

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
Penn State Worthington Scranton
February 15, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 P.M. by faculty senate chair, Beatriz Rivera-Barnes. A motion to accept the minutes of the January meeting was made by Gail Keating and seconded by Magid Chatsaz. The minutes were approved as submitted.

Administrative Reports

Chancellor

1. Chancellor Dr. Mary-Beth Krogh-Jespersen announced that graduation and related events will be earlier this year than in the past. Graduation will be Friday, May 4, at 6:00 P.M. The annual Honors and Awards Dinner will be held on Sunday, April 29, from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.
2. Dr. Krogh-Jespersen encouraged all to nominate for faculty and staff awards. In light of the earlier Honors and Awards Dinner date, she said that the dates for submission will be two weeks earlier than in past years. Information regarding the awards is on the campus website and submissions can be made through the website or by sending an e-mail to her. She said that there is seed money for two research awards. Interested parties should write a proposal to her and interim DAA, Dr. Molly Wertheimer.
3. Dr. Krogh-Jespersen said that, the effects of the Sandusky scandal will most likely have repercussions for years to come. The Board of Directors of Penn State University has recently elected a new chair and vice-chair, and they have invited The Academic Leadership Council, which includes the chancellors and deans of all the branch campuses, to University Park on Monday, February 20. The meeting will give the leadership of the board the opportunity to get a better understanding of the operation of an academic institution.
4. Dr. Krogh-Jespersen said that the previous day (Tuesday) she had met with the campus Faculty Senate Council to give an update on work done by a small task force of the cabinet. She explained the approach the group had taken in trying to assess possible new academic programs, both long and short term. Three potential areas of interest are accounting within the business major, communication and agriculture. She said the Faculty Senate will now take the next steps to assess those and other potential new academic programs, in keeping with directives in the Core Council report.

5. Enrollment is down throughout the Penn State system. Paid accepts are down by 55%. Conversion is thus extremely important, and Dr. Krogh-Jespersen encouraged all to do anything they can to encourage potential students to accept offers.
6. Dr. Krogh-Jespersen said she has been working on the budget with Kim Bogdan in anticipation of a 2% cut in state funding. If it ends up that the budget only needs to be cut by 1%, it will be a bonus.
7. Searches: The DSA search has been completed and Dr. Krogh-Jespersen said she is awaiting the results of the committee. The DAA search has also been completed and an offer has been made, with acceptance still pending. Dr. Krogh-Jespersen encouraged the quick completion by the committees for the open positions--career services, administrative support assistant, math and nursing faculty positions--so that filling them does not get caught in a potential budget freeze.

Acting Director of Academic Affairs

1. Dr. Molly Wertheimer, Acting Director of Academic Affairs, noted that an additional area of interest among students that could lead to a potential new academic program is political science. She said we should explore what students would intend to do with such a degree—pre-law, for instance—and market in that direction.
2. Dr. Wertheimer reiterated what she had said at the previous faculty senate meeting: that faculty should run a copy of their FAR reports and look at them before turning them in as they do not necessarily look the same online as they do in hard copy.
3. Anyone interested in applying for a sabbatical during the 2013-2014 year should let Dr. Wertheimer know during their FAR meeting with her since proposals are due in the fall. She noted that both tenured and tenure track faculty can apply in their seventh year of employment in order to take the sabbatical in their eighth year. She said that four people will be on sabbatical during the 2012-2013.
4. Dr. Wertheimer reiterated the end of year activities as previously mentioned by Dr. Krogh-Jespersen: Friday, May 4, Commencement 6:00 P.M. in the gym; Sunday, April 29, Honors Convocation, 1:00 P.M. in GCC. She also noted that the Nursing Pinning Ceremony will be held on Thursday, May 3, at 6:00 P.M. in the gym.
5. Dr. Wertheimer elaborated on Dr. Krogh-Jespersen's request for nominees for faculty and staff awards. She said there are two endowed funds for research and scholarly activity: the Dr. and Mrs. Richard Matthew's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and the Greater Scranton Penn State Chapter Faculty Research Endowment. The deadline is April 6. Eligibility and instruction on how to apply can be found on the Chancellor's letter dated February 8. An Ad Hoc Committee will review the proposals.

6. Dr. Wertheimer said that funds are available from University Park for undergraduate research. So far she has received several proposals but funding could accommodate a few more modest proposals. The initial February 1 deadline has been extended to February 24.
7. Dr. Wertheimer introduced the campus's new Academic Advising Manager, Caressa Olivo Gearhart. Ms Gearhart said she will soon be putting out a request for FTCAP advisors.

Committee Reports

David Byman, chair of the Curricular Affairs Committee, said that the committee will be actively involved in determining new academic programs for the campus. He said they will begin by looking for the best techniques for getting more information on the subject. He said the committee could use new members and advised that anyone who has an interest should contact Dr. Rivera-Barnes or Dr. Magid Chatsaz.

