

9-22-2008

## University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, September 22, 2008

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## **SUMMARY OF FACULTY SENATE MEETING**

**9/22/08**

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Wurtz called the meeting to order at 3:20 P.M.

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Motion to approve the minutes of the 9/08/08 meeting by Senator O'Kane; second by Senator Neuhaus. Motion passed with one abstention.

### **CALL FOR PRESS IDENTIFICATION**

No press present.

### **COMMENTS FROM FACULTY CHAIR, JESSE SWAN**

Faculty Chair Swan announced that the voting and non-voting faculty lists have been posted on the UNI Faculty Senate website under "Documents." Senators can contact him if they would like a copy.

### **COMMENTS FROM CHAIR, SUSAN WURTZ**

Chair Wurtz had no comments.

### **CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR ITEMS FOR DOCKETING**

970 Emeritus Status request, G. Scott Cawelti, Department of English Language and Literature, effective 6/08

Motion to docket in regular order as item #875 by Senator Soneson; second by Senator Mvuyekure. Motion passed.

971 Emeritus Status request, Charles D. Johnson, Department of Industrial Technology, effective 6/08

Motion to docket in regular order as item #876 by Senator East; second by Senator Neuhaus. Motion passed.

972 Emeritus Status request, Dean Kruckeberg, Department of Communication Studies, effective 6/08

Motion to docket in regular order as item #877 by Senator Neuhaus; second by Senator East. Motion passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Informational Update, Higher Learning Commission

Associate Provost Kopper provided a power point presentation for the Senate, noting that every ten years UNI goes through a comprehensive evaluation and that UNI has just launched their latest reaccreditation effort. She noted that the last comprehensive evaluation was in 2001 and UNI did not pass with a "clean bill of health" at that time. The site visitors were concerned with our general education program, the structure and role of the oversight body, and the lack of assessments related to our general education program, and we were required to do a progress report, which was submitted in 2004. The next site visitors will most likely be on campus in February 2011, which is not that far off given the large task ahead of us. She plans to talk about this reaccreditation process, inviting faculty, staff and students to participate because they want this to be a very open, transparent process involving everyone as they are committed to making this important and meaningful, and something that will move our institution forward.

Associate Provost Kopper also discussed the Foundation of Excellence (FOE) project, a joint project by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Policies Center that we're participating in, which is also being launched this semester.

Associate Provost Kopper reviewed the new criteria for accreditation as well as accreditation activities for this academic year and the self-study general timeline.

Associate Provost Kopper noted that the reaccreditation process is the "big umbrella" and that the HLC offers a joint project that will allow us to customize our self-study by participating in the FOE program. The FOE project is a self-study as well, which looks at the first year, the basis for all of our undergraduate programs. These are connected, falling under the reaccreditation umbrella.

Associate Provost Kopper answered questions from the Senate and a lengthy discussion followed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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### **DRAFT FOR SENATOR'S REVIEW**

## **MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MEETING 9/22/08 1651**

**PRESENT:** Megan Balong, Phil East, Jeffrey Funderburk, Mary Guenther, Deirdre Heistad, Bev Kopper, Julie Lowell, David Marchesani, Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure, Chris Neuhaus, Steve O'Kane, Jerry Soneson, Jesse Swan, Susan Wurtz

Jim McCullagh was attending for Katherine Van Wormer.

**Absent:** Gregory Bruess, James Lubker, Phil Patton, Donna Schumacher-Douglas, Jerry Smith, Michele Yehieli

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#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Informational Update, Higher Learning Commission

Associate Provost Kopper thanked the Senate for the opportunity to have a discussion about this and provided a power point presentation. She noted that every ten years UNI goes through a comprehensive evaluation and UNI has just launched their newest reaccreditation effort. The hope is that this critical self-analysis that will lead to quality improvement. One of the things that the committee is committed to during this evaluation is to have it be a meaningful process. It really does pave the way for us to look at our future, to look at where we want to go and to do some critical self-analysis.

