

Glenville State College Faculty Senate Minutes

November 15, 2011

I. Call to Order and Roll

President David O'Dell called to order the Glenville State College Faculty Senate at 12:30 p.m on November 15, 2011 in the Mollohan Center Multipurpose Room, Room 319.

Senators present: Jonathan Minton, Joseph Wood, Paul Peck, Liza Brenner, David O'Dell, Larry Baker, Ida Mills, Arthur deMatteo, George Hoshell, Greg Cronce, Dennis Wemm, Kevin Evans, J Morgan, Brian Perkins,

Senators absent: Cinda Echard, Shelly Ratliff and Jared Wilson

Others present: Dr. John Peek

II. Approval of Minutes and Ongoing Reports

Motion to approve minutes of November 1, 2011. Faculty Senate meeting. Motion passes and minutes approved.

Reports:

David O'Dell (President Reports):

- O'Dell has sent an email to the new members of the Faculty Role Model Timeline Committee to let them know they are on the committee.
- Peek has sent Baker a draft timeline for the FRM. This will help the FRM committee structure deadlines.

ACF/Board Representative Paul Peck

On November 14, 2011, Mr. Peck attended a meeting of the Advisory Council of Faculty in Charleston, West Virginia at the HEPC Building. Josh Sword, a member of the PEIA Finance Board who represents the West Virginia Federation of Teachers, discussed some of the impact on public employees of the recommendations in PEIA's "Potential Plan Changes for July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013." [Note: PEIA's Finance Board is appointed by the governor. Finance Board members serve a term of four years and are eligible for reappointment. The state Department of Administration cabinet secretary serves as chairman of the board. Four members represent labor, education, public employees and public retirees, respectively. The four remaining members represent the public-at-large. (From PEIA web site.)]

After the discussion with Josh Sword, the ACF spent several minutes revising the presentation to be made later in the day to LOCEA (Legislative Oversight Committee on Education Accountability). New language was added concerning PEIA changes—the ACF recommended that PEIA draw down more of its reserves, that the Legislature increase its appropriation to PEIA which would require an increase in employee premiums, and that additional effort be devoted to identify ways to control health costs.

The ACF presentation to LOCEA was made later that afternoon at the Capitol. The ACF suggestion to offer more long term contracts at the community and technical colleges led to some comment and discussion. The PEIA recommendations also led to some comment and discussion.

Other Officers

Larry Baker (Vice President Reports):

Item #1 The Student Government Association (SGA) would again like to thank the faculty senate for endorsing the proposal that led to the formation of the GSC parking committee. Members of the newly formed committee are Joe Evans, Eric Squires, Richard Turner, Hillary Harold, Lindsey Morgan, Drew Lothes and Sara Harvey. At their first meeting, they recommended a procedure for all events that require reserved parking to be announced, by e-mail to the college community, 48 hours in advance.

Item #2 The Promotion and Tenure committee met November 8th, 2011 and discussed items including the current Faculty Role Model (FRM). Multiple issues were discussed concerning the current system as it related to the departments that were elected to serve on the committee. From the committees unofficial minutes the following motion was made and passed.

“To comprise all disciplines and to gain faculty support, the Committee recommends that the Provost form a committee consisting of an elected representative from each department to address modification of the FRM (m/s, Taylor/Vavrek).”

In further conversations with faculty members, the concern that the same members of the department that would most likely be selected are currently working on HLC committees and/or, are department chairs, and/or have multiple other educational obligations next term. With all of these being important to the success of the college it was proposed that the formed committee could start the FRM review next term but the college should consider a week in the summer (5 days) devoted to this task.

I feel this is a reasonable request and would like to suggest this to the provost with a stipend for the members along with the Faculty Senate paying for the elected departmental representatives' lunch from our current budget. I called Aramark and lunch in the summer should be the same as last year at \$5.00/lunch. The faculty senate would have an expense of \$175 dollars for 7 members at \$5.00/day for 5 days. For a working lunch with the provost the cost would be an even \$200.00.

Item #3 The Promotion and Tenure by-laws were not completed by the committee for the faculty senate to review due to the following motion from the committees' unofficial minutes.

