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Faculty Senate

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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES FOR September 3, 2013

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Note: These minutes are not a complete verbatim transcript of the Senate meeting.

- I. Call to order could not be made as there was no quorum. However the meeting began with the members present at 2:00pm.** (Booth Library Conference Room)
Present: **Bruns Todd, Conwell Jim, Knight-Davis Stacey, Ludlow Jeannie, Methven Andy, Oliver Jon, Padmaraju Kiran, Rosenstein Amy, Scher Steven J, Sterling Grant**
Student Representative: Kathryn English (Student Senate Vice President, Academic Affairs)

Guests: Provost Blair Lord (Academic Affairs), Dr. Mahyar Izadi (Dean, LCBAS), Dr. Jeanne Lord (Associate Dean, LCBAS), Dr. Stephen Lucas (CAA), Dr. Rebecca Throneburg (CAA), Robert Downen (Daily Eastern News), Jose A. Rosa (ACE Fellows Program),

- II. Approval of the Minutes of 20th August, 2013:** Approval of minutes was tabled as the Senate did not have quorum at this meeting to approve minutes.

III. Announcements

No announcements were made.

IV. Communications:

In response to Senator Oliver's enquiry about the Admissions Appeals Review Committee, Provost Lord mentioned that Brenda Major had correctly responded and that the committee is no longer needed as there is an internal process in place for this.

Senator Sterling directed the Senate's attention to the communication from Dr. Jeff Stowell, the chair of the Steering Committee, to arrange for Dr. Michael Mulvaney, a member of the Steering Committee and also a member of the Senate, to provide an overview of the NCA process during an upcoming Senate meeting. The communication is available at <http://castle.eiu.edu/~facsen/Communications-September3-2013.php>. Senator Sterling encouraged the Senate to take a look at the Strategic Planning website which has updates about the NCA process.

All communications that were sent to the Senate prior to this meeting can be found at: <http://castle.eiu.edu/~facsen/Communications-September3-2013.php>.

V. Old Business

A. Committee Reports

1. Executive Committee: No report
2. Nominations Committee – Filling committee vacancies (per Communications): Senator Padmaraju reported Senator Knight-Davis' communication that there was a willing candidate (Dr. Sheila Simmons) for filling the vacancy on the Faculty Development Advisory committee.
The matter was tabled due to lack of quorum.
3. Elections Committee – Filling Senate vacancies: Kathy Bower, Jason Waller, Jeff Ashley/James Ochwa-Echel [Fall only]: Senator Sterling mentioned that the Senate still needs to fill its vacancies. Dr. James Ochawa had expressed his willingness to serve for the two-year term vacancy even though he may have to come in late (he teaches a class till 2:15 pm). The Senate wanted to encourage Dr. Ochawa to come even if he needed to be late. For the one-year vacancy, Senator Oliver requested the Senate to consider an

electronic approval for the Special Elections Call. Reluctantly, Senator Sterling agreed to have an electronic vote.

4. Faculty-Student Relations Committee: No report
5. Faculty-Staff Relations Committee: No report
6. Awards Committee: No report
7. Faculty Forum Committee: No report
8. Budget Transparency Committee – No report
9. Other Reports
 - a. Provost's Report: Provost Lord started his report clarifying that with regard to Admissions Appeal, our catalog has no formal appeal process. Referring to the known information with regards to change in leadership for the Admissions, he confirmed that the Associate Director of Admissions had left due to family reasons and the current Director of Admissions is also slated to leave after a candidate has been identified through a search process that he is planning to start soon. Provost Lord requested the Senate to put out a call through electronic means for volunteers to serve on the Search Committee for the Director of Admissions position. He clarified that the volunteer doesn't necessarily need to come from the Senate itself but from the larger campus faculty body.

Provost Lord then invited questions and Senator Scher enquired about the 10th day numbers. Provost Lord mentioned that while technically the 10th day was the previous Friday, the admissions people are still doing some checking before releasing the correct numbers. So he will be presenting the findings at the next Senate meeting.

b. Other: The student representative on the Faculty Senate, Ms. Kathryn English enquired about class packets, asking why some faculty members were getting the packets made outside the University. She further explained that she had heard from students about bad experiences with packets off-campus. She wanted to know why some faculty sent them off-campus as opposed to using the on-campus copy place. Senator Rosenstein mentioned that there was no particular reason and she had done it both ways.

B. Other Old Business

VI. New Business:

- A. Future Agenda: CAA Learning Goals?