Associate Provost Kopper provided the Senate with a bit of history on the process, noting that the last visit was in 2001 with site visitors on campus. We did not pass with a "clean bill of health" at that time and were required to do a progress report, which was submitted in 2004. The site visitors were mainly concerned with our general education program, the structure and role of the oversight body, and the lack of assessments related to our general education program.

Associate Provost Kopper stated that prior to today's meeting senators received timelines for the process. The next site visitors will most likely be on campus in February 2011. While that seems like a long way away she's glad that we have that much time looking at the size of the task we have to do. Accreditation activities for 2008-2009 were also provided which show the main activities that UNI will be conducting this year. Her plan is to go out and to talk about reaccreditation, inviting faculty, staff and students to participate. A invitation has gone out to all faculty, staff and students because the committee really wants this to be a very open, transparent process involving everyone that they possibly can because they are committed to making this important and meaningful, and something that will move our institution forward. All subcommittees will also begin this semester to collect data, interviewing people and developing draft reports.

Associate Provost Kopper also discussed the Foundation of Excellence (FOE) project, a joint project by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Policy Center on the First Year of College that we're participating in as part of our reaccreditation effort. Faculty will soon be receiving an invitation to a launch meeting on October 7. There will be staff and faculty surveys that will go out in October and she urged everyone to take the time to fill them out. In November there will be a student survey, which is also part of the data gathering. In the spring all that information will be pulled together with draft reports being refined over the summer with an action plan related to the FOE finalized. Next year the FOE action plan will be initiated and draft reports will be published so everyone can see them, have input and feedback.

Associate Provost Kopper noted the HLC Steering Committee, whose members are Karen Agee, Jon Buse, April Chatham-Carpenter, Barbara Cutter, Jan Hanish, Al Hays, Shashi Kaparthi, Bev Kopper, Mike Licari, Kate Martin, Siobahn Morgan, Inez Murtha, Jean Neibauer, James O'Connor, Phil Patton, Patrick Pease, Shirley Uehle, Bartholomew Upah, Donna Vinton, and Barry Wilson.

She also noted the FOE Steering Committee, whose members are co-chairs of the FOE dimensions: Philosophy: April Chatham-Carpenter and Jon Buse, Organization: Lyn Countryman and Lyn Redington, Learning: David Grant and Jean Neibauer, Faculty: Kim MacLin and David Schmid, Transitions: Lex Smith and Kristin Woods, All Students: Rick Vanderwall and Kristi Marchesani, Diversity: Susan Hill and Melissa Payne, Roles and Purposes: Alan Asher and Lisa Kratz, and Improvement: Gretta Berghammer and Bob Frederick. She urged faculty to thank them for all their hard work and noted that it's a great group to work with.

The HLC, our accrediting body, Associate Provost Kopper noted, offers a joint project with the Policies Center in the first year of college. The goal is that as you go through your reaccreditation you can apply for a customized self-study, which UNI has done and which has been accepted. Part of that customized self-study allows us to participate in the program called the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year. In hearing from so many people across campus, people doing wonderful things with our first year students the committee thought this would be a good idea. This would be a way to customize our self-study to really make it meaningful and to look at what we're doing as the foundation for all of our programs.

Criteria for the reaccreditation are included on one of the handouts that were provided to senators as well as information on the FOE. There are a variety of Foundational Dimensions related to learning, faculty, students, diversity, organization, and improvement with the idea being that this will be the focus of our reaccreditation effort.

Associate Provost Kopper played a clip from Dr. John Gardner, Executive Director of Foundations of Excellence. He invited viewers to read further on the site about the FOE process, which is a comprehensive guided self-study and improvement process that will enhance the institutions ability to realize it's goals for new student learning, success, and retention. He noted that the policy center is a non-profit, higher education center located in North Carolina, founded in 1999 and that their work is made possible by the generous support of four major foundations and over 300 participating campuses. Their mission is nothing less than to improve the foundation of the entire undergraduate experience.