“Deletion of post-tenure review statement in Article III, number 3, was tabled pending discussion by the Faculty Senate. The Committee will request Faculty Senate to review whether a valid post-tenure review policy exists and to address potential compensation associated with the review (m/s, Taylor/Echard).”

The following is from the Promotion and Tenure by-laws Article III, number 3 and was suggested for deletion by the last Promotion and Tenure committee.

3. ~~To review and make recommendations to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs on the credentials of all tenured faculty as part of the post-tenure review process~~

Dennis Wemm (Parliamentarian Reports):

- No report at this time.

Cinda Echard (Treasurer Reports):

- Not present

J. Morgan. (Director of Self Study - Self Study Report)

- Will have a draft by the end of the semester and will have it integrated for people to look at it by the spring semester.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Shared Governance

- Peek would like to remind everyone of the tragedy at Penn State. He urges all faculty to review 6.4 of the faculty manual and make sure we are in compliance. Also remember under Federal Law faculty are required to take attendance and be able to document a student’s last day off attendance in a course.

To: Faculty Senate

From: John M. Peek

Date: 15 November 2011

Re: Request for Additional Information

I welcome and encourage members of the faculty, staff, and students of Glenville State College to bring to my attention suggestions and matters of individual or general concern. Over the past year many members of the campus community have come by my office to share their suggestions and advise me of their concerns. In some cases, these conversations have been helpful in addressing misunderstandings or unfounded inferences. In all cases, I have found these informal conversations to be helpful in the performance of my duties as provost. I hope these informal conversations have been equally helpful to those who have shared their ideas with me.

I further welcome suggestions and concerns brought to my attention through more formal channels, such as department chairs, faculty standing committees, staff counsel, student government association, and faculty senate. The following narrative is in response to inquiries made in a recent meeting of the faculty senate. I hope the narrative fully addresses these inquiries, but if additional information is needed, please let me know.

Faculty Evaluation Process

During the search process I became aware of faculty concerns with the annual evaluation process. I engaged the department chairs periodically during the 2010-11 academic year in an examination of existing concerns and possible options for addressing these concerns. Department chairs were free throughout these conversations to discuss with their immediate colleagues the options being discussed. However, I did ask that they clearly convey to their colleagues that the options being considered were not to be mistaken for formal proposals. While these conversations were informative they did not lead to specific recommendations.

If they had resulted in specific recommendations, these recommendations would have been forwarded to the promotion and tenure committee and the faculty senate for review and comment if not additional action. The president of the faculty senate was so advised. He was also advised that I planned to bring this matter before the promotion and tenure committee this term, which I did. However, the committee selected not to address key aspects of the evaluation process. My next step would have been to propose the formation of a task force in consultation with the faculty senate.

Teaching Evaluations

The purpose of student evaluations is two-fold. The primary purpose is to provide faculty members with relevant and timely feedback on the learning experience in specific courses from the perspective of the students enrolled in said courses. In this regard, faculty members are expected to give due consideration to the evaluations and suggestions made by students as faculty members prepare their courses for subsequent terms. The secondary purpose of student evaluations is to provide department chairs, the promotion and tenure committee, and the chief academic officer with one of a number of means of assessing learning outcomes and teaching effectiveness.

The current evaluation does provide a means of indirectly assessing student learning and teaching effectiveness. In this regard, it is a relevant source of data which can be used by department chairs and others in making their determination of the points to be awarded in accordance with the teaching section of the Faculty Role Model. Department chairs are provided with an aggregate score for all faculty members to assist them in the interpretation of the scores of individual faculty members.

While I believe that the questions composing the current evaluation address many of the key traits of an effective instructor, no survey of reasonable length can address all possible aspects of teaching effectiveness. Thus, I can image cases in which colleagues will honestly disagree over the inclusion of one question and the exclusion of another. Therefore, as I stated last year, I remain open to suggestions to improve this necessary means of assessing teaching effectiveness.

