

Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting
January 27, 2010
Founder's Room, Lovett Hall

Senators present: Gregory Barnett, Randy Batsell, John Casbarian, Steven Cox, Sarah Ellenzweig, Bridget Gorman, Jane Grande-Allen, Deborah Harter, John Hempel, Tom Killian, Phil Kortum, Mark Kulstad, David Leebron, Susan McIntosh, Matteo Pasquali, Rob Raphael, Brian Rountree, Dale Sawyer, Gautami Shah, Robin Sickles, Evan Siemann, Meredith Skura, John Sparagana, Randy Stevenson, Devika Subramanian, Duane Windsor, and Jim Young.

Senators absent: Eugene Levy, Scott McGill, and Yizhi Jane Tao.

Agenda:

- I. Call to order
- II. Announcements
- III. Reports
- IV. Working group reports
- V. Unfinished business
- VI. New business
 - A. Candidacy MA in Business
 - B. Graduation Record of Date
 - C. Minor (Departmental) in Anthropology
 - D. Minor (Interdisciplinary) in African Studies
 - E. Biosciences curriculum restructuring
 - F. Possible new working groups and Senate initiatives
- VII. Adjournment to executive session

PROCEEDINGS

I. Call to order: Duane Windsor, Speaker, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

II. Announcements

- A. Windsor welcomed John Casbarian (Architecture) on his return to the Senate and the Senate's Executive Committee as of January 2010.
- B. Windsor thanked Randy Stevenson for the years he has served as the Senate's first Parliamentarian and presented him with a plaque. Windsor announced that Susan McIntosh will succeed Stevenson as Parliamentarian.
- C. A plenary meeting of the faculty is scheduled for this Thursday, January 28, to approve the mid-year degrees for both graduate and undergraduate students.
- D. A Convenor is needed; Windsor asked for volunteers.

III. Reports—Speaker Windsor

- A. Review of Deans: Windsor reported that the Senate Executive Committee is conducting an assessment of the Dean’s Review process. One item that proved to be useful to both of the committees which have reviewed deans thus far is the survey of faculty and staff in the respective schools.
- B. The Executive Committee wishes to initiate discussion of how the Senate should work with the University administration and the Board of Trustees to discuss the University’s future.
- C. The Final Senate Faculty Survey Report has been posted on the secure Rice-BCM website.
- D. The Senate Constitution needs to be corrected to reflect the name change for the “Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business” (from Management), when the official title is verified.
- E. The proposed Ph.D. in Sociology has been returned by the Graduate Council to the Sociology Department for revisions. The Graduate Council is also reviewing the Honor Council as it applies to graduate students.
- F. Personnel searches currently: Provost, Athletic Director, and Dean of Humanities.
- G. There will be a change in the Fall 2010 Tuesday/Thursday class schedule, primarily to allow time for travel to and from the Bioscience Research Collaborative (BRC). The change recommended by a task force is still under discussion.
- H. Deputy Speaker Jim Young described the duties of the Nominations and Elections Committee (NEC) and said he will be recruiting members from the Senate to serve on the NEC. He also stated that he had met with Carol Quillen in an effort to reduce the number of University Committees that the Senate staffs.
- I. Young discussed the constituency email lists that were recently sent to each Senator via the Faculty Senate Owl-Space site. He encouraged the Senators to destroy their old lists, and he said his original email is stored on the OS site under “Email Archive” if they need to review it.

IV. Working group reports—none at this time.

V. Unfinished business—none reported at this time.

VI. New Business

A. Candidacy Master of Arts in Business

John Olson, representing the Graduate Council, explained that this degree was previously called an “automatic” master’s degree. When a person is qualified for doctoral candidacy, he/she can also apply for a master’s degree simply by filing the proper paperwork. Olson reported that the Graduate Council had unanimously approved the name change. The proposal was unanimously approved by the Faculty Senate at today’s meeting.

B. Change in Graduation Date of Record

Olson explained that the date recorded on the transcript and diploma for both Rice graduate and undergraduate students does not accurately reflect when they earned

their degrees. Currently, the transcript and diploma of a student who graduates in December have a January date of the following year (the date of the plenary meeting in which the faculty approved the degrees). Olson and Paula Sanders, Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, gave reasons why the change is desired for graduate students. Robin Forman, Dean of Undergraduates, cited one reason the change is also desired by undergraduate students: a student who graduates in December (or August) of one year (for example, December 2009), but whose transcript reads January of the next year (January 2010), is considered to be “Class of 2010.” The proposal was moved and seconded, with unanimous approval by the Senate, effective with the December 2009 graduates.

C. Minor (Departmental) in Anthropology

Windsor stated that while the Committee for the Undergraduate Curriculum (CUC) has the authority to approve departmental minors, he wished for their work to be recorded as officially endorsed by the Faculty Senate. The proposed minor in Anthropology, approved by the CUC, was endorsed by the Senate. Please use these links to view the [Departmental Minor in Anthropology proposal](#) and [letters of support](#).