Dr. Stephen Lucas and Dr. Rebecca Throneburg presented the "Learning Goals Committee Recommendations to CAA – Agenda Item# 13-83" to the Faculty Senate. This document was sent as a communication earlier to the Faculty body and is available at <http://castle.eiu.edu/~facsen/communications/April2013CAALearningGoalsResolutionandPlanApproved13-83.pdf>.

Dr. Throneburg began with a background of the history of the learning goals committee which began in response to the concerns about student learning outcome data and Provost Lord's 2010-11 priorities for improvement. The committee was established to gather information and collect data in order to review the existing learning goals and their effectiveness in terms of integration, instructional practices and outcomes. A timeline was set forth for the committee and the plan was to have a set of recommendations by the end of Spring 2013. The 5-year plan presented by the Committee to CAA was approved by CAA in April, 2013. What they were presenting today to the Senate were a set of recommendations regarding the learning goals that were made to the CAA. The committee has revised the University's learning goals

and a fifth learning goal has been added. The committee wants to come out with a draft which they want to share with various councils. They have set up a website where they will be able to collect feedback in real time from different entities across campus. This semester, the committee wants to gather feedback and then in Spring 2014, the committee plans to have a series of workshops regarding the new learning goals.

Dr. Lucas continued the report mentioning that when the committee started looking at syllabi, they found that too many faculty members had not been aware of the University Learning Goals and there was a lack of coherence regarding learning goals in the general education courses. Students often look at general education course list as a checklist they need to go through before getting to the coursework for their majors. We need to take a look at the freshman level experience and we need to look at the skill set they need to get to, to be successful at upper level courses. One of the things that is happening outside the University in this regard is the change in high school assessment practices. The new PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) (<http://www.parcconline.org/>) assessments are going to come into place in 2015. IBHE has a strong interest in building on these assessments and thus reducing the number of remedial courses that are offered at institutions of higher education. Another issue in this regard is the whole general education system which has not been reviewed for a very long time. Dr. Throneburg is presently looking into other universities and seeing how many of them are planning to review their general education requirements. Dr. Lucas expressed concerns that some faculty had been opposed to how CAA had changed. He reiterated that nothing had changed, CAA as always was looking into what happens in courses. He mentioned the tension between academic freedom and curriculum. Even if the syllabus mentioned the learning goals, there was no guarantee that what was mentioned in the syllabus was being covered during the class meetings. The core of the course needed to be based on learning goals, the instructors who taught all the sections of the course and the department curriculum committees and not on what instructors pick and choose to teach in their courses. Senator Rosenstein pointed out that the learning goals were very skill- based and were not specific to any content area. CAA wants to specifically look at the skill set such as critical thinking and writing skills. These skills can and must be integrated into many courses, both general education courses as well as other content courses. These learning goals do not add any discipline-specific content. CAA just wants to look at the skill set and to build on that skill set to enable students from different majors to develop discipline specific skills. Dr. Throneburg recommended that we need to move away from the idea that since a student has taken ENG 1001, he/she can write. These learning goals are not meant for specific course but are to be integrated into all courses. Senator Rosenstein mentioned that the tricky part would be implementing these goals in large classes.

Dr. Lucas mentioned a small grant from IBHE that their dept. (SED) had received which allowed them to look into the skill set that their majors were graduating with. He hoped to get a bigger grant this year to expand this study and see at the University level, what skill sets we expect our students to graduate with. The three Universities that got this grant: EIU, ISU and NIU, will have a strong role in shaping this whole discussion about learning goals for our graduates. Senator Conwell enquired if the committee had looked into other universities, specifically the learning goals they have been able to implement more successfully. He further enquired about the consequences of these changes. He asked where the faculty would find time to revise curriculum once every five years when these learning goals are revised. How can you ensure that there won't be a change again? Dr. Lucas replied that he had no answer for that and CAA was an elected faculty body and these bodies change and if faculty does not like the direction that the current CAA is going in, they need to change the body by electing different faculty. Senator Bruns enquired where they thought the students need to be involved in the process. Don't we want our students to know what they need to be targeting? Dr. Lucas agreed that it was a good piece of the puzzle and their committee needed to take a look into it and see if and when they need to do that. Sadly, they had come across some syllabi that did not even have learning objectives. And even mentioning these learning goals in the syllabi would be helpful as students are reminded about them over and over again in every course.