Interdisciplinary Studies

The requirements of the interdisciplinary studies degree were previously approved by the faculty and other governing bodies. Unlike other programs, however, students have to go through a multi-level approval process in order to pursue this degree program. Faculty members and students have found this process so burdensome as to discourage the pursuit of this degree. Therefore, I brought this matter to the attention of the faculty through the academic affairs committee. The committee concurred with my perspective that it was not necessary for each IDS degree proposal to be approved by the committee. I appreciate the committee's support in this matter. The college leadership council will be advised of this procedural change at its November 29 meeting.

As to the question regarding any pending IDS proposals, I have little information to share. While I have heard that two students are considering pursuing IDS degrees, I do not know the status of these proposals.

Class Attendance

I advised the academic affairs committee last year of my concerns regarding the class attendance statement in the catalog. As no action was taken, I raised the matter again with this year's committee. I expressed two central concerns. First, the statement allowed for great disparity in the determination of the number of absences allowable. This raised issues of fairness and equity, which I consider central values in the educational process. Second, students were not being adequately advised of their right to appeal the recommendation that they be removed from class as is provided for in the catalog. This raised the prospect that students were being denied due process in such cases.

A letter is now sent to each student for which an "FIW" grade recommendation has been received by the Office of the Registrar. This letter is designed to ensure that students are advised of the recommendation and their right to appeal the recommendation as well as the option of withdrawing from the course in question. This letter goes out under my signature. The letter also encourages students to meet with their instructors in cases where there are extenuating circumstances that the instructor was unaware of at the time of the "FIW" recommendation. The instructor is under no obligation to reconsider his/her recommendation. Only in cases in which the instructor has advised the Office of Registrar to withhold the issuing of an "FIW" is the recommendation set aside.

It needs to be restated that an "FIW" is a grade which can be appealed. As in the case of other grade appeals, the assigned grade can be changed if the student's appeal is upheld. A related issue is that the "FIW" recommendation can be nullified by the student withdrawing from the course in question by the date established in the catalog. Thus, the final designation on the student's transcript in the case of an "FIW" recommendation may well be the result of administrative action.

It has been noted above that final action on an “FIW” recommendation is handled administratively. This is also the case in which a faculty member recommends that a student be removed from a class for disruptive behavior or academic dishonestly. In these cases as well, the student has the right to appeal the recommendation. Thus, the recommendation of the faculty member may or may not be upheld. The administrative withdrawal statement in the catalog is thus not a new policy, though it may be a procedural classification with which not all members of the faculty are familiar.

Closing Remarks

I wish to state, as I have on other occasions, my commitment to strengthening faculty governance and respecting student rights. Thus, I look forward to additional constructive conversations intended to clarify existing policies and procedures, especially those that influence the quality of the teaching and learning environment provided by the college.

I must also acknowledge that there will be occasions on which my perspective or decision on a specific issue will not satisfy every member of the campus community. In making these and other decisions, I will be guided by the values, policies, and practices common to institutions of higher education. In this regard, as I have throughout my professional career, I will draw upon AAUP guidelines, higher education publications, the advice of experienced administrators, and the insights of immediate colleagues in making these decisions.

- O’Dell states that the problem is not necessarily the content, but the practice of revising documents without going through faculty committees. O’Dell does not disapprove of the questions on the course evaluation forms, but disapproves of the practice of changing the forms without faculty input. One consequence is that the evaluation forms do not align with questions on the teaching section of the Faculty Role Model.
- Baker states we need to form a committee dedicated to correlating the student evaluations and the FRM.
- Evans states the FIW letter sent to students is unclear and contradicts faculty attendance policies.
- Peek has tried to make the letter clear and has drafted a new version of the letter.
- Baker states the letter should be presented to the Senate for review.
- Morgan states we need an advocate for students interested in the appeals process.
- Evans wants to make sure we are following shared governance.
- Peek states that committee reporting lines are unclear and still trying to figure out what committee does what. He states that at most institutions faculty makes the policies and the administration makes procedures. He doesn’t understand where the line is drawn at GSC.

V. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p. m; motion to adjourn by Mills/Hoshell (m/s). Motion passed unanimously.