

11-25-1996

University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, November 25, 1996

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FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Monday, November 25, 1996
1512

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Gilpin/Cooper moved/seconded to approve the minutes of November 11, 1996, as distributed. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Call for press identification. No members of the press were present.
2. Comments from Chair Haack.
 - **Herbicide Policy:** The request to meet with the Cabinet to discuss the herbicide policy was rejected by President Koob because it involved the safety of the work environment. The safety of the work environment is an issue covered under collective bargaining. The appropriate group to represent the faculty on this issue is United Faculty.
 - **Board of Regents Meeting:** A copy of the Fall Enrollment Report - Part II from the Board Office to the Board of Regents was distributed. The report contains enrollment projections through the year 2006 and the assumptions upon which these projections were made. A copy of the Annual Report on Student Retention and Graduation Rates from the Board Office to the Board of Regents was distributed. Portions of the report had been published in newspapers. In some cases, newspaper reports had contained errors. A Governance Report on Technology Transfer and a report on the continuing process of Strategic Planning for Distance Education was presented to the Board. Haack will make copies of these reports available to any Senators who so wish.
3. Comments from Provost Marlin: The Provost introduced Steve Moon, Acting Associate Vice President for Information Technology, who summarized the rationale and status of the new telephone system. The current telephone system cannot keep up with demand. It is old and repair parts are no longer available. It would be desirable to have an integrated voice, data, and video service but this is too costly. A new telephone system is needed immediately. The new system will provide digital service to faculty and staff but analog will be retained in the dormitories to support student accessories. Faculty and staff will receive new handsets and will be provided a voice mail box. During questions, Moon stated that the cost of basic service should not increase but there would be charges for additional services. Each faculty member will be asked about the services they need. Accommodation will be made for faculty who need to retain analog service for modems, etc. Further information, including training sessions, will be forthcoming.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR ITEMS FOR DOCKETING

There were no calendar items.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Andy Abbott, NISG Vice President, reported on a NISG resolution (SSR97-14) calling for the instillation of carbon monoxide detectors in the University Apartments.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Presentation by Don Doerr, Experimental Learning Coordinator, on the experiential learning program. Doerr introduced Donna Vinton, Associate Director of Placement and Career Services who reviewed the history of the program. The idea of "experiential learning" was brought up in the 1992 Strategic Plan. President Curris established a task force in the Spring of 1994. The task force presented its report to the President in the Fall of 1994. The report recommended that all U.N.I. undergraduates be required to have "experiential learning" by the year 2001. The 1995-1996 University Strategic Plan contained a call for "experiential learning". In the Fall of 1995, Placement and Career Services asked the Curriculum Committee for authority to offer "Work Experience" as a non-credit, ungraded course. The remainder of the Senate meeting was taken up by discussion with Don Doerr and Donna Vinton.

ADJOURNMENT

CALL TO ORDER

The Faculty Senate was called to order by Chair Haack at 3:30 P.M.

Present: Hans Isakson, Sherry Gable, Carol Cooper, Merrie Schroeder, Calvin Thomas, Ken De Nault, Paul Shand, Joel Haack, Suzanne McDevitt, Andrew Gilpin, Katherine Van Wormer, Barbara Weeg, Sue Grosboll, and Phil Patton.

Alternates: Bulent Uyar for Randall Krieg and Scott Cawelti for Jerome Soneson.

Absent: Dean Primrose, Richard McGuire, Martha Reineken, and Mary Bozik (Ex-officio).

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3. Comments from Provost Marlin: The Provost introduced Steve Moon, Acting Associate Vice President for Information Technology, who reported on the rationale and status of the new telephone system.

Moon stated that the current telephone system cannot keep up with student demand. Student use is particularly acute in the evening. The current system is old, it is no longer manufactured, and repair parts are no longer available. It would be desirable to have integrated voice, data, and video service, but this is too costly today. A new telephone system is needed immediately and it has been approved by the Cabinet and the Board of Regents. The proposed cutover date (date for transfer of service from the old system to the new system) is May, 1997. The new system will provide digital service to faculty and staff but analog service will be retained in the dormitories in order to support common telephone accessories that students purchase themselves. Faculty will receive new handsets and a voice mail box. There should be a noticeable improvement in the quality of the sound received. In addition, the new digital system will have other optional capabilities. It is recognized that there will need to be training on the use of the handsets and the voice-mail system. Extensive training sessions will be scheduled two or three weeks ahead of the actual cutover date. It is hoped that all faculty, staff, and students will be able to attend these sessions. Other components of the new system will be cutover after the initial cutover of voice service.

