

**FACULTY COUNCIL**  
**Tuesday, January 27, 2015**  
**3:30 – 5:15 pm**  
**Executive Boardroom (2390), University Capitol Centre**

**MINUTES**

Councilors Present: S. Ali, P. Brophy, S. Campo, S. Daack-Hirsch, E. Gillan, K. Kieran, J. Kolker, U. Mallik, P. Muhly, S. Seibert, P. Snyder, H. Udaykumar, S. Vos.

Officers Present: C. Bohannan, R. Fumerton, A. Thomas, T. Vaughn.

Councilors Excused: F. Abboud, J. Wilcox.

Councilors Absent: M. Voigt.

Guests: A. Beck (ITS), L. Glass (English), M. Jesse (ITS), K. Kregel (Office of the Provost), B. Magee (*Daily Iowan*), L. McLeran (Office of the President), J. Menninger (Emeritus Faculty Council), L. Moeller (Office of the Provost), C. Morphew (College of Education), M. Sauder (Sociology), L. Zaper (Office of the Provost).

I. Call to Order – President Thomas called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

II. Approvals

- A. Meeting Agenda –Professor Gillan moved and Professor Seibert seconded that the agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Faculty Council Minutes (November 18, 2014) – Professor Muhly moved and Professor Campo seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- C. Draft Faculty Senate Agenda (February 10, 2015) –Professor Kolker moved and Professor Udaykumar seconded that the draft agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. Committee Appointments (Christina Bohannan, Chair, Committee on Committees)
  - Alicia Gerke (Internal Medicine) to fill the unexpired term of Ekhard Ziegler (Pediatrics) on Faculty Senate, Spring 2015
  - Usha Mallik (Physics & Astronomy) to replace Claire Fox (English) on Faculty Council, Spring 2015
  - Ali Hasan (Philosophy) to replace Claire Fox (English) on Faculty Senate, Spring 2015
  - Peter Snyder (Internal Medicine) to fill the unexpired term of Ekhard Ziegler (Pediatrics) on the Faculty Policy & Compensation Committee, Spring 2015
  - Carolyn Colvin (Teaching & Learning) to fill the unexpired term of Jane Pendergast (Biostatistics) on the Committee for the Selection and Review of Central Academic Officials, 2015-16

- Paul Hanley (Public Policy Center) to fill the unexpired term of John Beldon Scott (Art & Art History) on the Campus Planning Committee, Spring 2015
- Ned Bowden (Chemistry) to fill the unexpired term of Morten Schlutter (Religious Studies) on the University Libraries Committee, Spring 2015
- Scott Vogelgesang (Internal Medicine) to fill the unexpired term of Rachel Williams (Gender, Women's & Sexuality Studies) on the Hancher Advisory Committee, 2015-17
- Christopher Benson (Internal Medicine) to fill the unexpired term of Joseph Dillon (Internal Medicine) on the Research Council, Spring 2015
- David Cuning (Philosophy) to fill the unexpired term of Neil Segal (Orthopaedics) on the Research Council, 2015-16
- Meara Habashi (Psychology) to the Lecturer's seat on the Council on Teaching, Spring 2015

Vice President Bohannan directed the group's attention to the last appointment on the list. She reminded the group that, at their October meetings, the Faculty Council and Faculty Senate had approved the addition of a lecturer seat for the Council on Teaching. That change to the Council on Teaching membership has also been approved by the other shared governance bodies, as well as by Provost Butler and President Mason, and it has been incorporated into the Operations Manual. Professor Campo moved and Professor Muhly seconded that the appointments be approved. The motion carried unanimously. President Thomas thanked Professor Campo, chair of the Council on Teaching, for guiding the effort to add a lecturer to the committee.

### III. New Business

- *Executive Session: Update on 2015-16 State Appropriations (Keith Saunders, Office of Governmental Relations)*

Professor Gillan moved and Professor Mallik seconded that the Council move into closed session, inviting Professor Loren Glass and Professor Christopher Cheatum to remain in the room. The motion carried unanimously.

Via videoconference, Keith Saunders, of the UI Office of Governmental Relations, gave an update on the legislative session and the 2015-16 Board of Regents state appropriations request. He then answered questions from Councilors.

Professor Snyder moved and Professor Muhly seconded that the Council move out of closed session. The motion carried unanimously.