What we are doing, Associate Provost Kopper stated, is participating in this as a way to customize our reaccreditation

process. We will be addressing the issues related to the FOE as well as addressing the new criteria.

Criteria as well as the dimensions, and the co-chairs for the various chapters are also included in the handouts. In going through this process, Associate Provost Kopper commented, they are trying to look at ways to make it as meaningful as possible. They're using an electronic data organizational system called "SharePoint" to catalog all the variety of information collected. They thought this would be helpful so that in the future when someone needs to access any portion of this information for something such as a program review, it will be available. Many, many individuals are involved in this process.

Senator Soneson asked for clarification about the process of self-study. Are we involved in two self-studies, UNI's and then the Foundations First Year self study, or are we only talking about the Foundations?

Associate Provost Kopper replied that we're only talking about reaccreditation, in the sense that that is the "big umbrella." In looking at launching UNI's reaccreditation and thinking about making this a meaningful process involving faculty, staff, and students, they asked how could we best go about doing this? They discovered that the HLC, our accreditor, offers this joint project, which allows us to customize our self-study by participating in the FOE program. We've opted to do that, and as part of the big self-study we'll be looking at the normal criteria for a reaccreditation, the five criteria listed on the handout. In addition to that, we will also weave into the process all the information we've gathered through our FOE project, which is in itself also a self-study, focusing only on the first year. The whole self-study effort will address a variety of programs. The focus will be on FOE, which looks at the first year as the basis for all of our undergraduate programs. While somewhat confusing, they are intimately connected, all falling under the reaccreditation umbrella.

Senator Soneson responded that there's going to be more confusion, and wondered if the focus will be on FOE, then checking on other programs as part of the same process? It probably won't include the athletic program, majors, those sorts of things, and how are they going to be included?

Associate Provost Kopper replied that all of that would be included but noted that the FOE really focuses on the first year programs. However, the five criteria are separate and include



everything. Reaccreditation looks at the entire university, all divisions, all departments and that is the "big umbrella", with special attention to the first year under that.

Senator Funderburk questioned the focus on the first year, as he doesn't see that there is a commonality in the first year.

Associate Provost Kopper replied that FOE is an aspirational program, what do we want to have for our first year students, whether right out of high school or transfer students? The first step is a current practices inventory, what are we doing, how are we doing it. This is a really intentional process. There are people all across campus doing really wonderful things with our first year students but sometimes they're not really connected. This is designed to help us be intentional about what we're doing, what we want to do, and to then develop an action plan.

In response to Senator McCullagh's comment, Associate Provost Kopper noted that it is left up to the institution to define "first year student". As UNI has many transfer students we may want to expand our definition to those students beyond the first year of incoming high school students.

Senator Lowell noted that many faculty worry about the quality of the transfer students and this might be a way to find out what's going on in the community colleges for students that ultimately transfer. She believes that it is a serious problem and it's becoming easier for students to go to a two-year institution and then they come to UNI unprepared.

Associate Provost Kopper stated that her hope is that once all this data is collected they will be able to disaggregate the data to examine the experience of transfer students as well.

Senator Neuhaus asked whether the FOE is expandable to the transfer population?

Associate Provost Kopper responded that she believes it is and the Policy Center where this is housed is really looking at the entire undergraduate process. They do acknowledge universities need to really look at their populations. With both faculty and student surveys we can tailor them as we feel necessary to get at some of the information we're interested in.

Senator East suggested that the committee be careful about what data is collected, specifically going further as to which

community college or high school. Otherwise we'd never have access to that data, whereas if it's been collected and stored you can do wonderful things with it such a database.

Associate Provost Kopper continued, noting that part of the constraint they're under is that it's not "our" survey. We can add items but we can't change it.