There are other automated capabilities of the new system that will not be operational until after the initial cutover. Many of these services will involve working with Departments to determine their wants and needs. Video conferencing and residential data modules have been approved in concept by the Cabinet, however these will require additional information and analysis before we know what, when, and how much for these services.

De Nault stated that there has been virtually no input from departments about the new system and that there are concerns about the expense. He asked for an estimate of the comparative cost to departments for the

new system verses the old system.

Moon replied that the cost for the University will go up because there will be new capabilities. However, the Cabinet has stated strongly that this is a central service and should therefore be funded centrally. He felt that there should be no cost increase to departments for basic services.

Gilpin asked about the cost for optional services.

Moon replied that there will be additional costs for these services. Each faculty member will be provided a certain number of minutes of voice mail. If additional time is needed, this will be an extra-cost option. Each faculty member will be provided a basic handset. If an individual wants a different handset (one with more options), this would be an additional cost option. If one wants video-conferencing capabilities from an office, this will be an option, but it would be an additional cost. The base service will provide either a digital or analog handset, depending upon individual needs, and an appropriate amount of voice mail time. These services will be included in the base cost. It is Moon's expectation that departments will not pay any more for this service than they pay now.

Cooper asked if there would be additional cost for wiring.

Moon stated that there will be a lot of wiring going on. Several buildings have been identified as not having sufficient wiring in place. There is presently a project focused on correcting this problem. Kamerick Art Building, Russell Hall, and Strayer-Wood Auditorium will be rewired this Spring and a new trunk line will be laid to University Apartments. Sufficient wiring is in place for the rest of the campus.

Cawelti asked about offices that now use modems to connect to the Campus mainframe system.

Moon replied that faculty will be asked about individual needs. A digital telephone handset and a modem are incompatible. It is hoped that faculty will eventually be ethernet connected to the Campus mainframe. However, it is recognized that there may still be a need for modems in certain faculty offices. Some faculty may need modems to connect to off-campus resources that are not otherwise available on the Internet. There will be several options available to faculty. These include leaving analogue service or, at extra cost, a module can be installed into the digital handset to handle a modem.

Moon stated that in January and February, everyone will be asked about their individual telephone needs. Departmental liaison people will be identified. Moon's group will be working with departments early in the Spring to both inform them of the capabilities of the new system and to determine individual and department needs.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR ITEMS FOR DOCKETING

There were no calendar items.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Andy Abbott, NISG Vice President, reported on the following NISG resolution (SSR97-14):

Whereas: Due to a recent incident at University Apartments concerning carbon monoxide poisoning, it has been brought to our attention that installing carbon monoxide detectors in all of University Apartments would help prevent a possible reoccurrence of poisoning and;

Whereas: Carbon Monoxide is a tasteless, odorless gas that can only be detected by these detectors and;

Whereas: The University should protect its students from harm if at all possible and;

Whereas: These detectors would be the best prevention for this type of poisoning then;

Be it resolved that: The Northern Iowa Student Government recommends that University Apartments and the Physical Plant look into installing these detectors.

Abbott explained that the issue was brought to the attention of NISG after a couple in University Apartments were overcome by carbon monoxide from their furnace. Furthermore, the detectors are inexpensive and would increase student safety.

Gable asked about the dormitories.

Abbott replied that the residence halls have their own central heating systems. The area of concern is the

escape of carbon monoxide from individual units that heat individual apartments.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Presentation by Don Doerr, Experimental Learning Coordinator, on the experiential learning program. Doerr stated that dialogue on the areas of experiential learning and transcript notation has been going on for over two years. Doerr introduced Donna Vinton, Associate Director of Placement and Career Services, who has been involved with the program since its inception, to give the background to the program.

