

University at Albany, State University of New York

Governance Council

John Delano, Chair

April 4, 2008

Minutes

Present: Erin Bell, Ray Bromley, Nan Carroll, Richard Collier, John Delano, Heather Horton, Nikki Kotary, R. Michael Range, Helen Strother

Agenda items: (1) IRCAP: Discussion of points that Dean Pryse provided in response to the proposed IRCAP amendment that was introduced to the Senate on March 10, 2008____.
(2) First Year Experience (FYE) Task Force.

Meeting convened at 3:05 PM in UNH 306

(1) IRCAP: Discussion on the IRCAP amendment included arguing the need for an oversight committee, considering whether the work of the committee would be redundant to either UAC or GAC, and rethinking the proposed committee's composition.

Following a review of Dean Pryse's perspectives, it was agreed that several 'friendly' changes to the IRCAP proposal would be made, and that the revised proposal would be re-introduced to the Senate at its next meeting. There was a consensus on the following issues.

- (a) The intent of IRCAP is to introduce a review process for curricular proposals originating from non-academic units that is parallel with the process that exists for curricular proposals originating from academic units.
- (b) IRCAP is not redundant with respect to either UAC or GAC, since multiple stages of review are standard operating procedure for curricular proposals originating from academic units.
- (c) IRCAP could be perceived as having a 'gate-keeping' role analogous to that of review committees at the college/school level. Such committees may reject or return proposals to the originating unit for revisions and/or for additional information. A proposal must be approved by IRCAP or the appropriate college/school committee before it is transmitted to either UAC, or GAC, or both.
- (d) IRCAP is viewed as a committee that is lower in the administrative/governance structure than either the UAC or the GAC.
- (e) If the decisions of IRCAP (or of any other governance body) were viewed as being arbitrary and capricious, then the Mediation Committee of the Governance Council is charged to hear such claims and to report its findings to the Senate.
- (f) *Ex officio* members of the proposed IRCAP (i.e., Senate Chair or designee; Dean of Graduate Studies or designee; Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education or designee) would be voting members. However, such ex-officio members or their designees shall recuse themselves from voting on any proposal which originates (fully or partially) from their respective unit.
- (g) Whenever IRCAP approves a proposal, its decision shall be reported to the appropriate council (either UAC, or GAC, or both) in writing. These decisions would include an assessment of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. That report would be intended to provide important perspectives for the next higher level of review (either UAC, or GAC, or both).
- (h) Since the proposed IRCAP would report to a Senate Council, not to the Senate Executive Committee, the proposed amendment should not be located under Article VII.7 of the Senate

Charter, but in an other appropriate place to be compatible with its role in the governance structure.

- (i) Consistent with Article II; Section 6.3 of the Faculty ByLaws, members would be appointed to serve staggered two year terms with a limit of 3 consecutive 2-year terms. The Chair would be elected annually by IRCAP members for a one-year term. *Ex officio* members would not be eligible to serve as Chair.
- (j) It was agreed that the phrase “degree-granting” should be deleted from the proposed amendment.

(2) FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE (FYE) TASK FORCE: Chair Delano reported that Interim Provost Phillips has proposed the creation of a Task-Force-on-the-First-Year-Experience to assess the current “crazy quilt” of the FYE programs at the university. At the request of the Chair Delano, the Interim Provost provided the Governance Council with a three-page draft of her current ideas about the charge and composition of that proposed Task Force. This draft served as the basis for the discussion and for the following suggestions.

- (a) The Interim Provost was applauded for her proposal to create this FYE Task Force.
- (b) The membership of the proposed FYE Task Force should not be laden with representatives from current FYE programs. While it will be important for the Task Force to receive invited testimony from such individuals, the membership must be seen as having no conflict of interest with whatever the Task Force might ultimately recommend.
- (c) One chair, rather than the proposed two co-chairs, was considered to be more efficient.
- (d) A member from Institutional Research (e.g., Bruce Szelest or designee) would be important to include on the membership in order to ensure informed discussion based on data.
- (e) A blog and/or threaded discussions could be created on the University website to engage members of the University community in conversation on key questions raised by the Task Force.
- (f) The Task Force should include undergraduate student representation (e.g., President of the Student Association).
- (g) The Task Force should begin its work in Summer 2008 in order to report its recommendations by the end of the Fall 2008 semester.
- (h) The Task Force should include representation from the Study Abroad Office.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM