

Faculty Senate Minutes

The Faculty Senate met on Monday, 11/3/03

Senators present for the meeting: Bruce Kelley, Meg Galligan, Robert Willgoos, Joyce Webb, Tom Patterson, Larry Daily, Liam Kennedy, Jason Best, David Wing, Sonya Evanisko, Rick Gibson, Dennis Woods, Doug Horner, Sylvia Shurbutt, Robin Good, Karen Pugsley, Kathy Reid

Senators not present: JW Thatcher, Kit Romano, Nicole Martin,

Guests: Hannah Geffert, Michael Day, Doug Cooper, JB Tuttle, Ruth Conley, Dan Starliper, Bob Brown

AGENDA

Approval of Minutes: Motion: *Approve minutes as distributed* (mShurbutt, sPugsley) *motion approved.*

Motion: *Suspend agenda to allow AFT representative to speak* (mGood, sShurbutt) *motion approved.*

Bob Brown, a union representative from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT hereafter), a division of the AFL-CIO, presented a case for faculty unionization. The AFT currently has 1.3 million members, including 180,000 in Higher Education. There are five divisions to the AFT: K-12 teachers, Higher Education teachers, Health Care Providers (primarily for teaching hospitals), Public Employees, and Classified Employees. In West Virginia there are about 5000 AFT members across these five divisions. In higher education, only Marshall has an active faculty AFT charter, with 127 members. Fairmont State and Concord have also approached the AFT about unionization. AFT has been representing higher education since 1918. To create a strong, effective local affiliate, 20-25% of the faculty would need to join. At that point, a charter would be issued, and training and organization would follow.

In the state of West Virginia, public employees have no collective bargaining rights. However, that has not stopped union action in other states. According to Brown, a union would:

- create better working conditions and salaries
- work for our interests in the state government
- provide staff support for the local chapter
- provide grievance support and representation.

At this point, Mr. Brown opened up the floor for questions and answers. The following is not a direct transcript, but a summary of the discussion.

Webb: Is legal support covered under dues?

Brown: Yes. Dues are \$375.00 annually, and cover the costs of legal defense in a grievance claim, and provide \$1 million of professional liability.

Horner: How is the AFT better/different from the Advisory Council of Faculty to the HEPC?

Shurbutt: The Council is an advisory board, and reports only to the Higher Education Policy Commission. As such, it is very different from the type of representation offered by the AFT.

Brown: In addition, the AFT can advocate in bargaining, or weigh in on state legislative issues.

Willgoos: If 25% of the faculty join, will the union help organize and fund the local chapter?

Brown: Yes.

Geffert: What specific improvements has the AFT brought to Marshall?

Brown: The chapter has only been in place for a year. During that time, they have been dealing primarily with grievances. They meet regularly with the president to discuss policy issues, and have paid for release time for someone to lobby the legislature full-time.

Shurbutt: Were the grievances filed by faculty or staff?

Brown: Its about 50/50.

Good: What future plans would the ATF have for a Shepherd chapter?

Brown: The goal is to have shared governance, to participate equally in the collegiate decision-making process. Any contract would be negotiated based on local conditions.

Good: What was the administrative response to the unionization of the Marshall faculty?

Brown: Cool at first, but they are coming around.

Shurbutt: Marshall seems to be the most politically active campus in West Virginia—has the AFT helped to educate them?

Brown: The AFT has higher ed conferences annually, and leaders from Marshall have been sent to these conferences.

Gibson: What percentage of the Marshal faculty are unionized?

Brown: There are 127 members, which is 15% of the faculty.

Warburton: What can the AFT do that a politically active senate couldn't do?

Brown: The senate is an arm of the institution. A union is a separate entity, and helps the faculty relate to administration on an equal footing.

Geffert: The senate represents the faculty as an advisory board. What kind of pressure can be brought to bear on the administration since we can't strike?

Brown: We don't advocate strikes, but just the fact that a union representative is there adds pressure. We strive to make the faculty separate, but equal, partners, with the administration.

Good: Outside of this state, what is happening?

Brown: Unions are on a roll. Graduate students at several universities have unionized, and Temple University is in the process of creating a charter. Unions are growing all around the country.

