



Ohlone College Faculty Senate  
Minutes  
November 2, 2011  
3:30 P.M.  
Room 7101, Fremont Campus

Members present: Jeff Dean, Chieko Honma, Jeff O'Connell, Jennifer Harper, Wayne Yuen, Jim McManus, Nicole Sandoval, Alan Kirshner, Diane Berkland, Bob Mitchell, Kim Stiles, Jeff Roberts, Alyce Reynolds, Luc Desmedt

Members absent: Terry Taskey

Others present: Priyanka Upadhyay (ASOC), Mike Bowman, Jesse MacEwan, Jim Wright, Gari Browning

**The meeting was called to order at 3:33 P.M.**

**Announcements**

O'Connell went to the most recent Budget Committee meeting. It was noted that the State is headed towards the budget situation known as Tier 2. Ohlone had already planned and budgeted for Tier 2. We will know more about the budget next month, based on information from the State.

O'Connell gave a brief update on the hiring of full-time faculty for 2012-2013. There were 23 proposals submitted by departments. The meeting to review the proposals took place recently. When the committee met, there was discussion about the reality that if the College does not hire a full-time Respiratory Therapy (RT) instructor, that program will lose its accreditation. The committee decided that it would recommend that the president hire for RT and took that position out of the subsequent ranking. That left 22 requests to consider. Each committee member ranked their top seven choices and the results will be discussed at the next meeting. The meeting is open to all and scheduled for Thursday, November 3 at 2 p.m. in room 7101.

**Approval of Minutes from October 19, 2011 (A)**

**Motion: Berkland**

**Second: McManus**

**Approved unanimously**

The agenda was revised. The report on the WASC retreat will precede Dr. Browning.

## **Report from the WASC Retreat on Assessment in Practice (I): O'Connell, MacEwan, and Bowman**

Mike Bowman, Jesse MacEwan, O'Connell, and others recently went to a WASC workshop related to assessment. Bowman indicated that the retreat focused on how to make sure that we are assessing what we need to assess so that it is meaningful and significant and meets the needs of the accreditation commission.

Bowman noted that an issue that came up related to how we assess GE learning outcomes. There are different ways to do this. Advice was given by those representing WASC. One significant finding mentioned was that it is vital to carefully interpret data and engage in dialogue. It is what is done with the data that is key, not just that we collect and present data.

Another recommendation noted by Bowman is that learning outcomes do not have to be totally uniform across sections. What is important is dialogue between colleagues to make sure that assessments are being looked at and adjusted so that continuous improvement is a goal. Bowman noted that it is acknowledged that "one size fits all" types of assessment are not workable or advisable. He noted again that in this process dialogue is a key element in illustrating that the College is engaged in assessments. Bowman indicated that most of the assessments we need to do are things we are already doing, but perhaps we are not capturing information as well as we could. Bowman noted that one way to look at this is to not aim for perfection, but that we should aim for improvement.

MacEwan indicated that cycles (deciding to assess different things during different years) are important, but setting a realistic cycle is key and to not have too many different ones or ones with large gaps of time. He noted that it seems that "honest effort" is the key to doing the kinds of assessments we need to be doing. He also emphasized that we seem to be doing what we need to be doing, but that it is how we are organizing and presenting our work that may need refinement.

Bowman noted that perhaps we need to be more purposeful in our gathering of evidence and documenting the dialogues we are having about our learning outcomes. He added that there are deadlines for this work, so it is important to be working on this.

O'Connell added that his opinion of working on assessments changed after this event and that he is less terrified. It is, he noted, a large task, but he feels that it is more achievable than he previously thought it was. MacEwan noted that the work we do building our assessment plans is important, since once we get it underway it will be easier to maintain and continue.

Berkland noted that this subject came up in the Counseling Department and that while dialogue is important, it appears that data is still being emphasized. She gave an example of how a counseling department elsewhere submits data on each student contact. She stated that this type of tracking and collection might be difficult for instructors not used to collecting tremendous amounts of data.

Wright noted that dealing with these issues will be largely individual, based on the department. He indicated that assessment is individual, from the classroom to the department and up to the program level. He stated that there is a lot of help available, including from Mike Bowman. Wright advised that it is important to avoid being "overcome by the data" and that it is essential to have a process to discern what is useful.

Bowman noted that there does not have to be a particularly wide range of data on different subjects. It is important to start small to avoid being overwhelmed.

### **Q&A with Dr. Browning (I): All**

Dr. Browning came to Senate to answer questions on the subject of the previously discussed academic freedom issue arising within the context of the sexual harassment policy and other questions the Senate may have. Before beginning, she indicated that she had read the minutes from the previous meeting and noted that she was impressed with the good and professional discussion on the subject of the academic freedom policy related to the sexual harassment policy. Browning noted that she wanted faculty input on this procedure, since it relates to what faculty do in their classes and are rightly concerned about. This is why it was sent to the Senate. She stated that as a former faculty member she is sensitive to the issue of academic freedom, but is also concerned about the issue, since having this policy in place would help to protect faculty in cases where wrongdoing is alleged. She further noted that she was not “wedded” to the paragraph in question as worded. She was open to the idea of revising the wording.