Senator East asked if this has to be done anonymously? If so, then you won't be able to connect it to anything, but if not you can collect that data through some other mechanism and just associate it with students. A lot of thought needs to go into what data you're going to collect and how you're going to organize it so you can use it fluently later on.

Associate Provost Kopper noted, in response to a question, that there is a steering committee of the chairs and co-chair of the FOE Dimensions. April Chatham-Carpenter and Jon Buse are serving as co-chairs of this particular effort. There is staff support available out of the policy center and a data survey specialist to provide institutional support.

Senator Soneson asked about the prioritization process, the things that will be done this year in terms of self-study and the accreditation process, is that completely separate or is this also a part of the self-study?

Associate Provost Kopper responded that Interim Provost Lubker launched that separately from the reaccreditation effort and the FOE. That is a separate process but if you look at it in terms of evaluating courses or curriculum improvement, or what we do with our academic program reviews or curriculum reviews - this could be considered a part of our continuous improvement. However, the prioritization process is separate from this whole reaccreditation process.

Senator Neuhaus suggested that if someone involved in the process could create a visual diagram of how all these things are going on at the same time and how they are inter-related, it would help understand what all is going on. While the Senate has been kept somewhat informed, all this going on may mystify their colleagues and making it clear for them would help in their understanding.

Associate Provost Kopper commented that her vision of all this is kind of a "big umbrella" because reaccreditation is the umbrella that's university-wide cutting across all divisions and

departments. In looking at launching that, they took advantage of the opportunity to do this specialized FOE self-study, which was actually launched last spring. This fall Interim Provost Lubker launched the prioritization assessment.

Associate Provost Kopper noted that the HLC initiated these criteria in January 2005, and they are different from the criteria used in our previous self-study. Ten years ago when UNI had their reaccreditation visit it was a time when everyone thought they'd be accredited. Times have changed. In trying to contact our HLC liaison recently, she was told he's been very busy in the process of not accrediting two institutions this fall. It's a real different ball game now and it's very high stakes. The new criteria centers around Mission and Integrity, and there have been some questions as to what the new criteria really mean for faculty and the academic side.

What this is essentially looking at is, do we operate with integrity, do we live our mission? Who are we, what do we say we do, do all of our structures and policies follow-up with that? The visiting team will be looking for evidence that we all understand and support our mission, our mission documents clear, and do we live our mission. They will also be looking at our Strategic Plan, which runs through 2009. The Board of Regents (BOR) has launched their Strategic Planning with the idea that will be done in April 2009. President Allen has indicated that we will soon begin our discussions, at least for our vision and mission. We can't really discuss our Strategic Plan until the BOR has finished theirs.

Recognizing diversity is one of values that is embraced by the HLC. Through this process "Organizations are urged to evaluate how well they address issues of diversity." The HLC leaves it up to the institution to decide how we define diversity and our diversity programs but do indicate that it is important and will ask how it's being addressed.

Senator East asked if diversity means racial diversity, gender diversity?

Associate Provost Kopper replied that she believed it means all of the above including sexual orientation, etc. The HLC wants the institutions to have those discussions.

Senator East continued, noting that one thing that tends to be overlooked is diversity of opinion, and how accepting the institution is of that. That's one aspect of diversity that

typically gets ignored as well as within a department, diversity of approaches to things. To him, that's as or more important than diversity of gender or race because it's tied up in there and if you get that kind of diversity you probably get the other kind of diversity.

Associate Provost Kopper noted that preparing for the future is another of the criteria. This really looks at our resources and how we budget our planning. This looks at the idea of continuous improvement, are we evaluating and assessing what we do and do we do that on a constant basis? If we collect data, do we use that data to make decisions? These are the kinds of things that come under this criterion.

