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Faculty Senate

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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES

09 SEPTEMBER 2014 meeting

(The 2014-2015 Faculty Senate agendas, minutes, and other information are available on the Web at: <http://castle.eiu.edu/facsen/>)

* Note: These minutes are not a complete verbatim transcript of the Senate meeting. (J. Oliver)

I. **Call to Order by Chair Sterling Sterling at 2:00pm (Booth Library, Room 4440)**

Present: J. Conwell, M. Dao, C. Duncan-Lane, S. Eckert, J. Ludlow, M. Mulvaney, J. Ochwa-Echel, J. Oliver, J. Robertson, S. Scher, G. Sterling, D. Viertel, S. Ahmad (Student VP).

Guests: Provost Lord (AA), Glenn Hild (CAH), Rich Jones (CMN), Rebecca Throneburg (CAA), D. Hernandez (DEN)

II. **Approval of Minutes of 26 August 2014**

Minutes from 26 August 2014 Senate meeting were approved. Motion made by Senator Conwell and seconded by Senator Viertel. Ochwa-Echel abstained.

III. **Communications**

a. 8/28/14 CAA Minutes

b. e-mail from Christine Derrickson, Re: Library Advisory Board

c. e-mail from David Smith, Re: UPC

d. Agenda for 9/15 meeting of CIUS

Conwell – anything faculty senate would like me to bring to the CIUS meeting?

Sterling – seeing none. Thank you for representing this body at the meeting.

IV. **Presentation to the Senate:** CAA/Learning Goals: Rebecca Throneburg and Rich Jones

Jones – Happy to help with this project. We will reviewed last year's Fall 2013 Learning Goals. CAA passed them in Spring. Conducted research on best practices and hosted workshops for each learning goal last academic year. Activities funded by grant money from IBHE secured by Stephen Lucas. Throneburg and Lucas met with various bodies on campus, revised course proposal form, and reviewed HE syllabus best practices. We reviewed federal credit hour guidelines = 2 hours outside of class for every 1 hour in class. We are in the process of updating the Learning Goals website. We are also sending out meeting summaries and are conducting CAA meetings

Throneburg – that (2013-2014) was year 1 of the 5-year plan. We are entering into year 2. Our focus is to infuse learning goals into the general education curriculum. We hosted a summer symposium. 25 faculty members, learning goals leaders, and representatives across campus attended. The complete list of attendees is on page 6 of your handout. Summer symposium was used for brainstorming. We analyzed what other universities did with learning goals in order to guide what occurs on our campus. Symposium was a positive learning experience. It will help us to consider what to implement at EIU. (Details in the handout). It was a productive 4 days of discussion revolving around our mission, how many learning goals should be established, and how they would be addressed. A significant question was discussed - "What would be the ideal # of learning goals for a gen ed class to target?" Maybe 2.5 LGs per class? After this the LG leaders met and developed a proposal to bring back to class. 95% of gen ed class suggest they are working on critical thinking. Suggestion – should every Gen ed class focus on critical thinking? And then maybe focus on 1 additional skill areas? Reading, writing, speaking,

quantitative? Then pick .5 of an LG to fill in. These are the decisions that need to be made this year. Also discussed is 'academic rigor' – we are attempting to define. A draft is being developed. Draft on page 5 of handout. Now we are moving into year 2 (page 2). Tasks that need to be completed by each committee for each learning goal are listed. We hope for continuity as a committee. Learning goal committees need to think about general expectations relevant to each learning goal. Some LGs written broadly. We are using resources from the AAC&U, Illinois Articulation Initiative, and Degree Qualification Profile. Learning goal committees will work with Gen Ed committee. Example – writing intensive class – enhancing the definition together. We will revise guidelines and provide assistance to each other. LG groups will meet outside of CAA time when the majority of members can meet. All CAA members will be a part of the Gen Ed committee. We want representatives from across campus to be identified and represented in these efforts and have a voice in the process.

What we see from this summer, is that the Gen Ed comm. will meet every other week to initiate the process – analyze the mission of Gen Ed, compare it with other universities and AAC&U guidelines, best practice docs, etc. Review our catalogue information – is the course good or does it need updating? We are looking at the data across campus – for example Unit A & B teaching gen ed courses. Average class sizes of Gen Ed courses. What is currently being used in Gen Ed – analyzing the current state of Gen Ed on this campus. Move into the discussion of new expectations in Gen Ed courses - # of learning goals, balance of content & inquiry, rigor, etc. Think about a schedule of revision of Gen Ed courses – a consulting process over an extended period of time. Maybe address curricular requirements with Gen Eds, # of hours required, etc. Changes within the current structure – no major structural changes will be explored. Ex – why students are delaying taking math? Even though they are weak in math! – this is not good for the student and their academic progress. Maybe create a capstone project at a lower level – not wait until the last semester to complete the EIU Senior Seminar. On the table for discussion.

