Members Present:

Members Absent:
Donna Anders, Robert Berg, Lisa Coen, Scott Clark, Rebecca Dienger, Mary Elger-Lonzarich, Billy Felz, Christa Garvey, Charlie Krula, Tamara Miller, Ryan Weichelt

Guests:
MJ Brukardt, Mike Carney, Margaret Cassidy, Mary Hoffman, Debra Jansen, Carmen Manning, Jean Pratt, Jill Prushiek, Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn, Jake Wrasse

The regular meeting of University Senate was called to order by Chair Weiher at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 9, 2021 via online Teams meeting.

1) Approval of the University Senate October 26, 2021 minutes
   - Approved as distributed

2) Administrator Remarks
   - We have seen a surge in applications over the last year
     - We logged 1000 new applications from last week alone, so Admissions has been busy
       - 200 admittance letters have been sent in the last few days
     - Deposits are up 7% over last year
     - Applications are also up at our other campuses
     - Housing applications and deposits are also up for new applicants and returning students
   - New students are important but retaining students might even be more important
   - Texts being sent to students to register for spring semester
   - Our first covid booster clinic “sold out” within an hour
     - This was a trial run to see if there was interest and there obviously is so will do this again
   - The Moderna vaccine is what is being given
   - There is a link to register is in Blugold FYI
   - Children over 5 can now get the vaccine too
   - We also have a regional vaccine clinic (6 days a week) at Jacobs Well
   - The vaccine clinic is being run by the County with our support
   - Vaccine scholarships will be selected by UW System this week
     - We can only publicize those that agree to let us share their name/information
   - Women’s volleyball recently had a win of 3-1 against Whitewater
     - We will be hosting the regional tournament this Thursday and will play Greenville University from Illinois
     - If we win then we move on to the Elite 8 in Missouri so let’s support them
   - This Saturday is Gatsby Gala
     - This event supports EC Jazz Festival
   - We will be having a 2nd Bark Break on campus
   - A compensation model that differs from the 2/2

www.uwec.edu/usenate/
• Too early but are doing the work to see what is possible
• Doing an assessment on internal monies as well as what costs might be associate with the TTC changes
• Would like to set up a renewal pool or ongoing commitment to a pool of funds to address equity on our campus
  • Want to make some adjustments
  • Also looking at if we can we use retention as a reason to make some kind of payments to employees
  • Also looking at the potential implications of the merit adjustments
    • Once Chancellor Schmidt gets any answers will consult with shared governance and leadership
    • Will hopefully update the campus on December 1
• Furloughs acted as insurance with dips in enrollment but what are your plans to invest that furlough back into our community
  • $2.3-$2.4 million in furlough collected
  • We need to balance $4-$5 million structural deficit
  • Would like to make investments back in the faculty and staff to attract and retain hardworking faculty and staff
  • Trying how to best invest in our faculty and staff
• Increasing tuition
  • Lots of chatter saying that if we consider a tuition increase it would need to be modest given the political environment
  • Differential tuition may be looked at but we do not want to risk losing the authority

