

Faculty Council Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2022
3:00-5:00 PM, via Zoom

Members in Attendance: Artemchik, Berg, Blackmond-Larnell, Brown, Cornelius, Dahari, Dentato, Devery, Dong, Dunderdale, Gawlinski, Gupta-Mukherjee, Haske, Heer, Holschen, Johnson, Jules, Moran, Nicholas, Ohsowski, O'Rourke, Pope, Rhodes, Shoenberger, Silva, Todd

Guests: Margaret Callahan (Provost) and Patricia Lee (University Senate)

Jules opens the meeting. Approval of January minutes is moved, seconded, and passed by acclamation.

Jules begins his report by discussing the University Senate. The Senate is undergoing a reorganization that will affect the work of the Faculty Council. Currently the Senate includes sixteen faculty members. The reorganization will have the Senate dealing only with university wide issues. There will be only seven faculty, as part of larger reduction in size. Faculty members on the Senate would be elected by campus rather than individual colleges or divisions of colleges. Jules says that this new arrangement will help the Council recruit faculty members willing to serve, and that there is no need for sixteen or eighteen faculty on the University Senate. Senate will continue to deal with matters that affect the entire university. One member asks what will happen to currently sitting Senators. Heer says that it is yet to be determined; their terms were staggered. This logistical question is still up for discussion.

Dean evaluations have been completed. Jules thanks the Service and Communication Committee. Evaluations were sent to provost early this term. The Council has been responsible for evaluation instrument. The Provost has had some discussion with Deans about the evaluations. This year, some of the deans questioned the results. Jules says that we need to think about the wisdom of having an external body conduct the surveys. He thinks we should explore having an outside company conduct them. Jules says the Council has been doing a lot, and that there are real limits on our time. In this prospective arrangement, the Council would still process information and present it to the Provost. The Provost suggests that small group work with her to identify a standardized instrument and which company to consult. She says this is not attempt to remove the Council, but rather is a move to standardization and efficient information collection. It will take some of workload off us, but not remove our involvement. The change should strengthen evaluation process. A member asks if Provost was going to consult with other Jesuit provosts. The Provost indicates that she has sent out a query, and will share with the Council. Sometimes, she asserts, the Council has been too generous in its summary of comments. A member asks for more specifics on the critique of instrument this year. Will the committee that worked on it at least be provided some feedback on these concerns? The Provost responds that some issues lie in the

way that we report the detailed comments; some deans want more detail about the numerical distribution of the responses. She has been sharing with the Council Chair, and the Chair of the Service and Communications Committee. The Provost thanks the Council, indicating that the review of deans is one of most important things we do. A member asks the Provost what we tell colleagues who have asked about where we are in the process. Callahan says that the deans have been asked for their responses by March 1, and the evaluations will be sent to faculty in units after that. She wants them to go out to the units at the same time. Deans have seen evaluations. Another member says she has heard from several faculty members, asking for sense of what deans' comments mean. Another member indicates support for the idea of turning to a professional organization, and that as untenured faculty member, they were hesitant to write strongly about the evaluations. The Provost clarifies that deans do not know who wrote particular comments. There is some richness in specific statements that could be effective in conveying to deans the substance of this feedback. She says deans also have strong feelings about this subject.

Jules moves to the subject of the presidential search. He refers to an email just sent from the committee chair to the campus community, indicating that 100 nominations were received. The committee will be interviewing candidates soon, and the July 1 target for new President remains viable. Jules is happy with the pool of candidates that he has seen.

A mask mandate is the next subject. The Council has weighed in on this subject to administrators. The consensus is against complete removal, but supports loosened guidelines that the university will be taking after spring break. Jules discusses the booster shot situation and wonders what happens to those who ignore emails about uploading their booster information. The Provost says that she is not sure of the timeline, but is following up. The Provost says that she advocated that faculty should be allowed to mandate masks in classrooms, given unvaccinated children and other vulnerable household members. Several Council members express agreement with this point. One member observes that they used university-provided language about what would happen if university changed policy, so it would be a problem if school did not allow them to have their own mandate in class. Another member observes that mask access in classroom would help if instructors stipulate wearing masks, and if the broader community moves to less masking.

Jules welcomes Patricia Lee from the Law School faculty and University Senate and changes the subject to the proposed revisions in the faculty handbook. Ian Cornelius, the Chair of the Handbook Committee takes the floor. Cornelius observes that it is clear at this point that there is not enough time left this semester to agree on all matters raised by the revision. The Provost has suggested an iterative process for revision. Cornelius agrees that it is a good idea to sort and classify proposals into those that can be easily done, will require some discussion, and those that are perhaps not viable at this time. Drawing up that list would put some faculty at ease, who worry that after a first round there might be less or no appetite for a first round. He says that he will focus on a few proposals that might benefit from discussion from this body. The first is a structural one with

implications for governance. The proposed revisions provide a greater chance for the university to state its commitment to shared governance. The second is the regularization of faculty ranks and titles, which would include conferring the title “Professor” on Arrupe and other full-time, non-tenure track faculty. Would have prefixes, such as “clinical” or “teaching” or suffixes like “of the practice.” The committee looked to models within the University of North Carolina system; aspects of this approach are also in place at other universities like Boston University.

The third point Cornelius emphasizes is that of a faculty grievance procedure. The burden of proof in such cases lies with the faculty member bringing the grievance. He points to Georgetown and Saint Louis University as models. The Fourth large, complex proposal is the process of termination for cause. The committee offers a procedure to weigh any university proposal to impose serious sanction in front of a faculty body. In such cases, the burden of proof lies with university. This is modeled after practices at a very large number of schools, including lots of Jesuit universities. This would bring Loyola into accord with practices endorsed by the AAUP and followed by many universities.

Other changes proposed include gender neutral language and a standardization of policies.

Cornelius then turns to the challenges to this process. The first big one is a compressed timeline for review and discussion. The second is coordination with a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) in the College of Arts and Sciences. The current CBA agreement runs through 2024-25 AY. Cornelius points the Council to a provision within the CBA dealing with this matter. There is a process that will have to be navigated, but this provision allows for an update to the handbook during the period in which the CBA is in effect. Cornelius then turns to Heer, who is an officer of the union represented in the CBA. Heer says that CBA has some tricky aspects, but that the union is interested in change of titles, and open to a memorandum of understanding that would allow for this.

The provost says that she agreed in last meeting with Handbook Committee to sort the proposals. She is working with the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs on that right now. Callahan anticipates that we should be able to move forward on some revisions. She was focusing on things we could move on this year. We could then sort the rest. Her sense, with the caveat that we have a new President coming, is that matters of due process and faculty titles are more complicated. The Provost was struck by list of Jesuit schools with such procedures, and wants to look at those.

Cornelius asks other members of committee if they have matters to add. One notes that the University Senate in midst of a reconstitution. Cornelius asks about timeline for receiving the sorted list described by the Provost. Callahan says that some matters will be reviewed and finalized before the end of the academic year, although final changes have to be ratified by the board.

Another member says that transparency around this road map will be very important. They point to the large numbers of faculty who have worked on this. Callahan responds that perhaps there could be a joint statement of how we will proceed.

The meeting then shifts to the presentation of reports from standing committees. The report from Faculty Affairs first takes up the question of the promotion and tenure process. The presenter commends the seriousness of the faculty on the University Rank and Tenure Committee. They suggest that the committee could be improved by diversification. The Provost indicates support for the general idea, if not to the specific suggestion of making associate professors eligible to serve on the committee. The committee is working with the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs on the matter

The second issue in the report from Faculty Affairs is the matter of annual evaluations. A Council member indicates that they are mentoring junior faculty, and emphasizes the importance of this process to relationship between individual faculty and deans and chairs. The committee has concerns that these evaluations are not being respected as a serious process in all corners of the university. It is noted that there are no formal bylaws for University Rank and Tenure Committee.

Faculty Affairs has also discussed the desirability of changing the language of “mid-probationary review” to something like “pre-tenure review.”

Academic Affairs begins its report. The committee continues to examine student evaluations of teaching, gathering information from across the university and from specific departments within CAS. Committee members are interested in having the Office of Institutional Effectiveness conduct a more professional study of biases in these evaluations. They are also drafting a resolution for the next council meeting about the use of these evaluations during continued pandemic conditions. Another topic the committee is discussing is how other universities count research mentorship, which in most units is currently uncredited.

One member says that they have been trying to find how each college uses evaluations; they find pretty extreme variations, with some units using annual evaluations for punitive reasons. But the baseline is that there is no uniformity. Another member adds to a discussion of the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). SAC has changed policy on when tests are to be submitted to them; there was no advance notice, but may be concerning to faculty since SAC can cancel exams if faculty do not comply. This member observes that communication with faculty to be going well. Thinks it is a resources issue, SAC seems overwhelmed. Another member underscores the comment that SAC is understaffed and somewhat chaotic. SAC has given some accommodations to law students that conflict with American Bar Association requirements.

Another member brings up the work of evaluating the core curriculum. They have been struck by the large number of courses being taught by part-time faculty. They think that it is definitely time to look at those numbers. In Modern Languages and Literatures, for example next Fall semester 43 courses will be taught by full time faculty and 65 by part-time faculty; of the 43 taught by full time instructors, only 12 will be taught by tenure-stream faculty members.

Another member brings up the question program directors and job descriptions for that work. The Provost says that there are written job responsibilities for chairs, and that schools do have different term lengths. Chairs should be evaluated annually by their deans, often with faculty input. Another member observes that the proposed revisions to handbook address this topic. A

different member underscores the points made about program directors and especially their compensation, observing that overload pay has been (they believe) frozen for twenty years. The Provost says that she needs to check accuracy of this, and is looking into it. She thinks overload pay has changed.

Next up is Service and Communications. The main item has been Council elections. There are fourteen divisions and twenty-four openings. Now we have enough nominees in thirteen divisions, and for twenty-three of the twenty-four openings. CAS social sciences is the exception; there is one opening. There has been an open slot there for two years. The committee chair points to the large amount of work needed to conduct elections but observes that it takes longer to explain the work than to do it. So although there good folks on the committee, they have done this individually, which works better.

The next report comes from the Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC). One of the Council representatives on the BAC summarizes the recent survey of faculty and staff conducted by the BAC. There is a relatively high levels of satisfaction with primary care coverage. Behavioral health care, in contrast, received very high dissatisfaction. Almost half of respondents said that they have lost providers. More faculty than staff are willing to accept higher out of pocket payments for better benefits. The survey also had findings on parental leave, and big differences between faculty and staff. In practice, some schools have made up for period at the height of the pandemic in which the university did not contribute to retirement.

Other results include Some questioning of Loyola is in the Jesuit, but not national, tuition exchange program. Results clearly indicate that the pandemic has taken a high toll on mental health and work productivity.

Generally, this member reports, the BAC is conducting a rapid pace of work on survey results and deliberating on them. The BAC has focused discussion on four priority areas, to present to HR and from there to university leadership: Insurance coverage, parental leave equity; tuition exchange program; and possibility of 403 B make-up committee. A subcommittee is looking at the strengths and weaknesses of Aetna as provider.

A Council member observes that the proposed revisions to the handbook include a provision that "Full-time faculty of all genders are eligible for one semester of paid parental leave following a birth, adoption, or placement of foster children."

Jules asks about the timing of any decision, and about possibly moving from Aetna. The BAC member responds that this is more difficult a process than one might think. There is a question of how companies would price plans. The BAC has focused on greater mental health coverage – data suggests other areas are not major concerns.

A member asks about information about the supplemental mental health program – do we know how much it is being used, and how satisfied faculty are with the quality of care? The BAC member responds that this mostly a stopgap, has been discussed on BAC. It was not meant to fix problem permanently.

A question about process and whether the head of HR is engaged in these discussions was raised. The BAC member says that they have asked for historical information, and have some information about why the insurance provider changed.

It is hard for them to say how engaged HR leadership is with the process. It is a little odd that faculty and staff actually leading the push for a close evaluation, especially since they haven't been through process of doing this before.

A motion to adjourn is made, seconded, and passed by acclamation.