The criterion of student learning and effective teaching are a large component. Do we provide evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness? This has an impact on the Academic Affairs Division. Goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible. It talks about having goals for all undergraduate, graduate, and post-baccalaureate programs, the assessment of student learning at the course, program and institutional levels, there are multiple direct and indirect measures, and the results are available to appropriate constituencies including students. This is where SOAs comes in and is very clear. More emphasis on SOAs is one of the bigger changes in reaccreditation the last ten years, as well as from the Iowa BOR.

Focus is on Learning, continued Associate Provost Kopper, "assessment of student academic achievement is fundamental for all organizations that place student learning at the center of their educational endeavors." We certainly do that here at UNI and this will be an area of scrutiny.

Acquisition, Discovery and Application of Knowledge is another criterion, noted Associate Provost Kopper. "The organization promotes a life of learning for faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility." Again, this is tying in with our mission. In terms of general education, the HLC isn't prescriptive about how we should do that but that whatever it is that we do, it must be valued and owned, and certainly assess it, and should clear and publicly articulate the purposes of our Liberal Arts Core, the contend, and the intended learning outcomes. This was the area where we were required to provide a progress report during our last visit.

Associate Provost Kopper stated that Engagement and Service as called for by our mission is the last criterion. In our mission, we talk about our service to the community and the state. Are we being responsive and analyzing our capacity? This will take more emphasis with our recent Carnegie classification related to community engagement and will also have an added emphasis.

Associate Provost Kopper recapped the HLC's new Criteria for Accreditation, noting that there are five new criteria, 21 core components, and several examples of evidence, all areas that cut across the entire university in terms of what we will be looking at. To try to provide as much information as possible and be as open as possible, a website has been developed, [www.uni.edu/accreditation](http://www.uni.edu/accreditation), which lists the committee members who you can email. It also lists the committee's agendas, minutes, and examples of self-studies. Drafts of reports will be posted in an attempt to get everybody's input and feedback. They are trying to be as open and transparent as possible and would love to have everybody's input.

Associate Provost Kopper quoted Jim Collins from his book "Good to Great," noting that she thinks about this when thinking about the reaccreditation process, that this is probably what we're doing. "When you turn over rocks and look at all the squiggly things underneath, you can either put the rock down, or you can say, "My job is to turn over rocks and look at the squiggly things," even if what you see can scare the hell out of you." Our job in reaccreditation is to turn over all those rocks and look at what's underneath. It may scare the hell out of us but that's part of the process, and part of the process of making it truly meaningful and truly a process where it's going to mean something. That is certainly our commitment, to have this be something that we can learn from and help move the institution forward.

In closing Associate Provost Kopper noted that senators received another handout about what faculty can do to help the Steering Committee. All committee members are listed on the website. She urged faculty to thank everyone involved in the process for all their hard work, noting that they're doing great work. She also urged faculty, that if they're asked for information or a report by a committee member to please help them out as it's a huge job. She also asked faculty with websites to please check them and to make sure they're up to date. In addition she asked the senate to take the opportunity to fill people in as to what

is being done, highlighting our commitment to making this a real meaningful process. If anyone is interested in joining them, they're welcomed. SOAs is a huge job, and is very important as is using that data to make decisions and program improvements. She will be updating all the college senates with this information. If there are other groups that are interested she will arrange a time to talk with them, as she'd like to have everyone involved.

Chair Wurtz thanked Associate Provost Kopper for her effort in informing us as to what is going on.

Senator Soneson commented that he understands that committee members for the prioritization process has been chosen, and asked who those committee members are.

Associate Provost Kopper responded that that is a separate process and doesn't know what the Provost's plans are for that. She will ask Interim Provost Lubker to make those names known. Discussion followed with Senator Soneson noting that continual updates would be very helpful to faculty.

Senator East who serves on that committee noted that they have only met a couple of times and are trying to get a sense of what their goal is and how to approach it.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Senator East to adjourn; second by Senator Neuhaus.  
Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dena Snowden  
Faculty Senate Secretary