

**West Chester University of PA
Faculty Senate
2008/2009
April 17, 2009, Full Assembly Minutes**

Members Present: *designated by an X*

Alessandria, Tina	X	Hutton, Jane	X
Azorlosa, Jay	Proxy, E. Brown	Kara, Orhan	<i>Absent</i>
Bean, Nadine	<i>Absent</i>	Li, Huimin (Amy)	Proxy, J. Hutton
Bedford, Robert	X	McVey, Randy	<i>Absent</i>
Bill, Debra	X	Means, Jennifer	X
Boyle, Michael	X	Metz, Stacie	X
Brown, Eleanor	X	Morgan, Tanya	X
Chilcote, Kathryn	X	Norris, Bruce	<i>Absent</i>
Cooke, Lynne	X	Onderdonk, Julian	X
Cressler, Walter	X	Polk, Denise	X
Dannessa, Karen	Proxy, J. Hutton	Sandhu, Bhim	<i>Absent</i>
DeHope, Eli	X	Shivde, Geeta	X
Friedman, Jonathan	Proxy, E. DeHope	Smith, Paul K.	<i>Absent</i>
Garthwait, Clayton	X	Staruch, Liz	Proxy, M. Gilboy
Gilboy, Mary Beth	X	Stiefel, Van	X
Haggard, Cynthia	X	Thompson, Brent	<i>Absent</i>
Halko, Gabrielle	<i>Absent</i>	Wandry, Donna	X
Hashimoto- Sinclair, Yoko	<i>Absent</i>	Winterton, Sally	X
	Richardson, Shayna, Student Gov't		<i>Absent</i>

Faculty Senate Meeting, Friday 4/17/2009

Following an initial period of socializing, Eli DeHope, President, convened the meeting at 2:15 p.m., welcoming Dr. Greg Weisenstein, WCU's 14th president who took office on March 2, 2009. President Weisenstein spoke of how his background in special education informs his belief in good teaching and keeping the focus on student success. He noted the important role of teachers as mentors and shared his view that the role of faculty research is to advance the discipline which can be accomplished through various routes such as modeling, applied research, or translational research. With 17,000 first-time applications this year, Dr. Weisenstein believes that WCU needs to emphasize its status as a "first-choice institution" which has been earned by the quality of what we do: "It's a great story but we need to tell it more aggressively!" A question and answer period followed.

- Question on budget: increasing student/faculty ratio to lessen costs does not seem reasonable for all instruction –e.g. applied music.
 - Response: We do not want to cut into the core of what we do well.
- Question: Would it help the budget to admit more students?

- Response: We don't want to lower our standards (e.g. SAT scores) just to have more students. In some respects the dollars should follow the students: if a department increases student enrollment, the extra \$ should go to that department. However some disciplines are inherently more expensive than others – e.g. Nursing. The differences must be recognized throughout the University. We also need to concentrate on *taking in more money* as well as cutting costs.
In sum: "We don't want the budget crisis to ruin what we are doing well."
- Question: How does the budget situation affect building improvements?
 - Response: Governor Rendell proposed capital improvements for PASSHE in 2009-2010 budget but none for WCU. Dr. Weisenstein is engaged in dialogue with legislators about how we can get some of this. In his opinion, full-time faculty should not have to share the same office. Meanwhile at WCU new student fees to be used for capital improvements have been endorsed by Student Government and approved by the Council of Trustees.
- Question: How do you see your role in University relationships in the local community?
 - Response: Dr. Weisenstein has already spent 4 hours with West Chester's Mayor Yoder and would like to strengthen the University-community committee through more frequent meetings which would focus on substantive issues. WCU needs to emphasize the positives of the many hours of student volunteer service, for example. Take approaches which engage people, listen, and convey positive public relationships. We also are obligated to strengthen our programs which reach out to students with problems such as alcohol abuse.
- Question: How do projected budget shortfalls impact WCU sustainability efforts?
 - Response: Much of that work is being done with "someone else's money" so we can still move forward and in fact we are "obligated" to future generations to do so. There will also be cost-savings in the long run from these investments – the geothermal conversion is projects to save about \$1 million annually.
 - Question was raised about use of solar energy and no one had definite knowledge about whether it had been investigated for use on campus. A West Chester community group interested in sustainability was mentioned as a possible partner for future projects.

Senators expressed appreciation to President Weisenstein for his time during the packed agenda of his first months on campus. We look forward to a continuing positive relationship with the President.

