

U N I V E R S I T Y *of* A L A S K A

Faculty Alliance

Minutes

Friday, December 14, 2012

3:00 pm via audio conference

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Members Present:

Robert Boeckmann, President, UAA Faculty Senate

Cathy Cahill, 2012-2013 Faculty Alliance, Chair; Past President, UAF Faculty Senate

Mark Fitch, 1st Vice President, UAA Faculty Senate

Virgil Fredenberg, President-Elect, UAS Faculty Senate

Dan Monteith, 2011-2012 Faculty Alliance, Chair; Past President, UAS Faculty Senate

Jennifer Reynolds, President, UAF Faculty Senate

Mike Stekoll, President, UAS Faculty Senate

David Valentine, President-Elect, UAF Faculty Senate

Staff Present:

LaNora Tolman, Executive Officer, System Governance Office

2. **Adopt Agenda**

Adopted

3. **Report of the Chair**

From the December BoR meeting, it is apparent that the BoR is engaged and interested in everything. Regent Jacobson, and others, are especially interested in textbook prices and fees. They want to know what we are doing to keep prices down for students. The regents also advocated for Legislative funding for research seed money. They are going to be looking to the Faculty Alliance to help them effectively advocate to legislature etc. VPAA Dana Thomas will pull Faculty Alliance in and make the Alliance more active with BoR than in the past.

Robert asked about the research overview given at the BoR meeting and on what basis did the BoR say UAF did not have enough research space? Cathy stated how the research space at UAF is limited to an extreme in comparison with UAA and UAS even though space is an issue across the state.

Jennifer commented about UNAC's three-hour come and go reception with the regents. Regents Heckman and Powers each spent about an hour chatting about serious of topics with the handful of faculty who came to the reception. Regent Powers stayed until 6:30 discussing issues. He was asking pertinent questions about how much the BoR should really be involved. Dave Valentine attended part of the reception (but this was a day between classes and finals so he could not attend the entire affair). Regent Powers took notes and received business cards from faculty. He will be going to GI in February as well.

A member stated there are pros and cons to the BoR's interest; the regents could interact with FA and produce good results, but, on the other hand, they could micromanage FA affairs. Jennifer stated Dana Thomas' involvement is to the Alliance's advantage.

Virgil asked if there a way to communicate to the BoR so they understand what faculty and Faculty Alliance do. FA would prefer they ask the Alliance before they start dictating or forcing the Alliance to do something the faculty do not want to do.

Cathy commented that the BoR is communicating with VPAA Dana Thomas and he is communicating with FA. The current Governance Report states what we are addressing and is a vehicle of communication but we can talk to the president and VPAA Thomas and see if it is possible to formalize the communication.

Mark said a faculty regent would be the answer. Cathy asked Mark if he would like to address this with the president.

Jennifer stated she heard during the UNAC meeting with Regent Powers that someone brought up the question on why we do not have a faculty regent. Cathy told Mark he has his homework.

UAA Union collaboration and overlap with other MAUs

Robert reported the contract negotiations are coming up. Encourage eBoards to invite union leaders to participate: a rallying point could be health care.

Mark sent Natural Science Labs document to Alliance.

4. Public or Guest Comments

No comments

5. Statewide Governance Office Changes

Cathy introduced LaNora Tolman and Anthony Smith

6. Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) Institute

Robert talked about travel and flying in from Southeast on Friday morning and setting the meeting time at 10:30am instead of earlier. Saturday flights back to Southeast are limited and those coming in from there need to spend Saturday night and fly out on Sunday. Fairbanks folks can fly back at 11pm Saturday night.

AACU needs summaries of work from the past eighteen months or so from each of the MAUs re: GER's or GER curriculum, motions, reports, papers etc. UAF - Jonathan Rosenberg will be asked by David Valentine to send them to Robert. David Valentine stated Dana Thomas asked for people to attend a previous AACU Institute and he and Alex Fitts were two of five who went and said it was worth attending.

Robert sent Cathy a draft of the agenda and she forwarded it to everyone.

7. **E-labs Taskforce Recommendations**

Mark reported the recommendations were written up with the past Taskforce in mind but took out the words "pedagogy style" and added "as necessary." The next step at UAA will be the provosts talking with deans and program directors.

UAA Faculty Senate has voted on their new document but not last year's. This is a distance lab discussion not E-lab.

Jennifer said she thought each MAU would review documents through their Faculty Senates and then get a unified report done in Faculty Alliance. A formal vote of each Senate is important. Faculty Alliance will vote on a document containing all three senate's comments. Faculty Alliance should construct a separate document instead of inserting comments in the circulating document.

There were questions about the UA Taskforce form. UAA is responding in a different fashion than the UA Faculty Alliance form but it will end up with a unified report.

Mark will put this in front of Alliance at the next meeting on January 18. It will go to each Senate afterwards.

8. **Strategic Direction Update**

Comments were received and passed on to the SDI formulators. Changes in themes, questions, and metrics are being assessed and incorporated.

