
SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**August 22, 2013
12:45 P.M. in SKH 369**

Present: Richard Miller, Mitch Berbrier, Wai Mok, Phillip Bitzer, Peggy Hays, Ramon Cerro, Timothy Newman, Charles Hickman, James Blackmon, Fan Tseng

Guests: Brent Wren

President Altenkirch was not present.

- Dr. Mitch Berbrier welcomed everyone and had everyone introduce themselves. He advised the new Committee Chairs to check with the prior year's Chairs to see if there is any ongoing business.
- Dr. Brent Wren reported we are looking forward to a good year. He informed the group that President Altenkirch is not here. Dr. Mitch Berbrier sent a list of items to President Altenkirch that he would like more information on and President Altenkirch passed 3 of those items from the list to Dr. Brent Wren.

Assessment

GER

Center for Teaching Excellence

Assessment—surprisingly our University is flat or thin for the administrative structure in many ways. One way is assessment. Most universities IR office has a person tasked with the assessment role and they also have an assessment person in the college. Here it all falls in our office. Debbie's group (IR) handles a tremendous amount of reporting for 3 people. Our office is really the spot where this resides in addition to a ton of other items. A lot of what we do is directed toward what we have to do as far as SACS and other accreditation is concerned, as opposed to real assessment. We have all units submit at least 3 documents, a strategic plan, an annual report and an assessment report. This is done all the way down to majors in the department. Internally we do 5 year and 10 year program reviews and then internal reviews with accreditation. We do a lot of stuff but it is viewed as just something we have to do. Assessment should be what we are doing, what are we missing and what do we want to do going forward. We talked in the Deans' Council about whether we are we doing the right thing. Consensus is that we are not. Dr. Richard Miller asked doe the Handbook require external reviews? He stated we, the Physics Department, requested and were denied. Dr. Brent Wren stated that will change. We have a schedule of when it will happen. Engineering and Business are finishing and Nursing has a regular review as does Music and Art. Science has no external reviews so program reviews need to be done in that college. There is a plan in place for

everyone. We will change what we are doing to be more of what we should do. We hear you and we will change but right now we are holding for stability.

Center for Teaching Excellence—there is a plan for developing this Center—it got bogged down and last year we tried to bring it back and we only had one applicant and we agreed that we did not resource it well enough to cause it to be as attractive. The next go round we have to define the position to have value. We need to fully resource it and do the right job. President Altenkirch is committed to bringing it back when we know what to do about a Provost and make sure it has value. We have a Faculty Resource Center in the Library. We already have a dedicated space. We need a more comprehensive plan for doing it right.

GER—the evaluation of the GER came about as feedback on policies and procedures that are harmful to students or programs. We got a lot of feedback—the common theme was the general education requirements and AP credit. To find the general education requirements was difficult prior to this year but now they are out on the web. Dr. Brent Wren distributed information on the current courses considered to be a GER and what a common body of knowledge that makes sense might look like. We need to define and agree on a group of courses that students can choose from as a common body of knowledge. When President Altenkirch put out a call for proposals for the strategic initiatives, Andrea Word provided a proposal for the GER and it did not fit with the strategic plan but it was a good proposal so President Altenkirch suggested she work with Dr. Brent Wren and him to develop a GER. He suggested they get a set of fundamentals and then involve the larger campus. These are guiding principles. The 41 hours comes from ACHE guidelines. These will be compatible with accrediting bodies. They need to be transferable across colleges. This allows seamless transferability for students. We are talking about areas I through IV of the GER. Area V is not in this. We asked for nominees from the Senate for the Steering Committee —the Committee will have members from across campus and across disciplines. We should start to make headway in the fall, in spring refine and by the end of spring we should know what to do and over the summer work for implementation of fall '14.

AP credit—there are discrepancies of what is accepted and this causes issues for students transferring in. Departments decide what they will accept. It is the right of those units to make that decision. We do need to discuss though and find out why we are different from others and determine if we need to make changes.

- Dr. Ramon Cerro asked if tenured appointments have to go through URB. Dr. Brent Wren and Peggy Bower can check if you want to give them names.
- There was a question of which proposals for the strategic initiatives were funded. We have some idea of the areas but not the exact proposals. Dr. Brent Wren will check and find out.

➤ Dr. Mitch Berbrier's Outline and Points to Consider for 2013-14:

Dr. Mitch Berbrier discussed that there are many things being put on hold or in-between until a Provost gets here and that is understandable but there may be some things that can move ahead. The Handbook is with the President and he is looking at it and asking questions. Dr. Brent Wren is also involved and Legal is involved. We are currently operating under the old Handbook right now.

The theme of this year is operational. We have been stuck in a structure to do things a certain way. At least for now we will have a half time person for this year. The individual will keep the website up to date and digitize the history of the Senate. This individual will have a room and computer in this building near this room.

Committee Restructuring—this falls under Phillip Bitzer's area in Governance and they will look at it and do research, study it and know what we should do when possible.

New Senator Orientation—many Senators think this is just for their opinion and not for representing their department. They need to talk to the department and college and represent them.

Attendance—try to make sure Senators show up and show up on time. Also Committee attendance is needed and important and maybe we need to look at the same sanctions for not attending Committee Meetings as we have for not attending Senate Meetings.

Should we send Senate records to Deans or Chairs?

Many times young faculty are sent as Senators and they do not know what to do.

We are building a constructive relationship and changing the past attitude that the Senate was marginalized.

We should develop a set of procedures for bringing in new senators and let them know what is expected.

Remind Chairs elections are supposed to be held in the Department with a vote.

Think about a balance of young and senior faculty on the Senate.

Meetings running long—the current President gives a good report and answers questions and we need to accommodate that but there is concern for the meeting time and losing a quorum. We will look into more efficient ways to run the meetings and concise reports etc. We can look at the timing of other business. We need to be efficient and effective. We could also look at changing the times of meetings. Either lengthen the time on Thursday or hold them on Friday afternoon. Electing Senators and then assigning them to a class is also a problem. This should

not happen. Maybe the problem will be solved because we do no longer have to review the Handbook. These are things to talk about. Also consider what we can do by email. Perhaps we could have email reports—what can be reported by email.

Lecture Ladder—to be able to retain and recruit lecturers we need to be able to give them incentive (i.e. different levels). The Personnel Committee should take a look at this.

Assessment—Dr. Brent Wren talked about this.

Teaching Resources Center-and Ombuds Office –we need to encourage the administration to budget something in. Charles Hickman should ask Ray to put him on the Budget Committee.

Administrator Confidence Survey—Ray Vaughn talked about this as something that was done at Mississippi—it gave good feedback on what he was doing well. Governance should take a look at this and perhaps consider it as something that is done above the dean level as it was at Mississippi.

Sent questions to President Altenkirch regarding hiring, VROP, Strategic hiring. Lecturer track and Enrollment.

Provost Search Committee—Dr. Berbrier reported we are in the process where the search firm is doing the big job and by October they should have a list for the Committee to look at.

Other University Committees—GER Committee—recommend 2 from each college. Also need members for the Angel Replacement Committee.