Becky Ross, Director of the Career Development Center, was our next guest. She gave a brief review of her background in career counseling through 15 years of graduate work and employment at other universities before coming to WCU in 2008. The mission of the center is to provide services, programs and resources that develop life-long career development. Placement is *not all they do*: they also can assist students searching for graduate study opportunities. Becky emphasized that collaborations with faculty are crucial for student success in planning their futures and appreciates any and all opportunities to come into the classrooms. Faculty should feel free to call anytime: they will send someone to class to talk about job applications, resume-writing, etc. One option is the CDC "Don't cancel that class" program: they will come & teach a resume-writing workshop on very short notice. They work with graduate and undergraduate students and would be glad to collaborate with faculty to support undeclared students in

selecting their major. Becky provided flyers from the Career Development Center and Senators thanked her for her presentation.

Senate Business Meeting:

- Minutes of the February 6, 2009 meeting were approved with correction to the spelling of one name.
- Tina Alessandria of the Senate Student Welfare Committee announced the need for support of proposed federal legislation, "The Mental Health on Campus Improvement Act (H.R. 1704/S.682)." This act would create a "competitive grant program that would provide funding to colleges to focus on both outreach to identify students with mental health needs and treatment of students coming to counseling centers for help." Eli DeHope will send out an email to all Senators with information about the bill & how to support it.
- Eli DeHope reported that her meeting with President Weisenstein focused on the role of the Faculty Senate at WCU. Dr. Weisenstein said that he had worked on campuses with many different models so had no defined expectations.
- Eli DeHope reported that she also represented Senate at a budget meeting of University faculty organizations. Dr. Lamwers and Dr. Spence-Coffey are definitely soliciting ideas from faculty about how to manage projected budget shortfalls. There are many differences in how colleges and departments are handling budget concerns.
- Discussion of the spring semester trial of the new SRIP form for student evaluations revealed several concerns: it had been sent to graduate students in distance education courses even though the questions are not appropriate for that environment; tenure-track faculty also received it; one class of students complained that the SRIP took much longer to complete than the QUIC (students in the test courses for SRIP also completed QUICs).
- Election of 2009-2010 Executive Committee took place. Ellie Brown was nominated from the floor for the At-Large representative. Results were:
 - President: Eli DeHope
 - Vice-President: Julian Onderdonk
 - Recording Secretary: Jane Hutton
 - Corresponding Secretary (& back-up Recording Secretary): Dee Bill
 - At-Large Member: Tanya Morgan
 - At-Large Member: Ellie Brown

Due to technical difficulties, elections for all of next year's Senators have not been completed but will be by the end of the semester on May 1. Two At-Large seats have yet to be filled.

- Eli DeHope opened the floor to brainstorming about how Senate meetings could be improved for next year. There was general endorsement for having committee reports and work at the beginning of each meeting and guest speakers later.
- Eli noted that Senate has access to many of the power groups on campus and thus we have the opportunity to influence the University through work from our committees. We do good work, but how do we use our influence? She challenged members to brainstorm about how we could strengthen and/or focus our work to reach out more effectively. There is a role for faculty advocacy outside of APSCUF. Extensive discussion ensued and included the following ideas and issues?
 - We should review our Constitution & By-Laws and update them.

- Sustainability should be a standing committee
 - Perhaps Ethics should merge with another committee? Which?
- Set Senate goals for the year at our first meeting.
- Concern about lack of diversity among Senate membership
- Social equity issues and oversight on campus: who, what, & relationship to what the Senate Ethics Committee does
- There was a motion by Robert Bedford to review the scope of what the WCU Office of Social Equity deals with and how the Senate might relate to that. Motion seconded and approved.
- The Senate adjourned, completing its 2008-2009 academic year.

Committee Work & Reports: End-of-year reports attached. None submitted from Ethics or Faculty Welfare.

- Communications Committee: "Year End Report," submitted by Amy Li, Chair
- Curriculum & Research Committee: "Duties of the Curriculum and Research Committee," submitted by Jonathan Friedman, Chair
- Facilities and Sustainability (Ad Hoc): "2008-2009 Year-End Report," submitted by Walt Cressler, Chair
- Student Welfare Committee: "Student Emotions and Student Success," submitted by Ellie Brown, Chair

Respectfully submitted,
 Jane Hutton
 Recording Secretary
 AY 2008/2009