The other question – we have courses on the books for 30 years without revision. Many other universities have a 5-8 year review cycle. This will probably be suggested here on campus. That is our ambitious agenda for this year. Would you like to join? It would be nice to have a few senators on the Gen Ed committee

Conwell – at the end of year 2 and you have accomplished what you want to, will CAA implement changes?

Throneburg – we would hope to have a schedule of revision of Gen Ed courses in place at that time

Conwell – would you then analyze Gen Ed courses to see if it is of high enough quality?

Throneburg – we would probably be looking for a level of quality that is acceptable according to revised standards. For example – Sciences should focus on CT, Quant, and Ethics – would that be the LGs associated with Science courses. The group is leaning towards letting the instructor select what standards should be implemented in the course

Conwell – a concern is that in the past when CAA has analyzed Gen Ed courses, they found too many courses being offered and some were cut.

Throneburg – not familiar with or have heard of that

Conwell – also concerned about ratio of types of classes that need to be taken – will those ratios be considered or changed?

Jones – we are not changing ratios

Scher – so each course/instructor will decide? How do you ensure that all students will be exposed to all 5 LGs in this situation? I believe that students are here to establish a set of skills-competencies, and should be able to select courses where those skills will be developed.

Throneburg – there are some universities doing this. Students select the courses that provide the competencies needed for their professional career. So students will know what they need in the real world and will pick accordingly.

Scher – but students would have to meet the minimum standard but at least acquire what they need

Throneburg – the old writing portfolio did just that – specific requirements in courses. It is an interesting thought and should be part of discussion.

Ludlow – related question <rumor-mill>. Related to Sen Scher's questions. English is doing significant revision of courses. The belief <rumor> is that every course needs quantitative reasoning in it. I've heard this. True?

Throneburg – no, not true. 2.5 LGs is the proposed goal for Gen Eds. Departments have to decide what level of LGs are necessary in major courses

Ludlow – been thinking about critical thinking. Our measures are not very good in English. I wonder if C.T. is too narrowly defined that it cannot be successfully applied across campus. Maybe we should not define it so narrowly, but develop a form of assessment that is more narrative – allowing students to demonstrate critical thinking skills in different disciplines.

Throneburg – C.T. may manifest itself differently in different departments, but as a university we need to come to a basic agreement of what C.T. is (looks like) in the Gen Eds

Ludlow – I agree with that but how do we assess that in a discipline in the literary environment?

Conwell – (to Ludlow) I totally agree with you and I don't think that every course should have C.T. – studio art class at the freshman level? Beginning drawing class? –that involves critical thinking? I don't think so.

Jones – the proposal is to leave it up to the instructor

Conwell – but does each Gen Ed course have/need critical thinking assessed?

Jones – we recommend receiving input from committee members. The problem is not defining it too narrowly, we believe it is still broadly defined. Possible some pedagogical training is needed?

Mulvaney – FYI – during the summer training (symposium) there was significant support for C.T. to be integrated into every Gen Ed course.

Viertel – is the sole way to access C.T. the Watson-Glazer?

Throneburg – centrally, that is what we have that is free. CLA is administered to 100 frosh and 100 seniors each year. About to administer again. CASL group is coming right behind us regarding how to access C.T. Developing different ways to assess C.T. than Watson-Glazer is probably needed. Assessment is probably more valid at course and department level, not generalized across campus.

Sterling – this ties in with defining C.T. – my biggest concern about the entire process is that there are many faculty that have the basic attitude that 'we already do this' and 'there is not a problem'. 'We are all ok'. The attitude of 'jumping through CAA hoops' is real. Faculty have not bought into the idea that there is a 'problem'. They will satisfy your (CAA) requirements but will not change or conform long-term. Their attitude = 'another new CAA thing that will cause us to do some more busy work'. Lots of faculty think 'what's CAA going to make us do now?' Anything you can do to convince faculty that there really is a 'problem' and how we/they need to do things differently is encouraged.

Throneburg – we have been trying to do this – academic responsibility – we are all paid to teach courses in a curriculum – there is a reason what needs to be taught in each course.

Scher – but Grant’s point is that the faculty member is thinking ‘I am already teaching C.T., at least I think I am’. ‘I don’t see a problem’. Getting people on board is going to be tricky – possibly an academic freedom issue. Where do you find the balance? Most faculty are truly invested to help students meet academic goals. How do you convince them that what they are doing is not working will be difficult, will be the hard part

Throneburg – any suggestions? Change from bottom > up? Change from top > down?

Conwell – we only have the Watson-Glazer, but some people are saying it is no good. But our departments have the highest scores with the Watson-Glazer. So is it no good? You need to persuade me differently – come up with an instrument that shows that where we are screwing up.

Throneburg – yes and no. I come from a dept that is also high-achieving. We are still asking the question – our students are good, but can they be better?

Conwell – but why do you think we have a problem? At least at the departmental level?