9. **Human Resources/JHCC Recommendations**

Cathy addressed a point: Given JHCC is a union committee how much should Faculty Alliance be involved? Many say "none." Robert says some motions are reasonable, but there is not a strong rationale for why. We really need faculty to say something. He spoke with Abel Bult-Ito and he is amendable and he would like Faculty Alliance to get involved. However, the union gets involved with topics like this and Faculty Alliance focuses on academics. It

was suggested to speak with the union and talk with Staff Alliance about JHCC questions. Staff Alliance has a lot of influence with Health Care. Don Smith is looking at the impact as the issues come to him from JHCC. Ask President Gamble to clarify at 4:30 today.

10. **Fees and Textbook prices – Regent interest**

This topic came from the regents through Dana Thomas. The regents want faculty opinion about using online, eBooks etc. Faculty have no control over prices only over what can order. Maybe Regents would like to be notified in what the faculty already do? It may require some kind of survey. It was suggested that students use e-books on tablets and iPads instead of hard copy books. It would be good to check with other universities. The question is whether all the textbooks are available as eBooks or this could be a premature move. eBooks are about a third less expensive than regular textbooks. Encourage faculty to find the most reasonable opportunity for the students balancing price and quality including eBooks.

MOTION:

“Faculty Alliance encourages faculty to find the most reasonable option for the students balancing price and quality including eBooks.”

6 approve, 1 nay, 1 abstains

The motion will go to President Gamble.

11. **Electronic Student Evaluations**

Jennifer reported that UAF Faculty Senate is running this. The Faculty Assessment, Development and Improvement Committee is reviewing software packages available for electronic student course evaluations. The first demonstration they scheduled was cancelled by the company. The second one went well.

Juneau is doing is using an electronic evaluation already. UAA would like to see the summary.

UAA’s questions and methods of student evaluations changed and it decreased the response rate - online too easy and no accountability. Distance and computer classes have higher response rates for online evaluations. iPads and tablets for students in the classroom would make it easier as well.

12. **Alignment of Placement Cut Scores across MAUs and expiration dates**

UAA English put a motion through for cut scores. UAF and UAS should do the same.

13. **Course Management Software Evaluation**

David says UAF eLearning Center is doing a pilot study this spring and nine faculty are to deliver courses by LMSs other than Blackboard. They will report on how it works. They teach in both class and via distance so they will be able to comment on both

aspects. A focus group is being put together consisting of faculty using different LMSs to discuss the ease of use etc. Karl Kowalski was invited this week to talk with the faculty at UAA. They met on Wednesday, 12/12/12, for a couple of hours and talked about alternatives to Blackboard. UAA is looking for a CIO replacement as well.

President Gamble phoned in.

Mark suggested having a faculty regent – a similar position to the student regent rotating on a similar schedule. President Gamble said it is a BoR issue and they would have to vote on it. The president had no objection but did not understand how to advocate for it. It would be primarily the board's business. If they ask the president's opinion, he would advocate for it. Robert said there was an issue like this in the past years but the relationship between UAA's chancellor and the president caused a problem for it. Cathy said Faculty Alliance will go forward with it. President Gamble said he thinks it will get votes. Jennifer said this may take an action with the State Legislature. Cathy said that given the BoR's current interest in the faculty's actions, a faculty regent would help keep many questions from coming through the VPAA's office.

Joint Health Care Committee:

Cathy asked if there is still time for input. The President Gamble says HR will endorse or not endorse what comes from the JHCC. Two items are hot potatoes. The president would like the JHCC to have a town hall type of meeting for people to stand up and share their thoughts. It helps with those who say they have no voice. The president is not sure about the value of the motions to the university when the pluses and minuses are written down. The dialogue will continue after holidays. It is a long process and it will be slowed down a bit.

Cathy shared that it is good that everyone else can speak out. Faculty Alliance should concentrate on the academic responsibilities.

President Gamble said the hot potatoes in the JHCC motions are: Opt Out and a mandatory \$1200 fee for spouses.

Regarding the textbook motion, President Gamble said students will like to hear this too.

President Gamble said the governor's budget for UA was taken out. We will have to get it back piece by piece. (See budget email) He said the governor likes to show he has the power to reduce budgets then the legislature puts it back in and the governor blames them. It is pure politics. Last year we got the budget all back plus two new engineering buildings that were not even in the budget.

President Gamble said he has been talking to many groups about what is happening next. He spoke with UAF School of Education's Dean Morotti about the production of teachers in Alaska.

Lockheed Martin is interested in stepping up things with UA to build satellites out of UAF. This will allow us to get involved with launching out of Kodiak and Hawaii. We can expand this particular area of our aerospace work, space launch and satellite building.

This last BoR meeting was a good one and the regents are getting more involved. A new BoR member is coming on and we are hoping to get them on board for the regent's retreat in January. The BoR is a government appointment. We can suggest, but we do not know how Governor Parnell will handle it.

17. **Comments**

None