Dr. Lucas mentioned that Dr. Throneburg had been talking about having a common language. Dr. Throneburg wanted to be able to distinguish between students who had gone through our gen. ed. program as opposed to others just by seeing the skills they brought with them. Senator Conwell enquired if they had found a particular dept. doing particularly well in a particular learning goal. Dr. Lucas replied that they did not have specific data with any dept. or program. Senator Scher asked if they had data about critical thinking. Dr. Throneburg replied that the data they had was a small sampling and they tried to get dept. specific data but with low budgets and lack of time, that has not happened as of yet. Senator Conwell felt that we should consider collecting data at the University level (20\$ for each student) just to be more effective with faculty time. Dr. Throneburg replied that she was in favor of doing such a study but we need to look into objectives etc. Dr. Lucas added that CAA is not going to say which course needs to address which learning goals. The programs need to determine which of their courses would specifically target which learning goals more strongly than others. Senator Sterling mentioned that some departments claim that they do well with critical thinking but there is no way of measuring this. There needs to some pre- and post-assessments in courses to see how much growth there has been in each of these areas of the learning goals. Senator Sterling agreed that as a group, EIU students are not doing very well with regard to critical thinking and writing skills. Dr. Throneburg appreciated that we were beginning to take a look at other universities, and started to look at teaching award winners to see if they could share their best practices. Senator Ludlow wanted to know the steps that lead the learning goals to student outcomes. Dr. Throneburg mentioned that they had involved, KASTL, CAA and Faculty to form a strong triangle towards that purpose. Senator Methven asked what the key foundational experiences they wanted to look into were. Dr. Lucas replied that one of the goals they had was to define what the freshman experience at EIU should be. One of the concerns was that 60% of general education courses at EIU are taught by Unit B faculty. He meant no disrespect for Unit B but being faculty whose contracts are renewed every so often, it is huge disincentive for them to be too strict with their grading policies. Senators Ludlow and Padmaraju expressed similar concerns about most foundational level course being taught by adjuncts and/or Unit B and/or tenure-track faculty who are judged heavily based on student-evaluations. Dr. Lucas agreed that part of this conversation needs to be consideration of our DACs' to see what we do for our junior faculty who are adhering to the rigor required for implementing the learning goals more effectively but are not getting good student evaluations. Dr. Throneburg added that there cannot be too many differences between different sections of the same courses. They may need to look at multiple syllabi for the same course because of this concern. Senator Rosenstein appreciated the efforts of the Learning Goals committee and stated that they had done an excellent job in identifying the issues and challenges in these areas. Dr. Lucas stated that the kudos needed to go to the different members within this committee (Tim Taylor, Rich Jones, Jill Fahy, and Deb Reid). Dr. Throneburg and I synthesize the information they bring to us and present to the different councils on campus. Senator Sterling continued to express concerns that we will continue to get students from high schools who do not have the skill set required for college courses and if faculty members are strict with expectations, the students may just spread the word not to take courses from that faculty member. Senator Conwell brought back the proposal to consider investing \$20,000.00 to collect data on each individual student. Provost Lord replied that there was a proposal before him and he was looking into it. Dr. Throneburg mentioned that there are other options that they could consider which may not be as expensive. Senator Padmaraju enquired if this committee was looking into gen. ed. requirements for each of the programs. Dr. Lucas replied that they are looking at courses themselves, not the courses as required by specific programs. They want to look at which specific areas of learning goals could be addressed by which area within the gen. ed. requirements. Dr. Lucas then showed the website to the Senate showing how feedback could be given and how it was being collected.

Senator Scher expressed concerns that even after the proposal was submitted and approved, nobody know what will happen at each course level. Provost Lord concluded this discussion by mentioning that the demands for public policy are different from the implementation efforts. This was a tough conversation and what we need to look into was what we were doing

and what we can do to further help our students. He reiterated that his understanding of rigor included high expectations, integrated learning, and retention. This was a call for a collective conversation and it was wonderful that CAA has taken this up. It provides a wonderful opportunity for the whole campus to continue the conversation.

B. Other New Business: Senator Padmaraju requested for a volunteer to take minutes on October 15th as she is going to be away for a conference.

VII. Adjournment: No motion to adjourn was made as the meeting was never called to order. The meeting ended around 3:40 pm.

Future Agenda items: Fall 2013 Future Meeting Dates: September 17; October 1; October 15; October 29; November 12; December 3

Respectfully submitted,

Kiran Padmaraju
September 15, 2013