Members Present:

Members Absent:
Jan Adams, Grace Becker, Lisa Coen, Grace Crickette, Jeff DeGrave, Ashley Galoff, Brad Gehrke, Pat Kleine, John Mann, Dalete Mota, Daniel Schumacher, Lisa Schiller

Guests:
MJ Brukardt, Mike Carney, Margaret Cassidy, Mary Hoffman, Debra Jansen, Nichole Owen, James Phillips, Jean Pratt, Jill Prushiek, Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn, Jake Wrasse

The regular meeting of University Senate was called to order by Chair Weiher at 3:01 p.m. on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 via online Teams meeting.

1) Approval of the University Senate October 12, 2021 minutes
• Approved as distributed

2) Administrator Remarks
• UWEC recently received a $10 million anonymous gift by a foundation board member
  • This is an exceptional and rare gift
  • We would like to thank the fantastic staff in foundation, under Kim Way’s direction, but this started with UWEC’s level of excellence, so this is a huge vote of confidence
  • Will have a focus on faculty/staff and health and human well-being
  • It was stated that this was their initial gift so that is exciting as well
  • This gift will be part of Foundations Endowment Fund so it will be part of base funding
    • Base resources allow us to hire people in permanent positions
    • More information will be released at the Chancellor’s briefing tomorrow
      • We will also present Barron County’s Land Acknowledgment Statement
      • These meetings are also recorded
      • Chancellor Schmidt gives monthly briefings to ensure greater access to university leadership
        • Questions can be submitted in advance
  • Native American month
  • Many activities will be held so please watch for those upcoming events
  • First Generation Day on November 8th and this is the first time that UWEC will participate
    • This is a way to help our 1st generation students celebrate their achievements as it can help them navigate college
    • If you are a first-generation graduate and have interest or would like to tell your story, then grab a t-shirt and tape your story as we will feature stories as that is a way to help students at UWEC find a home here and that helps with retention
    • Many of these students are Pell Grant recipients and the discussions being held in Washington might lead to significant increases in that program
      • This is an efficient program, and it is a targeted and needed program, so we are hoping to support our low-income students

www.uwec.edu/usenate/
• Funding for the Sonnetag Center
  • City council was in a closed session meeting so no information on what came out of that, but we have been working closely with the City Council
    • There is support and matching funding to bring more sustainable features into the design
    • The City of Eau Claire wants larger events to come to town, so the city is interested in helping with funding
      • We designed the building for what UWEC needed but the city can help with additional funding if they want the size of it increased
      • They would like us to host approximately 10 large concerts that the public would be invited to and we would offer a family rink space to use for athletic tournaments and that is also why Visit Eau Claire is a part of this as well
    • The Parks and Waterways Commission and the Planning Commission will be reviewing this plan soon so expect to see a more public discussion phase starting tomorrow

3) Reports

a) Report from University Senate Chair Weiher
  • The provost consulted with the Executive Committee on starting a 2-year pilot in which the withdrawal date is moved back to 12th week
  • This is done at several other campuses with notable success at reducing withdrawals
  • The Executive Committee supported the plan
  • The SSD office has been overwhelmed and they now have been improving their services and more improvements are coming
    • Adjustments are being made to get more service there
  • Executive Committee went into closed session to consider a nomination for an honorary doctorate
    • We'll meet again next to make a recommendation on the nomination
    • We obviously can't share the name of the nominee at this time
  • We switched from E-True North to Webber for covid testing and after a bumpy start, things are working much better in terms of getting the results back to people
  • The head of HR David Miller contacted me about getting some nominations for academic staff to serve the TTC appeals process
    • They need academic staff on senate or on ASPC
      • I've talked with the chair of Academic Staff Personnel Committee, Jasmine Case, about this
      • I believe the appeals are due this semester, but the actual process will start in spring
  • TTC process
    • It will be a 2-person appeal panel
    • It will be initiated by an e-form, but supplemental documentation can be included
    • There will only be two for the appeal panel because that is the minimum that System asked for
    • The review panel may not be anonymous

b) Faculty Representatives Report – Senator Peterson
  • A meltdown over TTC occurred
  • There is frustration regarding the Shop UW Plus System as orders are taking too long and costing too much money so many are trying to figure out ways to get around it
    • Faculty reps will try to help with this
  • Furlough monies
    • UW Stevens Point had a Resolution requesting that their chancellor investigate reimbursing furlough dollars
      • System HR said that there are too many legal hurdles and complications
      • One example is that the extended furloughs that some campuses did then allowed for unemployment compensation
  • BOR meeting coming up next week again and hopefully TTC will be on the regent's agenda
    • No conversations on retirement calculations changes based on furlough but Geoff will forward this along to see if we can get an answer
    • No lump sum conversations took place

c) Academic Staff Representative Report – Senator Case
  • Met last Friday
  • It was a very frustrating meeting as TTC was to be discussed but we were presented with a power point and there was no time for questions but what we do know is:
• Salary structure(s) will be available November 1st with the letters to academic staff going out around that same time of November 1
  • They took into account multiple salary surveys to get reliable market data to come up with median salaries for the pay ranges
  • There are 15-35 salary grades
  • Minimum is 13.50 p/hour or $28,000 per year but hoping many campuses will start at $15 p/hour
  • Maximums for all are the same but minimums for the comprehensives are lower
  • Excluding Madison and Milwaukee 379 people are coming in below the salary range so they will be bumped up to that minimum and that “raise” will be effective November 7
  • Excluding Madison and Milwaukee, there are 90 individual that are over the maximum so those will not get base building salary increases so that is concerning as they not have been mapped properly
  • An employee notification letter will be going out soon and will include job title, salary grade and employee class
  • Salary range will not be on this letter so one would have to go out to system and find it
  • Appeal filing begins November 22 - December 31
  • UWEC only one doing the online form for collecting appeals
  • The only thing that can be appealed is the job title and not the salary range
  • Will be reassessed every two-three years
  • Was said that this process is good for the System but it was not obvious how it was good for the staff
  • There will be two town halls coming up on November 9th and 18th
  • Reps asked for a meeting without a PowerPoints so they can ask questions
  • Academic staff needs help for the appeal panel
  • We need 4 academic staff representatives (need to be shared governance representatives: senators or ASPC members) with as much representation as we can get
  • We will not use IAS on this appeal process
  • Training will be the end of January with the appeal process starting after that but the time commitment or any compensation is not known
  • If interested in serving on the appeal panel let chair Weiher or Senator Case know
  • Question on if there were a disagreement between the two people on the appeals committee
  • Haven’t gotten responses to that question but David Miller said if the decision is split then the recommendation goes forward
  • The decision isn’t made by the panel but reviewed by the panel
  • Grace Crickette makes the decision
  • Question on why the comprehensives are locked into titles from Madison but then they split us out with the pay
  • The townhalls will be open calls
  • Concern that the appeals process is available to IAS so why aren’t the IAS being requested to be part of the appeal panel
  • Grace is the final decision on campus but do not know if it goes further than that
  • Do not know what the benefit of this is

4) Unfinished Business
  a) Second Reading: Motion from the Academic Policies Committee
     Adding a 7th approved absence category

Continued Discussion
  • Until you’re proven guilty you are considered innocent so that is asking us to judge another person so the student would be allowed to go to court, even for a DWI, as the student would get a misdemeanor if they didn’t attend the court date
  • This would be an excused absence
• APC has been in contact with the Caregiving Taskforce and once a proposal comes forth then it will be on the APC agenda

VOTE on MOTION: APPROVED

b) Second Reading: Motion from the Faculty Personnel Committee
Requirements for Promotion

Continued Discussion
• This appears innocuous but there is a downside
  • We felt our process was sufficient so questioning why we are changing it
  • Other changes resulted with a lot of additional work with little payoff
  • We are still in the process of seeing how our current ratings are working
    This should not have a portfolio involved
  • Concern that if you change the promotion clock so it matches post tenure clock then it is under the guise of a promotion review and a portfolio is not necessary for promotion
  • The workload is problematic
• Those that conduct the reviews did not support this as we are losing the opportunity to give a faculty member feedback before promotion to full
  • Is a chance for the committee to spot things before they go to the promotion to full
  • Is good communication and helps the candidate get feedback before a “no” reply
    Some might feel like they’re being given less time for promotion to full so could be negative for some populations
• If we shorten the timeline then there is more pressure on groups that are judged more harshly so we are setting the stage for less successful promotions
• We have a mechanism for those ready to seek promotion on an early basis
• Workload may be impacted in a negative way
• This motion gives a choice in 4 years instead of 5
  • Is your decision if you want to go up early
• Communications happen ahead of time anyway, so it is only a benefit
• This is not a mandate
• It only changes the earliest point of eligibility
• Functional equivalent and the workload from the volunteers to serve on the committee
  • Colleges are in tough spots with limited tenured faculty
• Concern that people may feel pressured to put their materials in sooner than they would otherwise have to
• This has underlying gender inequities
• Do not want people to think that there is something wrong if you do not submit early
• Would help with recruitment and retention especially in healthcare
• Will be a strong way to attract individual to this campus
• This is a gendered issue
• Would argue that it could harm retention of women and faculty of color as might be less successful in a positive promotion decision
• This has social dimensions that haven’t been looked at
• Many will try to go up early and could then have negative consequences
• There are advantages in rolling them together but changing this might enhance some racial and gender issues

VOTE on MOTION: FAILED (11-16)

5) New Business
   a) First Reading: Motion from the Academic Policies Committee
      Change in Major Names in Chemistry
Debate
• “ACS” is already in the title but wanted to add “certified” in the title
• Concerned about title in the degree as certification process requires us to buy expensive ACS content
• “ACS” in the degree title might unintentionally tie us financially to ACS and that is concerning because it limits our ability to make equitable decisions
• Programs have autonomy with their title, but ACS is blackmailing us to prescribe to their journals
• ACS approves the department and if we are not approved, then we cannot hire faculty
  • The degree is certified by UWEC on their (ACS) behalf
    • We are recognized as being credentialed
    • Part of this is messaging
    • ACS title helped us retain the general emphasis, so it is also for retention and for prospective students
• We need to financially support these then if we want to change the title but we need similar support for other programs too
  • Can be problematic with our wider array of programs that support journals

Objection to vote on this today

VOTE on MOTION: POSTPONED

6) Announcements
  • The next meeting of the University Senate will be held via Teams on November 9, 2021
    • The library is evaluating databases that provide news content, so they have many data base trials going on right now
    • UWEC members can provide feedback
      • There is a link in chat to a guide of what databases are being trialed

Without objection, meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.

Submitted by,

Tanya Kenney
Secretary to the University Senate