D. Minor (Interdepartmental) in African Studies

The Faculty Senate must approve interdepartmental minors. Susan McIntosh, Chair of the CUC, stated that her committee found that there is substantial intellectual merit in the study of African culture at Rice, especially when one considers the work of *Rice 360*, the Institute for Global Health Technologies. McIntosh reviewed with the Senators a concern that the CUC raised in its review of this proposal: the limited number of faculty for some of the required courses. However, McIntosh stated that the Chair of Religious Studies is committed to providing support, as indicated in his letter which was sent to the Senate prior to today’s meeting. John Greiner, Chair of the CUC subcommittee which reviewed the proposal, provided additional comments in support of the minor. There was a motion to approve this minor, which was seconded, followed by a unanimous vote for approval. Please use this link to view the [Interdepartmental Minor in African Studies](#) and accompanying [support letters](#).

E. Biosciences curriculum restructuring proposal

McIntosh and Professor Ken Whitmire (Chemistry, Associate Dean of Natural Sciences) described the proposed restructuring of the Biosciences curriculum. Windsor also distributed a two-sided document which summarized the changes outlined in the proposal, which include:

- Some minor revisions will be made to the requirements for the existing BA in Biochemistry and Cell Biology (BCB), BS in BCB, and BS in Ecology and Environmental Biology (EEB).
- The proposal includes creation of a new BA in EEB.
- One program--BA in Biological Sciences-- will continue to be jointly administered by BCB and EEB.

- The BIOS code will be replaced it with a department-specific code (BIOC for BCB and EBIO for EEB).
- Oversight of the BCB and EEB degrees will be the responsibility of the respective departments.
- New minors are being created for each department (BCB, EEB).

In addition to McIntosh and Whitmire, Registrar David Tenney and Professor Evan Siemann (EEB) offered further clarification and support for the proposed changes. Windsor asked the Senate if voting on this proposal should be postponed for one month so that the entire faculty could discuss it. Siemann indicated that a vote today was preferable. In addition, Senator Jane Grande-Allen (Bioengineering) stated that she and other affected faculty members were contacted regarding these changes. The proposal was then moved and seconded, followed by unanimous approval from the Senate. Use this link to view the approved proposal: [Biosciences Curriculum Revision](#).

F. Possible new working groups and Senate initiatives

Windsor announced that Jim Coleman, Vice Provost for Research, had asked for Senate input regarding three issues: Conflict of Interest policy and form, Research Misconduct Policy, and a possible Data Retention Policy.

- Conflict of Interest Policy and form: The faculty was asked to sign a new form last year. When faculty expressed dislike of the form, the administration cancelled its use and said a new form would be designed with faculty input. Coleman explained that, in general, conflict of interest concerns the integrity of scholarship; avoiding the appearance that one's funding affects one's research findings.
- Research Misconduct Policy: the Rice policy from the year 2000 needs updating. The Department of Health and Human Services updated its policy in 2005, and Rice needs to change a few items in its policy in order to match it. In addition, Rice's current policy is not clear, and some faculty had indicated a desire to improve it.
- Data Retention Policy: The question is if faculty should be required to leave their data at Rice if they leave the university. Rice does not currently have such a policy, but many universities do, and Coleman cited the policy used at Stanford University.

Windsor stated that the Senate has three choices: 1) leave these issues to the administration only, 2) let the administration find faculty members who can provide faculty input, or 3) have the Senate form a working group. Windsor stated his preference was for the third option. Deborah Harter stated that she also preferred the third option because often the faculty is more supportive of such policies if they know that the Senate has been involved in their formation. It was stated that working groups do not have to be comprised of Senators only, and that faculty representatives need to be collected from various departments across campus. It was proposed that the Senate be the body to locate faculty members

(both internal and external to the Senate) for any working group which will work with the administration on these three issues. The proposal was moved and seconded, followed by unanimous approval.

VII. Executive Session Report

Windsor asked that the Senate move to Executive Session so that Don Morrison, Chair of the Faculty Merger Review Committee (FMRC), and President Leebron could speak with the Senate regarding the merger negotiations with Baylor College of Medicine (BCM).

Morrison gave a short report regarding the concluding efforts of the FMRC. The official statement which announced the end of Rice-BCM merger negotiations was issued January 12, 2010. Morrison thanked Sharon Mathews, Faculty Senate Assistant, for her support of the FMRC's work. Morrison also noted the dedicated work of the Rice administration during the merger process. He characterized these individuals, especially President Leebron, as providing strong, able leadership. The Senate gave President Leebron a standing ovation.

Harter, as former Speaker, also thanked President Leebron. Harter also thanked Morrison for taking leadership of the FMRC, a position that he successfully handled with poise and grace. The Senate gave Morrison a standing ovation.

Windsor thanked Morrison and the FMRC, and he also thanked Leebron. He asked the President to pass these compliments on to his senior staff. Windsor thanked the survey working group (Professors Randy Batsell, Steve Klineberg, Don Morrison, Bob Stein, and Randy Stevenson) who designed and analyzed the faculty opinion survey on the merger, as well as John Cornwell of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Windsor then yielded the floor to President Leebron. Leebron thanked Morrison and Harter for their complimentary remarks, and he thanked Harter for persuading Morrison to chair the FMRC. He noted that the FMRC had challenged the administration on various issues, which he said was their job. He said he was grateful to the Faculty Senate for its role, and he said the Senate has had great Speakers and Deputy Speakers, with whom the administration has been able to work closely and collaboratively. Leebron also said he was grateful for the kind words for his team, who are individuals who act solely for the interests of the institution, and especially the faculty and students.

President Leebron then detailed the chronology of the end of discussions with BCM which he asked the group to keep confidential. He expressed great respect for BCM, and he stressed that both entities feel that the relationship between Rice and BCM remains vitally important.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.