

Governance Council

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

12:00PM

UNH 306

Susanna Fessler, Chair

Agenda

Present: Liang Chu, Susanna Fessler, Reed Hoyt, Danielle Leonard, Andi Lyons, John Pipkin, Donna Scanlon, Laura Schultz

Guest: Sue Barnes

The meeting convened at 12:03 pm

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of April 28 were approved by those present. Approving votes that were cast by email after minutes were distributed electronically on May 18 were also counted.

New Business:

Chair Fessler explained to GOV that she wanted to initiate the conversation concerning the use of iClickers in the Senate now—during the summer months--so that it could be presented and brought to a vote at the first Senate meeting in September. She asked Sue Barnes from ITLAL to present a hands-on training session and demonstration that would provide an understanding of the technology. Chair Fessler said that by the end of today's meeting, she hoped to have enough input to write up a formal bill to be presented at the first Senate Executive Committee meeting for approval to forward to the Senate.

Sue Barnes provided GOV members with a demonstration of how a bill could be set up in advance for a vote and GOV members were given several opportunities to vote on mock proposals with their iClickers. She also demonstrated how new issues raised at a meeting requiring a vote could be set up as a "question on the fly" with a preformatted template or an ad hoc template. She also provided an overview of the session summary feature of the iClicker software. She then reviewed the "histogram," feature of the software, a chart that displays results both during and after the vote. Ms. Barnes said iClickers can be used with PowerPoint, Excel, Word and pdfs.

The pros and cons of using iClickers were discussed. Chair Fessler pointed out that they also could be used for taking attendance and for a quorum call to obtain a count of the number of senators present. Secretary Leonard said it would provide for a quicker and more accurate count of votes.

The default vote was discussed. GOV members decided that the default vote would be a named vote, and that a motion would be required for an anonymous (ballot) vote. In the Senate meeting itself, named vote results would be displayed instantly with the total number of votes but not with names attached. However, each Senator's vote would be recorded in the iClicker software, and those votes would be reviewed by the Secretary in order to determine if there were any illegal votes. Each device has an identification number and Ms. Barnes described the registration process for the purposes of assigning a device to each senator.

This is an important step which would avoid random or illegal votes such as student bringing in devices they use in their classes. Devices would be identified with a sticker containing the name of the senator to whom it is registered. Senators would claim their device upon signing in at each meeting and turn them in when they leave.

The discussion turned to how the hard data would be maintained and distributed. GOV had questions about to whom voting information would be divulged and under what criteria it would be released. They discussed the importance of constituents knowing how their representatives are voting on issues but also the need to protect junior faculty who are senators. A suggestion was made to provide a percentage of the votes from a particular unit as opposed to providing individual names. In one case where a college only has one senator it would be problematic. Chair Fessler was concerned about creating an environment of mistrust by constituents requesting voting results from the Senate Secretary instead of directly from their representatives. Secretary Leonard discussed the importance of having materials distributed early enough so that representatives will have sufficient time to discuss issues with their constituents for purposes of obtaining feedback on their views and how they might want their representative to vote. GOV agreed that a formal data plan would need to be developed on how to release the information. Reed Hoyt pointed out that limiting the voting information to constituencies requires the need to define units. Laura Schultz added that at-large votes need to be public. Andi Lyons said that in terms of protecting junior faculty, a call for a ballot vote could be made if a subject is particularly contentious. Secretary Leonard raised the issue of part time senators. Part time faculty and staff do not elected part time representatives and do not have same status as full time faculty and staff. She was concerned about everyone having access to that information except part time faculty and staff. Chair Fessler asked what access administrators would have as well as whether or not senators would have access to how *ex officio* members vote.

In conclusion, GOV decided that constituents would have access to their representatives' votes, that *ex officio* members would not have access to vote records, nor would anyone have access to *ex officio* vote records, and that at-large senators' votes would be available to all members of the voting faculty. A grid of these parameters will be included in the bill forwarded by GOV.

GOV members then discussed maintenance of the voting records. Secretary Leonard said the Senate has a shared drive where the information could be kept. It was suggested that numerical tallies for each bill be recorded in the Senate minutes in the future, thus eliminating the need to keep vote tally records beyond one academic year. Members of GOV agreed this was a good solution. GOV agreed that records would be maintained until the end of each academic year and purged on August 31.

Chair Fessler received a quote for the clickers of approximately \$2,300 with a discount for a bulk purchase. The President's Office has agreed to cover the costs. The only other costs associated with the system would be the replacement of batteries once a year. ITLAL has agreed to supply a base, software and two complimentary "instructor" remotes.

Chair Fessler will write a draft of a bill and circulate it for GOV members to provide a timely review prior to the first meeting of the Senate Executive Committee on September 12. Chair Fessler will introduce the bill at the first SEC meeting and field questions that arise.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Gail Cameron, Recorder