Donna Vinton stated that the idea of "experiential learning" was first brought up by the 1992-1993 Strategic Planning Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee originally presented the idea to colleges just for discussion. In the Spring of 1994, President Curris established a Task Force on Internships and Student Work Experiences. The purpose of the Task Force was "to present to the Cabinet and the University in general, recommendations to strengthen the relationship between the University's academic program and structured opportunities for students to enhance their educational experience by campus work opportunities, internships, cooperative education placements, and where appropriate, summer employment." The Task Force broadened its scope and went beyond the original charge. In December of 1994, the Task Force presented its report to President Curris. Among its recommendations was that by the beginning of the Fall Semester, 2001, all U.N.I. undergraduates would be required to have an "experiential learning experience" completed before graduation. The 1995-1996 University Strategic Plan, under the direction of President Koob, included "experiential learning" under Goal Area 1, Subgoal 1A2c, which states "Ensure that every student has a program of study in a major that provides preparation for the both present and future, includes opportunities for experiential learning, and allows choice in the selection of electives. During the Spring of 1995, money was allocated to Placement and Career Services to hire an Experiential Learning Coordinator. A search for a Coordinator was initiated in the Summer of 1995. Interviews were concluded in the Fall of 1995 but no acceptable candidate was found. However, Placement and Career Services continued development of the program. In the Fall of 1995, Vinton asked the Curriculum Committee for authority to offer "Work Experience" as a non-credit, ungraded course so that this program could gain transcript notation. Last Spring, another search was conducted for a Coordinator of Experiential Learning. That search was successful and Don Doerr was hired and assumed his duties in August of this year.

Vinton distributed copies of a handout titled "Experiential Learning: A Graphic Representation of Options and Roles" and discussed the expected educational benefits of the program.

Doerr presented the four phases for "transcript notation": (1) Identification of when transcript notation is a viable options. If there is potential for credit in an existing course, "transcript notation" is not an option. (2) Identification of goals to be approved by the supervisor and Doerr. (3) Carrying out the experience. (4) Evaluation. The evaluation will be in the form of a reflective essay that will be assessed by the supervisor and the Coordinator of Experiential Learning. If a student does not complete the process, there will be no record on the transcript. Only positive results will be recorded on the transcript.

McDevitt stated that students in her department, Social Work, already have experiences as part of the required curriculum. She asked why the program is devoid of faculty input and content. Faculty should be overseers and help students reflect on their activities. A basic role of faculty is to help students reflect on their experiences and to evaluate the quality of these experiences.

Vinton replied that they are trying to find those places where students do not have the availability of the kinds of programs that are available in Social Work. There might be times where there is not the appropriate vehicle for students to get credit.

McDevitt stated that the roll of Placement and Career Services should be to work with academic departments to develop these opportunities and not to set up parallel programs.

Vinton responded that if credit is available in a department, then they would not be involved.

McDevitt reiterated that Placement and Career Services have not identified or justified places where experiential experiences can take place at UNI and be recorded on transcripts without faculty involvement. Faculty involvement and evaluation must be an essential part of this program. The person making the judgment to approve a "transcript notation" is not a faculty member.

Vinton stated that the "transcript notation" would only be approved if the supervisor approved.

McDevitt pointed out that the supervisor would in many cases not be a faculty member.

Vinton stated that such a situation exists with the athletic training program. In this case, to be certified as an athletic trainer, students must have a certain number of hours of actual hands-on experience. Placement and Career Services was approached by the supervisor of these students to explore the idea of transcript notation because students do not have the option of getting credit. In this case, there would be no faculty to oversee the experience.

Cooper stated that in this case, Placement and Career Services clearly should check with the Department to see if this was something the Department supported or whether someone was circumventing their curriculum.

Doerr stated that in this case, because transcript notation had been approved by the Curriculum Committee, he had worked directly with the student supervisor and had not consulted the Department.

Grosboll asked what proportion of experiences fall into this category versus other types of experiences.

Weeg asked for clarification of the policy of only giving transcript notation if a student fulfills their obligation.

Doerr stated that the policy was for only positive results to be recorded on the transcript.

Weeg wondered how this was going to teach responsibility and professionalism. It would be of greater educational value to students to also record if a student does not fulfill their obligation.

Gable asked about the cost of the program.

Vinton stated that there was no cost to students or faculty.

Gable asked how faculty get credit for participation.

Vinton replied that there were questions of how faculty should be rewarded for transcript notation as well as for making their courses more experiential and development of new experiential courses.

Gable asked why this cannot be accomplished through the existing course structure. Everything that has been presented is present in the curriculum. The term "transcript notation" is an administrative term not an educational term. Nowhere has a case been made for "transcript notation." The goals are curricular and the process is curricular. She has not heard a cogent argument for this to be outside of the normal curricular process.

Vinton replied that this is only an option for a student if a credit option does not exist. Vinton agreed with Gable that they want this to be curricular and a learning device.

Gable replied that if this is curricular, why is it not brought through the curricular process.

Vinton responded that they had taken it to the Curriculum Committee which authorized the experimental status.

