The regular meeting of the University Senate Executive Committee was called to order by Chair Harrison at 3:05 p.m. on Tuesday, October 5, 2004 in the President’s Room of Davies Center.

1. Minutes of September 21, 2004 approved as distributed

2. Open Forum
   • Issue of benefits for domestic partners to be brought up under Miscellaneous Business

3. Review of tentative agenda for October 12, 2004 meeting of University Senate
   • Consensus to approve agenda as distributed

4. Miscellaneous Business
   • Academic Policies Committee looking at chart on Undergraduate Academic Program Changes in Chapter 7 of Faculty and Academic Staff Handbook
     • Question arose as to whether changes to chart needed senate approval or could be entered for the record
     • Changes made (as per handout) by APC not to procedure or policy – consistent with current process
       • Changed format for easier reading
       • Added items previously not included
     • Without objection, will be for the record item; revised chart to be distributed in senate packet
   • Question of resolutions – should senate be involved in sending resolutions to various entities detailing faculty/academic staff position on various issues?
     • Debated issue extensively when considering resolution on war in Iraq
     • Currently much discussion/resolution writing by various campuses on domestic partner benefits and on proposed constitutional amendment to define marriage
   • Issues have been discussed at chancellor and vice chancellor level
     • Board of Regents discussed both issues at meeting last April
     • Discussed as social/moral issues, but also from pragmatic standpoint of being able to recruit and retain faculty
     • Deans of arts and sciences from around state have taken position against constitutional amendment in defense of marriage, as have student affairs officers
     • System position on both issues should be crystallized after November regents meeting
     • See domestic partner issue as parallel to issue few years ago of funding first six months of health insurance for new hires – was intolerable from recruitment standpoint
       • Eventually campuses allowed to pay for this benefit – costs UW-Eau Claire about $150,000 annually
     • Talked about issues at Academic Staff Reps Council
       • Although issues not the same, do go hand-in-hand
     • Domestic partner benefits is personnel issue, but will not go through unless political climate changes
• Have to take stand on more global issues to look at personnel issue
• See it as important to disaggregate issues – individual rights vs. equal protection – may need to keep separate because of politics
• UW-System Fringe Benefits Advisory Committee looked at cost of domestic partner benefits
  • Was considerable cost factor because would involve all state employees
  • Campus representative to that committee, Ed Young, may know particulars
• System put together talking points on issues
• Fundamentally different questions – deal with recruitment and retention and benefits
  • Bring senators up to speed, but leave up to individual or committee to bring up action
  • Image of state at national level at stake
    • Backwoods reputation makes it harder to attract quality professionals to state
• Will include talking points in senate packet and post sample resolutions and other links on senate website
• Since part is personnel matter, suggest faculty and academic staff personnel committees address that portion
• Definitely think we should speak out on state issues that affect recruitment
  • Kinds of companies that will come here also depends on political climate in state
• Clearly regents in November will come out with statement that this is not good for the people, the system, or the state
  • Chancellors were clear about larger issue of state being challenged to attract people with bachelor’s degrees
  • Also more difficult to attract creative, intellectual people when state is looking at carrying concealed weapons and being clear about marriage
  • Need to get out message that this will not attract the people you want to attract
• If want to send resolution to regents before November meeting, may want to put together subcommittee of interested people at October 12th senate meeting so resolution can be passed at October 26th meeting

5. Announcements
• Press release about UW-Oshkosh program to get people who began, but did not finish, work on their degree back to complete degree includes reference to UW-Eau Claire looking at such a program
  • Want local campus community to know we are not implementing any such program; simply looking at some numbers
  • What to offer, or how to accommodate such students, has not been determined
  • Not something we would do without adequate resources
• Chancellor will be out of town for October 26, 2004 senate meeting
  • Vice Chancellor Soll to be put on agenda for special report on 2005-2007 budget request from regents so senators know what went forward
    • Regents requested 3% increases each year for faculty and academic staff labeled catch-up
    • Governor already knows of that action
    • Talking about pay plan earlier than ever
    • At November meeting, regents will talk about pay plan piece and probably add to the 3%
    • Also requested tuition increases of 4.2%
• Heard at academic staff reps meeting that Department of Administration had requested figures for distribution of 3% catch-up to just faculty – raises concern again about decoupling of academic staff
  • When chancellors discussed, no one thought decoupling was good idea
  • Academic staff do not want decoupling, neither does system; will go to regents together
  • System must respond to request for data – gave data both ways
• At Compensation Advisory Committee meeting, shown a chart indicating what an additional 1% would cost, what 2% would cost, and so on – people might find that interesting also

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

Wanda Schulner
Secretary of the University Senate