- *Online Student Evaluations Update (Annette Beck, Director of Enterprise Instructional Technology; Maggie Jesse, Senior IT Director; Lon Moeller, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education)*

Ms. Beck reminded the group that recently the Center for Teaching and the Evaluation and Examination Service had merged with the Instructional Services unit of Information Technology Services to form a new entity called the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Technology. Joyce Moore, former director of the Evaluation and Examination Service, along with a faculty advisory committee headed by Professors Shelly Campo and Renee Cole, had initiated a request for

proposals for an online faculty evaluation system. Ms. Beck is now following up on that work. The chosen vendor is CollegeNET and the software to be used is *What Do You Think?*

A pilot project with this software was completed in December 2014, with a total of 95 courses and 28 faculty members and teaching assistants. Some additional faculty members from the College of Engineering also participated, but that data was not included in Ms. Beck's presentation. The College is currently using its own online evaluation system, but may switch over to CollegeNET's product. It was also considered important that a Rhetoric class be part of the pilot, in order to test the system with a course supervisor/teaching assistant and first-year student scenario. The pilot for Rhetoric involved 304 students in 16 courses, many of which were taught by teaching assistants. Some TA's were in their first year of teaching. Overall there was a 61% response rate. When the results from the two TA's with the lowest response rates were removed, the overall response rate jumped to 70%. Another department involved in the pilot was Health Management and Policy in the College of Public Health. Three faculty members and 82 graduate students in three courses participated. The overall response rate was 41%. Two of the three faculty members, however, had a response rate of 100%. Those two faculty members conducted the evaluation in class, and one of those faculty members had a class incentive (group participation points students could earn).

A post-pilot survey was conducted over winter break. Only nine responses were received, most likely coming from faculty members rather than TA's. Most participants reported that they had discussed the evaluation with their students beforehand. Some conducted the evaluation in class, while others did it outside of class (they were not asked to specify). Participants generally indicated that they were comfortable with potentially lower than usual response rates during the pilot. They also thought that response rates would increase as faculty and students became accustomed to online evaluations. Participants were asked to suggest ways to increase response rates. Proposed methods were sending email reminders, making evaluations a prerequisite for subsequent class registration, increasing experience with the system, withholding grades, and creating incentive mechanisms. Another survey question focused on what faculty could do to increase response rates. While some felt that there was nothing faculty could do to increase response rates, others suggested that faculty members could stress the importance of evaluations and set aside class time for this purpose. Some expressed concern about students not all having an appropriate personal electronic device for doing online evaluations in class (those students could be sent to a nearby computer lab).

Contacted by phone for follow-up questions, faculty participants in the survey felt that the university should move ahead with online evaluations, even though response rates may initially be low. They also thought that students are tech-savvy and that in the future will most likely expect evaluations to be conducted this way; response rates will rise as everyone becomes accustomed to online evaluations. Participants liked the possibility of comparing their results over time that the online system provides. Concerns that arose in the faculty advisory committee chaired by Professors Shelly Campo and Renee Cole included response rates, public release of evaluation data, incentives for students to complete evaluations, preparation of faculty for this culture shift, timing of the evaluations (currently faculty members are used to choosing a

specific day for evaluations; the online system would keep the evaluations open for the last two weeks before finals), choice of questions, and access rights.

Ms. Beck indicated that a wider, voluntary pilot project would be carried out in the spring semester. The Colleges of Engineering, Business, Nursing, and Dentistry are in various stages of interest in participating, as are several departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Division of Continuing Education, which currently has its own system, may phase out that system this year in favor of the CollegeNET product.

Professor Muhly asked if there was any mechanism for free-response questions. Ms. Beck responded that system does allow for free-response questions, as well as for individually-written questions. These latter questions would not be included in the data compiled from the evaluation. Past President Fumerton, observing that faculty members who had volunteered for the pilot project might be those who are more enthusiastic about online evaluations anyway, asked how the participants in the pilot project were chosen. Ms. Beck indicated that some participants were identified by associate deans from colleges that have expressed interest in the pilot, while others were faculty members with whom ITS had already developed relationships. He then asked if response rates to the pilot project were compared with response rates to the paper forms. Ms. Beck responded that this was not done, because the current system is too antiquated. It could be possible to compare by hand, if necessary, however. Past President Fumerton also asked if there was any flexibility regarding the two-week open period for the evaluations. Ms. Beck answered that the system did not allow for individual open time periods; everyone at the institution must use the evaluation system for the same time period.