Berkland asked if the Senate can recommend changes to that paragraph. Browning noted that since this part of the policy is legally “advised” as opposed to the rest of the policy, which is “required,” we are not as compelled to adopt it as worded. Browning indicated that she wants to achieve the purpose of protection in whatever wording is created.

Mitchell asked how this section would “protect” a faculty member. Browning answered that if we have a process in place and that if the process is followed, that protects the faculty member. In this case, if the “explicit” work in question were taken to a dean in advance, then we would have shown that a process was followed. Browning added that the policy wording is based on precedent.

Yuen observed that if we adopt the policy, then the sexual harassment policy will trump academic freedom. Browning indicated that this only comes into play if academic freedom is the defense used in a case where sexual harassment is alleged.

Browning clarified the distinctions between “policy” and “procedure.” She indicated that policies are set by the Board. Procedures are the ways things get done and are established by the administration.

Kirshner indicated that he believed that the policy seems to give the administrators more protection. He indicated that his concern was with the word “must” in the paragraph in question. Browning agreed with the problematic nature of that word in the policy. Yuen indicated that he is working on revised wording.

Dean asked a question about the dean positions that will be vacated by Stacey and Quinta. Browning noted that both Stacey and Quinta will continue in limited capacity into the Spring semester but that a specific plan has not been put into place to hire those positions, although she hopes to have administrative positions in place by the end of Spring. Browning indicated that she solicited feedback from faculty and would like to have that feedback by Friday, November 4.

Yuen asked if the division structure will change. Browning noted that she is consulting with Jim Wright on this subject. She made the observation that she did not believe that the workload among the deans was distributed fairly or evenly, but that she did not yet know the exact shape that things would take.

Berkland asked what type of feedback Browning was asking for. Browning stated that she was asking for feedback and ideas from both Academic Affairs and Student Services, since those areas are greatly affected at this time. She is looking for observations about what is working and what does not seem to be working and how things might be improved.

O'Connell asked Browning for a brief update on the hiring of full-time faculty. Browning mentioned that the hiring prioritization committee will make recommendations to her and that she will also be looking at the proposals themselves, since they contain valuable information, including data. She also explained that she needs to look more closely at what the faculty obligation number is projected to be, since that will affect the decision about how many new full-time faculty will be hired. She expressed that the number right now looks to be between 6 and 8. She stressed that the recommendation of the committee will weigh heavily, since it has been a collegial and valid process, but that the decision will also reflect some of her own thinking.

Dean asked if the decision about faculty hiring will affect a decision about redistribution of departments within divisions. Browning replied that she didn't think this would be a major factor since the number of faculty being hired would not be that significant.

Kirshner asked about possibility of teaching dean positions and what consideration has been given to hiring from within versus hiring from the outside. Browning indicated that she saw value in hiring from within and also that there was value in hiring from outside. She added that hiring from within is a good demonstration that there is opportunity for people to move into administrative roles and that individuals have the chance to move their careers forward. On the other hand, she stated that if we only hire from within, there may be limited perspectives and a lack of ideas coming to the College from the outside. She concluded that some of each (hiring from within and from the outside) is usually the way to go. She added that the option for deans to teach has remained.

Desmedt asked if full-time faculty would be hired for Spring. Browning indicated that there isn't enough time to do this.

Harper asked about hiring from within versus having outside searches and if there would be appointments versus formal hiring processes. Browning indicated that searches are important since it gives us the opportunity to find the ideal candidates from a wide pool and that even if the eventual person hired is from within, having gone through the search validates the person in the new position.

Berkland asked for an update on the construction going on across campus. Browning replied that she has been told that the water intrusion project is on schedule and will likely be finished by the start of next semester. She noted that there will be disruptions (such as a power outage noted today) because of ongoing construction projects across the campus. Browning did observe that she felt that things were going smoother here than at other places where she has experienced construction projects, but acknowledged that we will experience this type of environment for some time to come. She added that the Facilities Committee recently met and the subject of the future of Building One is an example where new thinking is opening people's minds to the future of the campus. She noted that the existence of Building One is not considered sacred and that a future without Building One is being imagined. Likewise, she noted that places like the Palm Bosque might not be considered sacred to some. She encouraged people to review the minutes of the Facilities Committee.

**Support of Resolution on Repeatability for PE and Kinesiology Courses (A): Roberts**

This is a follow up to the item at the last meeting regarding repeatability.

**Motion to support the resolution: Kirshner**

**Second: Harper**

**Passed unanimously**

**Other**

O'Connell reports that the Senate now has a bank account.

Next time we will work on the revision of the wording to the academic freedom wording for the sexual harassment policy. Yuen and/or O'Connell will send this out to the Senate.

**Meeting adjourned at: 4:36 p.m.**

**Next meeting will be November 16, 2011 in Room 7101 at 3:30 p.m.**