Horner: What would you say to those who think it's beneath their dignity to unionize—that this is just a blue collar issue?

Brown: White collar workers, such as airline pilots, doctors, nurses, and others, are the ones that are unionizing today, and that's where unions are growing. In addition, no one should be opposed to improving working conditions and wages.

Shurbutt: What position does the AFT take on adjuncts?

Brown: The union has organized adjuncts at several universities. In addition, they work with administration to eliminate eroding of full-time positions by hiring adjuncts in their place.

Gibson: How do you propose to enhance wages, given the state's financial condition?

Brown: A strong legislative program to stop cuts is needed. The reason K-12 Education funds weren't cut was because they were unionized.

Brown ended the Q&A session at this point, and indicated a willingness to come back as we directed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Admissions & Credits (Warburton) The committee has met a number of times, and considered 23 petitions. This committee was also charged to review the computer literacy requirement. The following report was given:

Review of
Computer Literacy Requirement
by
Admissions & Credits Committee

The Computer Literacy Requirement, as described in the current Shepherd College Catalog (2003-2005), was developed by the General Studies Committee. Its development involved extensive faculty input prior to its proposal to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee for passage.

After review of the Shepherd College Constitution and the By-Laws of the Faculty Senate, the Admissions and Credits Committee has decided by that it has no purview with respect to the creation of the Computer Literacy Graduation Requirement, as:

1. The Admissions & Credits Committee does not make decisions with respect to creation of curriculum.
2. The General Studies Committee was created in 1998 by the Faculty Senate as a sub-committee of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee and not of the Admissions & Credits Committee.
3. The Computer Literacy Requirement was unanimously passed by the Curriculum & Instruction Committee and, as per the Constitution of Shepherd College, it was forwarded directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The requirement did not have to be brought to the Senate for a vote. However, the chair of Curriculum & Instruction at the time could have brought it to the attention of the Senate during "Committee Reports."

It is the view of the Admissions & Credits Committee that the Computer Literacy Requirement was placed into the catalog in a correct fashion.

The chair of the committee also noted that computer literacy does not have to be certified by the advisor if he or she feels uncomfortable doing so—they may also be certified by taking ENG 101 or one of the library courses.

- b) Curriculum & Instruction (Shurbutt) No report.
- c) Affirmative Action (Galligan) No report, this committee has not met. There was a representative of the committee at the multicultural student forum last week.
- d) By-laws (Shurbutt) Motion: *Send bylaws to committee for review and revision, and present these changes at a future senate meeting* (mPugsley, sHorner) motion approved.
- e) Honors Board (Daily) This committee met October 24, and reviewed drafts of revised honors handbook which will go to the students. They have also opened up elections for a first year student to join the honors board.
- f) Ethics (Willgoos) No issues have been brought before the committee.
- g) Library (Evanisko) No report.
- i) Professional Development, Faculty Salary and Welfare (Horner)

Motion: *Eliminate the 1-year delay for granting emeritus status* (mHorner, sWillgoos)

Discussion: There was some confusion as to why the 1-year delay was there in the first place. Was it there to soften the blow if the status was not granted? Woods wondered if norms were available for the selection criterion for this position.

Motion: *Suspend vote on this issue until more information is gathered by the PDFS&W committee* (mPugsley, sShurbutt) *motion approved.*

This committee has also examined the designation of “Honorary Associate Professors” designation. They are in favor of this distinction, however, they felt that

- 1) the title lacks dignity, and wished to get rid of the term “honorary”,
- 2) the designation should be granted by each school’s Promotion and Tenure committee.

Motion: *Move senate approval of the designation “Honorary Associate Professor”, with the changes noted above* (mHorner, sKelley)

Discussion: Shurbutt indicated that English had been against this title, and thought that promotion titles should truly be earned. There was a feeling that if the professor couldn’t get promoted after being at Shepherd for 30 years, then why should such a person be granted the title after retirement? Several other senators agreed, and indicated that there was a definite difference between earning a promotion in rank and being handed one at retirement. There was also question as to why just the associate rank was being used, and if associate professors might, on retirement, receive an “Honorary Full Professor” advancement. Horner indicated that the honorary title might be used to reward those who had served faithfully at Shepherd, but who might not have ever received their terminal degree, making them ineligible for advancement in rank. Several departments had not considered this aspect of it, and senators wished to take the issue back to their constituents.

