count as much as departmental and college service on the DOE. Second, the Chair can make sure that appropriate Senate committee chairs are invited to relevant orientation sessions, which will help rebrand the Senate and help illustrate how the Senate is meaningful and something for new faculty to aspire to. Third, there needs to be a renewed attention to levels of service in the tenure and promotion process, particularly from the level of associate professor to professor. Senators should be reminded annually to request 5% service effort on their DOEs for Senate service. The Chair added that he could attend a meeting of the council of chairs to explain how it is in their best interest to have their best faculty be members of the Senate. There was a brief discussion about how current University regulations restrict department chairs and center directors from serving in the Senate and SC.

#### RESULT:

- *Chair discussed DOE concerns with Provost Riordan, who did not take action.*

#### Senate Committee Structure

The Chair wondered if all the committees were necessary or if some could be disbanded, noting that some committees had not reported to the Senate in years. With respect to encouraging Senate committee-administration committee collaboration, he said the real danger was in a potential vicious cycle in which a low-workload Senate committee feels like it does not accomplish anything, so it stops meeting, after which the administration may believe there is no point in partnering with the Senate committee. Furthermore, there are some relatively new members of President Capilouto's leadership team who may not know there is a wide range of Senate committees with which the administration can collaborate.

#### Summary:

SC members believe that administration does not really want faculty input, but tolerates it. The Chair can provide the list of Senate committees to the Provost and explain that instead of offering SC-approved nominees for certain administrative committees dealing with a particular issue, the Chair will offer an entire Senate committee to assist. In order for that to work, though, the SC must ensure that Senate committees are led by excellent committee chairs. SC members suggested: orienting committees and their chairs early on in the year, so they can hit the ground running when an issue comes up; ask outgoing committee chairs for suggestions on who could be an effective chair; identify a way in which committee chairs can somehow be compensated for their time (e.g. a small stipend or additional percentage on distribution of effort forms); and put committee chairs on a 12-month contract.

#### RESULTS:

- *Increasing attempts to identify Senate committee members to serve on campuswide committees related to the Senate committee charge.*
- *Chair provided a list of Senate committees and their chairs to senior administrators.*
- *Senate committees will be composed prior to fall and oriented earlier than usual – will allow committee work to begin in early September instead of the mid-October time frame from the past.*