

Governance Council

Friday, November 19, 2010

3:00 PM

UNH 306

Susanna Fessler, Chair

Minutes

Present: Tom Bessette, Nan Carroll, Liang Chu, Nicholas Fahrenkopf, Susanna Fessler, Reed Hoyt, Andi Lyons, Candace Merbler, John Pipkin, Tremayne Price, Donna Scanlon, Joette Stefl-Mabry

The meeting convened at 3:00 pm.

CHAIR'S REPORT BY SUSANNA FESSLER

Chair Fessler thanked everyone for their responses concerning the nominees for the Excellence Awards Selection Committees. The recommendations were sent to the President's Office last week. The memo that was sent to the Tine Reimer in the Provost's Office will be circulated to GOV members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Due to technical problems the recorder had with equipment at the last meeting, there were some inconsistencies with the minutes from October 29. It was agreed to table approval of the 10/29 minutes until the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Evaluation of Administrators and Administrative Offices:

Chair Fessler reviewed the resolution that was passed by the Senate this past spring, charging the Senate Executive Committee to develop procedures for evaluation of administrators and administrative services and functions. At its meeting in April, the Executive Committee voted to refer the matter to the Governance Council. Discussion of the topic will require careful focus. The Chair provided handouts of possible strategies in going forward based on practices at peer institutions.

Much of GOV's conversation was focused on whether the process should be an evaluation or assessment as well as the advisability of speaking with a few campus experts to help guide GOV in the process. Chair Fessler said the original intent was to conduct evaluations, with the original suggestion that it be limited to administrative offices and then administrators. Joette Stefl-Mabry informed GOV that the evaluation process is more focused on a product while an assessment is more focused on process. She also indicated that an evaluation is more

judgmental, while an assessment would be more informative. Many members agreed that it should be an assessment but believed the originators of the resolution were more interested in evaluations. Secretary Bessette reminded everyone that the focus should be on how a job is done as opposed to an individual. Another member pointed out that the Resolution was the result of a recommendation made by the Middle States Self-Study. Andi Lyons informed GOV that senior administrators receive assessments but view them as evaluations. Faculty understand that assessments will be viewed as an evaluation tool by CPCA. Some administrators may view an assessment as a ranking so it's important to make it understood that the intent is to assess. Candace Merbler said the assessment will provide feedback to assist administrators on how to work on areas that need improvement. She said we need to see communication going in two directions, not just top to bottom but from the bottom up as well.

Council members discussed questions pertaining to responsibilities and procedures outlined in a handout from the Chair:

Who should have oversight?

GOV members discussed that the process should be done with regularity and that a body would need to be identified to make sure it happened. A suggestion was made that the Senate Executive Committee should have oversight. They did not feel GOV should be that body.

What should the composition of the ad-hoc committee look like?

The ad-hoc committee will be the architects of the evaluation process. A number of key sub-groups to be part of the committee were reviewed including Institutional Research, CAA, members of the administration, and both professional and teaching faculty. The committee could add other members as they see fit.

GOV members felt that other questions such as what the evaluation instrument would look like, how it would be disseminated, and who would be evaluate would be best approached by consulting with experts that we have on campus. It was suggested that those individuals be identified and invited to one of GOV's meetings. Additionally, it was suggested that these individuals be on the ad hoc committee.

GOV members discussed obtaining more information from peer institutions and how their process is conducted. Chair Fessler distributed a handout from SUNY Binghamton. She found it useful and felt it addressed many of the questions for GOV that were in her previous handout. The Chair said some of the language might be applicable in developing a document such as a Charter amendment in defining the process. It was suggested that the process be given a "dry run" before proceeding with changes in the Charter. Ms. Merbler suggested contacting campuses for information on how they launched their programs and to ask for institutional history. The Chair agreed that could be useful information but, keeping in mind that our campus has its own personality, we need to be sensitive to how the campus is structured and what will work. Professor Stefl-Mabry agreed that the process should be specific to the culture at UAlbany and not be a business model.

Chair Fessler asked Professor Stefl-Mabry through her expertise, to identify other people on campus who could advise GOV and come to the next meeting. Chair Fessler summarized the

discussion and asked GOV members to think of any questions they may want to forward to guest speakers in advance of the next meeting. GOV agreed it should be made clear to those being invited that the process will lean towards being an assessment instead of an evaluation, and they should review the portion of the Middle States self study that addresses assessments. The major points to be addressed are how the assessment will be done, possibly through MyUAlbany, and who will have access to document.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 pm

Respectfully submitted by
Gail Cameron, Recorder