Motion: *Postpone vote on this issue until the first senate meeting in December, 2003* (mDailey, sPugsley) *motion approved.*

The president of the senate then asked the committee to review the revised inclement weather policy, reproduced as follows:

18. Attendance and Absence (page 89 of the Faculty Handbook)

A. Punctuality

Promptness in being on the job at the specified time and for completing the workweek is expected. If for any reason an employee cannot report to work on schedule or an employee will be absent from work, it is the employee’s responsibility to notify the supervisor. A faculty member should place on the course syllabus either a telephone

number or an e-mail address as this will allow students to be given notice via voice mail, on the college telephone system, or home telephone, or e-mail, if a faculty member will not be able to attend a scheduled class.

II. B. 5 Rescheduling of Final Examinations Due to Inclement Weather

- a. Should inclement weather occur during the Final Examination period Shepherd College will, if at all possible, remain open and examinations will be given in conformance with the official final examination schedule as posted by the College Registrar.
- b. If the College remains open and:
 - i. If a faculty member cannot be present to administer a final examination, that faculty member shall authorize a supervisor to administer one or more final examinations for which the faculty member cannot be present.
 - ii. Due to inclement weather, if a student cannot take a final examination as scheduled, the student shall receive an incomplete (I grade) for the course.
 - iii. Within two weeks of the beginning of classes for the semester following, a student who missed a final examination due to inclement weather shall contact the instructor of the class, or classes, to arrange for a make-up final examination.
 - iv. If a faculty member does not conform to provision i above, it is the faculty member's responsibility to make alternate arrangements for the students to take the final examination.
- a. Due to inclement weather should the College be closed during one or more days of the official Final Examination Schedule, and:
 - i. If the College closes for one or more days during this period, the exam schedule for those days shall be the same for the next examination dates.
 - ii. If the College closes for one day, Saturday will be the make-up examination date; all grades from faculty will be due and posted by 9:00 am Monday morning.
 - iii. If the College closes for two days, the examinations shall be given on Saturday, and Monday of the following week— TR exams will be administered on Saturday; MWF exams will be administered on Monday; all grades from faculty will be due and posted by 9:00 am Tuesday morning..
 - iv. Should a faculty member be unavailable to administer a final examination during this "make-up" day or days, refer to b.i.,iv above.

j) Research Ethics (Best) The committee has been meeting via e-mail, and is considering one request, and is expecting two others.

k) Scholarship & Awards (Gibson) No report.

l) Washington Gateway.(Pugsley) No report.

Senate reports from representatives to

TOC (Pugsley) Meeting this Friday. One concern that has been brought to the committee is the fact that not all faculty have budget lines for individual computers. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

Assessment (Kelley) Assessment reports from all departments were due today. Assessment plans for next year are due April first. The committee will be reviewing the reports this coming month, and departments should get results back by the end of the semester. The committee is also in the process of evaluating the college's course evaluations.

Old business

Study of Unionization of Shepherd College Faculty

Although the union representative had offered to meet with faculty this coming Monday, the senate thought that was moving to fast. We will offer a representative back if we determine that there is sufficient interest in this to move forward. Senator Good asked if we were interested in exploring other unions (specifically the Teamsters) besides the AFT.

Motion: *Charge Senator Good to explore how active the Teamsters are in setting up unions with Higher Education (mKelley, sWarburton) motion approved.*

Motion: *Senate will take information from today's presentation back to the departments for discussion (mShurbutt, sWillgoos). Motion approved.*

New Business:

Voting Rights of Alternate Senate Members.

The current bylaws prohibit substitutes from voting in senate matters, although they may be counted for quorum. This has caused some contention with various departments. According to Robert's Rules, the way around this is to elect "Alternate Senators", who would then have voting rights.

Motion: *Send this issue to bylaws committee, and to specifically modify the bylaws to allow departments to choose alternate senators with voting rights (mPugsley, sWillgoos) motion approved.*

Future Business:

None.

Motion: *to adjourn* (mWillgoos, sReid) *motion approved*.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40pm

BCK, secretary.