3) Reports
a) Report from University Senate Chair Weiher
  • Chair Weiher missed the weekly campus covid call and the meeting with the Eau Claire County Health Department because I needed to conduct 10 zoom interviews for a faculty search in biology and it was difficult to schedule all of them
  • At the last Senate Executive Committee meeting:
    • We consulted with Teresa O’Halloran on search process for the Director of the Center for Racial and Restorative Justice
    • We heard about a concern with the BP Logix shut down, but it probably won’t be nearly as long as the memo stated
    • Had some budget questions
    • We supported a nomination for an honorary PhD
  • Chair Weiher was surprised and alarmed by the email from Academic Affairs that ordered transparency training for all instructional staff, redesigning two assignments, as well as documenting outside of classroom activities with students
  • Chair Weiher immediately got a lot of complaints from faculty and staff
  • Among the many issues, neither of these orders were brought to any shared governance group that I know of
    • The word transparency was mentioned at an Academic Master Planning meeting, but no details were shared
    • Maybe I missed something, but I don’t think so
  • Chair Weiher wrote a response on Wednesday evening to address the Transparency Initiative, slept on it, then shared it with about a dozen of you for comments
    • On Thursday, after we finished our last 6 zoom interviews, I revised my response using only some of the excellent comments and sent it to the provost and back to some of you
      • Tanya, let’s send it out to all the senators
  • Provost Kleine replied that she completely agreed with my note
    • Which was curious as we had a very good discussion at the leadership meeting on Friday and it was my impression that Transparency Initiative was intended to be optional
    • In a follow-up draft email, the training was still required, and I don’t know the status of the Initiative other than it’s still there
  • It’s Chair Weiher’s understanding that even though many of us already make every attempt to be transparent, there are a few bad professors who don’t
- So they want all of us to do this to catch the few bad ones
- Chair Weiher thinks transparency is great, but doesn’t accept a singular mode of transparency
  - A personal example was given
- On lighter note, as chair of the Putnam Park Commission, Vice Chancellor Crickette contacted me about possibly using the prairie area of Putnam Park as a dump for snow from the parking lots
  - The parking spaces are sold out and there is no room to store the snow and so she was looking to save at least $25,000 and so someone made a desperate suggestion
- I want to thank her for contacting me prior to making a decision on it and it’s not going happen
- Strategic Plan and their initiatives
  - The legislature took away faculty control and input but that has continued to be granted in by administrators at UWEC so this mandate is concerning as this could set a precedent
  - The gravity of this was not lost on the provost but this is not changing the way you teach but only making you more cognizant
    - We have made limited progress on this campus for students of color and for the underrepresented students
  - The research is compelling, but we need to reengage in this process to see how we are working with our students of color and the underrepresented as our approach to student learning could be distinctive
  - It was not intentional that shared governance was not consulted
    - This is part of CETL training and is a tier two activity so thought the meeting with the department chairs and directors would test the idea
  - Concern that this isn’t the first time that fac are being blamed for a problem
  - This is presented as top-down mandate, but it is really just one more thing people are being asked to do
    - Also, this is not the first time for an autocratic mandate to be given then it is stated that it was not administrations intentions
      - The provost does not believe it is the fault of the faculty, but we need to know who we have on our classrooms
        - We are a community of learners, and we owe to our students that we take a look
  - One instructor went through the assignment then got a statement that the assignments were not approved
    - Would have to talk to CETL as to why but have been told there are 4 different letters that can come from CETL
    - Submit assignments to the canvas site
  - Even if this is a good thing the email surprised people and there is much concern about the top-down feeling
    - Provost believes in shared governance
  - Seems like another hoop to jump through but still worried that shared governance was not consulted
  - A one size fits all idea does not work and that is why we have shared governance
    - Nothing that has been said has been reassuring
      - This is not a box to tick
      - This is not an experiment, but we can take a look at something that might be appropriate
    - UWEC’s messaging is terrible as the email should have stated additional strategies
      - Shared governance should have been consulted for messaging ideas
  - everyone made limited progress on this campus for students of color and for the underrepresented students

b) Faculty Representatives Report – Senator Peterson
  - None

4) Unfinished Business
  a) Second Reading: Motion from the Academic Policies Committee
  - Change of Major Names in Chemistry

Continued Discussion
- Is a rename and no requirements have changed so a notification is required to uw system
  - Not a new major, just a rename
• Provost will double check this

VOTE on MOTION: APPROVED

5) New Business
   • None

6) Announcements
   • The next meeting of the University Senate is scheduled for Tuesday, November 23 via Teams
   • Last spring a campus climate survey was completed
     • UW Regents looked at that last week so now we can look at our institutional data
   • EDI Strategic Plan Process
     • We have it down to 4 goals and would like to push them out to the campus so will consult with the University Senate Office to see when it might be an appropriate time to do so

Without objection, meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Submitted by,

Tanya Kenney
Secretary to the University Senate