Gable stated that new programs must be brought to the Senate for approval.

Isakson asked a hypothetical question about a case where a faculty member was involved in an "experience". If the faculty member did not think the student had achieved the specified goals but the Coordinator of Experiential Learning did think the student had achieved the specified goals, would the Coordinator have the authority to grant transcript notation.

Doerr stated that he would try to work out the differences by talking to the faculty member and the student. He would then make a decision as to whether he would grant transcript notation.

Isakson stated that if there was no faculty member involved, the decision would be solely that of the Coordinator. This would seem to be the majority of cases.

Van Wormer stated that it would be better to encourage departments who do not have these opportunities to offer them.

Schroeder asked if a student's motivation to ask for an experiential learning experience was to circumvent

something that is already in the curriculum.

Vinton stated that they would not allow that.

Schroeder asked for clarification of the student's motivation for asking for this.

Vinton asked a Presidential Scholar, who was completing an experiential learning experience by working as a teaching assistant, to respond.

The Presidential Scholar related that when he worked as a teaching assistant he did not have any chance for reflection. The professor that supervised his teaching was not familiar with college teaching and could not discuss things like reflection. The professor would ask him such things like "How did it go?" The professor had not received any training in how to help the student reflect upon their experience. He related another experience in which he had taken an independent study course. Again, the professor had been extremely helpful in directing the study but had had no training in helping the student reflect upon what he was learning. The student wanted an experience where he would have the opportunity to reflect upon what he was learning. The student also expressed the opinion that the designated "Work Experience" on his transcript would help him get financial assistance in graduate school.

Weeg returned to the issue of the procedure concerning when there was a difference of opinion between the supervisor and a student or the Coordinator and a student about whether the student had achieved the objectives of the experience. Because this is offered by Placement and Career Services, a non-academic unit, and in many cases supervised by non-faculty, would the student have the opportunity for appeal through the regular academic student appeals process. When there is a disagreement between a student and a professor about an evaluation, there is a procedure for addressing that disagreement. Because this program is outside of this environment, what safeguards are there for the student.

Vinton stated that this was a good question and she was not sure of the answer.

Grosboll asked if the student's advisor would be involved in approving the experience such as they are for regular curriculum.

Vinton stated that this would be a wonderful idea.

Grosboll stated that this would be her concern. She would like students to have as many opportunities as possible. Many students come to the Museum wanting some form of experiential learning. These experiences are handled in a variety of ways by departments. She would like more commonality between departments but she finds students are not going to talk with their advisors. She requires students discuss the desired experience with their advisor.

Vinton responded that this could be another signature on their form. She further stated that transcript notation is only a part of what they want to do. They also want internships, externships, shadowing programs, mentoring, and other professional preview kinds of opportunities. These are all non-credit, non-transcript experiences.

De Nault stated that he was unimpressed by the presentation. He had not heard anything new. There is a lot of glitz and terms, but there has been no effort to identify the problems that this program is to address. There has been no identification of what is lacking in the present curriculum. Though we are acutely aware of the limited funds in the academic area, the University has funds to establish a new position of "Coordinator of Experiential Learning." It has been stated that new courses having "experiential learning" are to be developed. There are already lots of courses that have "experiential learning." There are already courses titled "practicum", "internship", "coop", "undergraduate research", and "individual study". Each of these reside in individual academic departments and are available to students. He presumed that those departments that do not offer any or all of these, have a good academic reason. Departments are the most knowledgeable about what is of benefit to their students. He did not see this program complementing existing programs. Furthermore, though the presenters stated that there is no cost to students and faculty, it takes funds away from other programs. Classes with low numbers are being canceled purportedly to save money but this program wants faculty to take on one-to-one relationships.

De Nault questioned the value of "Work Experience" notation on the transcript in enhancing a student's chance to obtain a scholarship in graduate school. De Nault stated that in his field, this would not be the

case. The transcript notation would not be meaningful but what a professor writes in their letter of recommendation would be important.

Vinton agreed that there were already lots of experiential learning opportunities for students on the campus. She would like to see this accomplished at the University level in a more assertive and organized manner. She reiterated that the program is not intended to replace what is already in existence. This is just another opportunity for students.

De Nault questioned the necessity for transcript notation. He wondered what educational opportunity is denied the student if they cannot have a non-graded, no-credit course put on their transcript.

Vinton stated that students want credit for accomplishing this.

De Nault mused that we want to produce life-long learners but they are only going to learn if it goes on their transcript.