New Business

1. Mary Beth Benedict, financial aid coordinator, presented information she had recently presented at the coordinators' meeting regarding changes in student eligibility for financial aid.
 - A. Under the old system student eligibility was based on full time status: a minimum of 12 credits in each semester with the summer allowed for makeup. Now, since the summer of 2011, eligibility is based on percentage of coursework completed during a given semester. Based on total credits attempted, 67% of coursework must be completed. Mary Beth noted that the new system is generally to the students' benefit. Fewer students have been losing financial aid with the new calculating method. Mary Beth elaborated by saying that "attempted" is based on the number of credits registered for on day one of the semester; all credits a student drops or adds at any point in the semester; all credits for the courses the student enrolled in but subsequently withdrew from or failed; transfer credits; credits earned through examination and portfolio assignments. Mary Beth said that the highest number of credits enrolled in at any time during the semester is the number used in the calculation. If a student does not achieve a 67% completion rate during a semester, the student is put on a one-semester financial aid warning. If the student does not meet the required percentage

completion rate in the next semester, the student is denied financial aid until he/she brings the percentage up to the 67%.

- B. Students must also complete their degree within a maximum timeframe measured by attempted credits equal to 150% of the number of credits required for a primary degree. For a B.S. degree that would be 180 credits. For most students, this is no problem but this can be a problem for students, such as some of our nursing students, who have already completed another degree before working on their current one. However, these students may appeal and such appeals are usually approved.
- C. The third way that student eligibility is monitored and gauged is by F grades. She said there are two kinds of F grades: 1) walk aways, students who just stop coming to class but don't drop the course; and 2) those who "earn" an F. Mary Beth cautioned that it is better for students to drop or to just keep coming to a class instead of just stop attending even if they know they have no chance of passing. This is true because the University must send back Pell grant money, which the student must then pay back to the University. Earned Fs do not involve money having to be sent back.

A discussion ensued after Mary Beth's presentation in which Mary Beth clarified many of the points she had covered. She gave an example of a student who on day one had registered for 21 credits but dropped to 12 during the semester. That student's attempted percentage would be below 67% since the calculation would be based on the highest number of credits the students registered for during the semester. So if the student were to add a course one day and drop it a few days later or even later the same day, the rate would be based on the number of credits with the added course before the drop. Another example: if a student were to, say, start on day one with fifteen credits and then at some point drop a course and then add another one the same day, essentially bringing the total of credits back to a total of fifteen, the student's status will not be affected.

When Dr. David Byman asked how students got the word about the changes in financial aid, Mary Beth said that many correspondences have been sent out by mail and by e-mail, both from our campus and University Park. Information is also available on the campus website. Now that advisors, faculty and staff know too they can help to spread the word to students. Amy Gruzesky, public relations specialist, suggested that flyers be posted on campus and Mary Beth said she would consider it in the future.

In answer to other concerns, Mary Beth said that any students with a problem situation can be dealt with by the financial aid office on a case-by-case basis, and she mentioned again that an appeals process does exist for special situations.

Handouts were distributed on the information Mary Beth covered at the meeting.

2. Dr. Russell Casey announced that Advising on the Fly would occur the week of April 2. He invited everyone to attend a session sharing the results of a second focus group on advising at noon on Monday, February 20 in BB 118. The presentation is being sponsored by the Schreyer Institute and will be polycomed to other campuses. He mentioned that Wilkes-Barre will be doing their first Advising on the Fly this semester. He mentioned that there appears to be a concern among some faculty that the name, Advising on the Fly, may be giving a negative impression and discouraging students from seeing their own advisors. He said he would be sending out an e-mail asking for feedback about a possible change of name.
3. Marilee Mulvey, Director of Information Technology, distributed "Penn State Worthington Scranton Social Media Guidelines, January 2012." She explained that the document is based on a similar document prepared by Penn State's Office of University Relations, July, 2010. Marilee said that a small group on campus examined the best practices throughout the system--some of the best being the guidelines of the University Library, the Agricultural Science Department and the Education Department--then put the current document together based on the best of the best practices. Marilee said that boxed information in the handout was from the original Office of University Relations document and that bulleted items under a box indicate how the campus intends to carry out the boxed directive. She asked that everyone read over the guidelines and get in touch with her with any questions. She said that the practices should be put into effect by the end of the month.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 P.M.

Addendum

Tierney Lyons, Assistant Librarian, asked that the following report be added to the minutes. She serves on the Board of Directors of Penn State Worthington Scranton Alumni Society as Faculty Representative. As Faculty Representative,

she serves as campus liaison to the association and provides campus prospective to the members when selecting student groups in need of fundraising and encourages campus involvement in the society's activities.

If faculty members are aware of student groups wanting assistance with their fundraising, please have them contact Tierney or the Society. Last fall they worked with students in the Blue & White Society to raise \$1000 for Thon by hosting a ZumbaThon with over 100 people in attendance.

Upcoming events and events that support student scholarships include:

*Alumnus of the Year Reception—Lou Ingargiola will be honored as this year's winner of the group's prestigious award on Wednesday, Feb. 29th at 7:00 P.M.—if you see Lou (or hear him on the "Talker") be sure to congratulate him --well deserved.

*Breakfast with the Lion—Sunday, April 22nd—get your tickets early!

*Penn State Day at Knoebel's—Saturday, May, 12th—in conjunction with eight other area groups from Wilkes-Barre to Hazleton to Schuylkill—including Societies, Chapters and Affiliate groups.

*James Gallagher Annual Golf Tournament, Country Club of Scranton—Monday, June 18th--\$18/golfer; \$125/hole sponsor.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Harper
Faculty Senate secretary