Sterling – lots of people say to me – “our dept did really well on WG, great instrument’ or ‘we did poorly on WG – the tool is poor’. And there is significant variance in dept GPAs. Are students really that good or bad in different departments? Sometimes faculty think “If data shows we are doing ok we are ok”, or “if data shows that we are bad than data is bad.”

Scher – the data has to be pre-test or post-test. Current data may not be valid without it. This whole process frustrates me – we need pre-test/post-test data to truly see what students are learning while they are here. Maybe a subset of students randomly selected? This will show what the gen eds or majors truly add to learning goals. I would like to see us take 500 students and test them early, and then test them every year or at the end of the 4 years.

Throneburg – we had a proposal to do more college specific testing. But no \$ right now. When we get to the majors what type of assessment are we doing of our own majors? – maybe pre-test/post-test with majors. Assessing between intro classes and senior capstone course.

Viertel – response to Grant – wildly varying GPAs across campus – that is a big part of academic freedom – I have taught in places where I came up with grades at the end of semester when my chair required me to change them because they were too ‘high’. A caution against normalization of grades between departments

Mulvaney – suggestions – if you want to get buy-in, people need to get involved. Personal ownership. I would wonder if we could develop a CT instrument for Gen Ed – maybe by college we could create a committee to create an instrument to measure CT – created in-house through a panel of experts. Maybe a committee of 8 to 10? I would get involved.

Dao – are we concerned with the Gen Ed courses not meeting LGs or is it courses in general? If every dept on campus assessed major and learning goals, maybe an external review every 5-7 years? Would this be sufficient? Assessment is an on-going process. We ask the majors in exit interviews if they acquired skills. What could we do better? 5 years down the road we ask the same questions.

Jones – the goal for us is for the Gen Eds to be the platform. Acquire skills as you move into the major.

Dao – the assumption is that they will need LGs before the major, correct?

Throneburg – some Gen Ed courses are almost intro to the major. Repeat exposure of LGs is needed during Gen Eds. We need to explain that to students.

Sterling – thank you for your visit and report

V. Old Business

A. Committee Reports: Compiling a list of volunteers for sub-committees. Send them to me. I will send the finalized list and let committee members chose their chair. By next meeting we will have all committees fully populated and chaired.

1. Executive = Sterling – no report. We have not met.

2. Nominations = email from lib advisory board – they need 4 replacements. They can still conduct meetings while we try to fill vacancies. The sooner the better.

3. Elections = we will need a fall special election – becoming a permanent feature. At least 1 for CAA, 2 for UPC, 1 for CUPB, 2 for COTE will be on the ballot or appointed if needed sooner than elections.

Conwell – changes of the bylaws may impact who can serve on these committees

Sterling – don't expect changes on the bylaws before special elections. And most of these committees can function without immediate replacements.

Scher – but doesn't UPC position need to be filled by Sept 1? (according to 'agreement')

Sterling – yes, if it does not happen by Sep 1, a dean can appoint in their area. No one from CEPS was elected for UPC during Spring 2014 elections. Dean Jackman is 'ok' with us including the position in the 2014 Fall Special elections.

4. Faculty-Student relations = no comments or report

5. Faculty-Staff relations = no comments or report

6. Awards = no comments or report

7. Faculty Forum = no comments or report

8. Budget transparency = no comments or report

9. Constitution/Bylaws = no comments or report

10. Committee on Committees = no comments or report

11. Other Reports:

a. Provost's Report – Presidential search consultant here today and tomorrow. Tonight the Library event opens on 1960s – activities for 6 weeks. Next Friday – BOT meeting. There will be an academic matter on the agenda – masters online cohort – Health Care Admin/Leadership to be discussed, potentially approved. Thanks for conversations with CAA reps. Tricky conversation. But it's a good thing when we talk about how we can help our students more. We are scheduled to present on enrollment in an upcoming meeting. Happy to answer any questions. (no questions)

b. Other – none

B. Other Old Business:

VI. New Business

A. Future Agenda: Fall meeting dates: Sterling – contacted all groups we had interest in. CAA and Provost have responded. Presidential Search committee responded – they are not coming. But committee members from that committee will be invited to present/speak to us. No other groups responded to my email. I will email them again. Schedule is still flexible. Let me know of topics you want discussed.

- September 23; October 7; October 14 (adjusted due to NCA visit); November 4; November 18; December 2.

B. Other New Business: Robertson - morale of EIU faculty during this time of cut-backs is awful. Real-world situation impacting current and former staff and colleagues. Recent death of former faculty cut last year is indicator of this. Sterling – faculty morale is at an all-time low since I have been here. Ludlow – is there anything this body can do as a resolution in memorium for this deceased colleague? Discussion is important, a resolution could be useful. Conwell – faculty input in hiring/firing situations and ratio of Unit A/Unit B is limited. Should be increased.

Sterling – any more comments? Seeing none – meeting adjourned.

VII. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 3:24 pm.