

Minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting

January 18, 2006

The regular meeting of the 2005-2006 Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by President Matt Esposito. The following senators were present for all or part of the meeting. Alexander, Bartschat, Cairns, Courard-Hauri, Dore, Esposito, Freeman-Miller, Gilbert, Gillespie, Larson, Lyons, Martin, Morrow, Nelson, Pandit, Reed, Reincke, Sanders, Simpson, Tice, Wade
Absent: None

The November 2005 minutes were accepted. (The December 2005 meeting was cancelled)

President Maxwell's Report

-- Noting the resignation of David Blank, Athletic Director, leaving later this semester, President Maxwell gave the group an update on the status of that position. A search committee is being formed of which Art Sanders will be the chair. A national search group will be used during the process.

Provost Troyer's Report

-- Provost Troyer announced that for the Fall 2005 semester, nine students fell under the 2.0 Non-Participation Policy. Of which, three are non-athletes. This is the lowest number of individuals impacted by the policy in one semester.

-- The Board of Trustees Academic Affairs luncheon will be held on Friday, January 20th and will feature an International theme. This type of Board, faculty & student event has been very well received and the Provost looks forward to presentation.

-- The Dean's Council met with the Vice-President of Admission and Financial Aid, Tom Delahunt and examined various Admission strategies especially those which involve faculty. Some changes will be soon implemented on how the faculty time is spent recruiting new students.

Senator Bartschat thanked Provost Troyer for working on Split Sabbatical Policy. The effort is appreciated.

President Esposito's Report

-- Faculty volunteers are needed for the National Alumni Scholarship events which will be held on two Saturdays in February.

--Faculty Representative to the Board reports will be circulated to the Senate after the January Board of Trustees meetings.

Senator Reincke noted that the January 2006 Board of Trustees meetings will be held on campus and asked if this is a result of the questions which were raised concerning the site of the January 2005 meetings. President Maxwell indicated yes.

Old Business: none presented

New Business:

Senator Martin moved and Sanders seconded motion **06-06:**

*review and approve revisions to the Mission Explication document
suggested by the Criterion 3 and 4 Committees*

Dean John Burney was asked to address the body concerning the motion's content. He indicated that the revisions brought forward today were based on suggestions made by the Senate members. Without objection an omitted word was included in statement I.B.3. (*often*) and editing in statement II.C.2.

Current: I.B. 3. Understand that the truth is often best discovered through discourse and the reasoned analysis of one another's ideas.

Revision: *Understand that learning is often best accomplished through discourse and the reasoned analysis of one another's ideas.*

Current: II. A. Articulate a reasoned vision of their own values and plan for life-long development.

Revision: *Articulate a reasoned vision of their own values and an understanding of the value of life-long learning.*

Current: II. C. 2. Push the boundaries of current knowledge and current practice in their fields.

Revision: *Are able to critique existing knowledge in their field and to produce ~~are capable~~ ~~of producing~~ new knowledge.*

The motion passed as edited on a voice vote.

Senator Sanders moved and Reincke seconded motion **06-07**:

Be it resolved, the Faculty Senate recommends that Drake University end the practice of presenting honorary degrees at commencement.

Senator Sanders stated that for several years the Senate only talks about Honorary Degrees when there were names brought forward for consideration. This made it difficult to have a discussion of the concept, practice and procedures when individual names were also involved. He wanted to present the motion as a way to talk about the topic of honoring individuals. Senator Gilbert asked if a specific year should be added to the motion, such as in the phrase "effective with the 2006/2007 year".

Senator Sanders stated that he has reviewed the rules and policies of the Faculty Senate and notes that the Senate does not have the power to actually end the practice and therefore did not feel that a definite academic year needed to be added to the motion.

Senator Courard-Hauri asked if there had been student input received on this motion yet. The reply was not yet. Senator Courard-Hauri indicated that he was not in favor of the motion without receiving any student comments.

Senator Reincke stated that she felt there was a lack of specific criteria which lead to a lack of integrity in the current system and further wondered why a degree was given as opposed to simply having a commencement speaker. Senator Tice stated that he has wondered about the value of the degree and how does this practice fulfill the University's mission. Senator Alexander also wondered how the practice benefits Drake. Senator Martin suggested that the process is flawed and the criteria may not really be clear or very strong.

President Maxwell offered that he would speak for or against the motion but presented two pieces of information or points of interest. First, at other institutions when students are asked for suggestions, the speakers on the list are current popular names who require large fees to speak, as it is their living. Secondly, that while the current criteria may seem haphazard, the other prevalent option in the country is

to honor close personal friends of the President. He continued by stating that he sees some value in asking students about the practice and the principles behind it.

Senator Pandit asked if the honorary degree is given instead of a speaker's fee or does the individual receive both. The reply was that degree recipients are not compensated.

Senator Freeman-Miller stated that she sees this practice as a small investment for the goodwill this practice brings to the university and yet saw value in reviewing the selection criteria. Senator Simpson hoped that the parents and students would not be forgotten in the discussion as the students are what graduation is all about. She stated that she was struck by the past when we invite persons who have been seen as valued, honorary Drake individuals but then they are not more included in the student's graduation experience.

Senator Gilbert indicated he was in favor of selecting only one per year. Several Senators indicated that the selection criteria and student opinion on this topic were important to them. President Maxwell reminded the body that the Board of Trustees does take seriously the concerns and actions of the Faculty Senate, but that it is the Board of Trustees which awards degrees.

With a motion and vote, the motion was tabled.

Senator Reed stated that she was not interested in setting up a new committee for this topic, but that there are existing groups which may be able to further discuss these concerns and present to the Senate at a later date. She referenced the President's Committee on Commencement and the Honorary Degree Committee. President Esposito indicated he would work with the Senate Executive Committee to gather comments. President Maxwell offered that he would speak to the Alumni Department and perhaps comments can be gathered concerning commencement and honorary degrees from the recent graduates.

Senator Wade, current chair of the Honorary Degree Committee, asked the body for their opinion about this year's solicitation of nominees for this year. The group believed that the current process should go forward as scheduled.

The body adjourned at 4:35 p.m. Secretary, Nancy Geiger