Doerr stated that the program provides a structure for students. When a structure is provided, it generates a sense of personal motivation because the student has decided the goals. There is then internal motivation of the student.

Cooper stated that she was concerned that this was the first time she as a faculty member had been made aware of what Placement and Career Services was doing. Experiential learning is a part of her Department's strategic plan as it is of probably most departments. What is needed is not for Placement and Career Services to be offering these courses but for them to provide guidance on how to make existing and proposed experiential learning experiences more effective, meaningful, and potent to students. She agreed with De Nault that there are plenty of opportunities for students. The question is why are students not coming to departments for these opportunities. Departments have the faculty and resources.

Cooper also stated that when a curriculum proposal of this nature is brought forward, there should be consultation with every academic department on campus because each department is potentially affected by the program. This would also give Placement and Career Services better feedback.

Vinton replied that this was approved on an experimental basis by the Curriculum Committee. It will need to come back when there is a request to make this a permanent course offering.

Doerr stated that he would be happy to send the Experiential Learning Mission statement to all departments.

McDevitt stated that there are a lot of pitfalls with this program. Placements often do not work due to many factors, such as personality conflicts and inadequate placement to meet student's needs or expectations. This is why it is important to involve faculty in the discipline. Furthermore, she agreed with Cooper that the Coordinator of Experiential Learning's energies might be better spent communicating to departments and faculty the knowledge acquired about experiential learning.

Vinton stated that all the Deans have meet with Placement and Career Services as a group. They would like to meet with department heads. She reiterated that transcript notation is only a small part of their program.

Isakson stated that meaningful experience with faculty guidance is very beneficial to students. Placement and Career Services is selling itself short by not including faculty. Students should not be allowed to attempt a transcript notation experience without the consent of the student's advisor. Advisor and faculty involvement is essential for success of the program. No one is arguing against the value of the experience. The question is the extent of faculty involvement in the program. Furthermore, if a faculty member cannot be found to be involved with one of these transcript notation experiences, it should not be offered.

Andy Abbott, NISG Vice President, stated that there may be cases where a student does not want to go through their advisor or have faculty involvement.

De Nault stated that he was confused. On the one hand, students complain about a lack of advising but now he hears that students want to do things without an advisor.

Abbott replied that there are some students who would not want any faculty or advisor involvement.

Haack asked how many students are involved in the transcript notation program this semester.

Doerr replied that there were 5 in the athletic training program, the one presidential scholar, and some students working on the UNI Yearbook. The latter group has not officially started because the experience will go over two semesters.

Haack asked what specifically would be recorded on the transcript.

Doerr replied that in the case of the Presidential Scholar's experience, this would be listed as "010:159 Work Experience: Teachers Assistant". The notation has a limit of 26 characters.

Haack asked what would appear under the column where a grade normally appears.

Doerr stated that he thought this would be left blank.

Patton stated that no grade would appear in the column.

Haack asked if the credit hours would show a 0.

Patton replied that this is a required field, so a 0 would have to be shown.

Haack stated that he had heard several suggestions on how to reconcile a non-academic course appearing on an academic transcript. This is an issue of some concern. Furthermore, most "010" courses have a faculty advisory committee overseeing them.

Vinton stated that an oversight committee would contain faculty as well as others.

Cooper asked if these faculty would be elected or appointed.

Vinton stated that she would be open to process.

Haack stated that having an academic department head sign off on these would put them back in the academic arena.

Haack asked if there had been consideration to developing a non-academic transcript.

Vinton stated that she had looked into cocurricular transcripts and she did not think it fit the concept that is being developed.

Haack was impressed with the steps outlined but was not convinced that this experience needs to be noted on a student's transcript. He agreed with De Nault about the value of the notation. In evaluating applicants for graduate programs, he would be far more influenced by a paragraph in a letter of recommendation or the student's application that discussed the experience than he would be by a transcript notation. He was not sure he would even notice the transcript notation.

Grosboll hoped that this kind of structure can be applied to other opportunities.

Doerr agreed and stated that they have a long way to go.

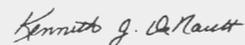
Vinton stated that they wanted to be part of something bigger that is happening at UNI.

Haack thanked Don Doerr and Donna Vinton for meeting with the Senate.

ADJOURNMENT

Cooper/Thomas moved/seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. The Senate adjourned at 5:02 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth J. De Nault, Secretary
University Faculty Senate

Approved December 9, 1996