Professor Cheatum asked how the online system would accommodate team-taught courses. Ms. Beck explained that one could choose particular instructors from drop-down boxes and evaluate that person individually. She further explained that, while the semester-based system is only available during the last two weeks of classes, section-based evaluations can be opened as necessary throughout the course, therefore allowing more timely evaluations of instructors who may have taught early on in the semester. Professor Udaykumar commented that in the College of Engineering, response rates on paper-based evaluations neared 100%. When the College shifted to online evaluations, however, response rates plummeted. He added that pilot projects, in which students have only one evaluation to fill out electronically, may experience high response rates, but when students have several online evaluations to complete at the end of each semester, participation drops off sharply. Stronger incentives, such as the withholding of grades, may be necessary to increase participation. Ms. Beck commented that one reason that was suggested to her for the College's low participation rates was that the evaluations had to be filled out in computer labs. The CollegeNET system is mobile, so students can use it anywhere, from their portable electronic devices.

Professor Daack-Hirsch suggested comparing pilot response rates to those from courses delivered entirely online, such as some courses that the College of Nursing provides. Ms. Beck commented that it may also be possible to compare response rates from some courses in the Division of Continuing Education that are taught entirely online. Professor Gillan observed that in introductory chemistry courses, students have six evaluations to fill out just for this one class

(lecture, lab session, etc.). Currently these are paper-based evaluations that are filled out in class. Moving to an online evaluation system might be overwhelming for students and therefore contribute to low participation. Professor Kolker commented that giving students extra points for filling out evaluations, while not a method she necessarily endorses, does seem to impact participation, as does simply explaining to students the value of evaluations and how courses have been changed because of student feedback. Associate Provost Moeller noted that ITS and the Provost's Office will continue to work with the faculty advisory committee chaired by Professors Shelly Campo and Renee Cole to explore solutions to these issues.

- *Update on TIER Efficiency Review (Laura McLeran, Office of the President; Scott Seibert)*  
Professor Seibert indicated that he, along with his colleague in the Tippie College of Business, John Murry, a Faculty Senator, is participating in the selection of a consulting group to assist the Board of Regents with the academic portion of the Transparent, Inclusive Efficiency Review (TIER). Four proposals have been submitted in response to two calls focusing on distance education and time to graduation. Three of the four responding consulting firms will give presentations on February 12. Another consulting firm, Ad Astra, has already been engaged to assist with space utilization issues. Secretary Vaughn asked about the timeline for these projects. Professor Seibert responded that the involvement with the consultants should last about 4-6 months only, as they will not automatically be involved in the implementation stage. The chosen firms would have the option of bidding on the implantation stage, but the university could bid, as well.

Professor Gillan asked if the academic review consultants would need to show clear evidence of cost savings before any efficiency suggestions were accepted by the university. Laura McLeran responded that it may not necessarily be cost savings that are sought here, but rather more efficient use of staff and faculty time. Professor Mallik asked if there were any tension evident between the business and academic sides of the review. Professor Seibert responded that he was not aware of any tension. Vice President Bohannon asked about the possible impact of the UI's recently-announced merger with AIB. Ms. McLeran responded that AIB had not been part of the review discussions yet, but would most likely become so once the implications of the merger become clear.

Turning to the business side of the review, Ms. McLeran explained that the implementation stage is now underway. Earlier this month two consultants had been engaged by the Regents to assist with this stage. Huron Consulting Group was hired to implement the sourcing and procurement business case. Huron will work with all three institutions, because it is anticipated that the greatest cost savings would be realized through joint efforts. Ms. McLeran noted that the universities were allowed to submit their own plans for the delivery of services Request for Proposals. This RFP encompassed three business cases, dealing with human resources, information technology, and finance. The Regents agreed to let the three institutions lead the efforts on these shared services cases; however, a consultant, Chazey Partners, has been retained to lend expertise on some aspects of implementation, particularly with the finance business case, but also with communication strategies for all three cases.

Secretary Vaughn asked how institutional staff would interact with the consultants. Ms. McLeran explained that, regarding sourcing and procurement, the institutional procurement officers will meet with Huron staff and talk through the business case recommendations. Huron staff will then develop an implementation plan in conjunction with the procurement officers. Regarding the shared services cases, the institutional working group leadership for each case will discuss with Chazey staff where assistance is most needed. Each working group will develop its own plan for collaborating with Chazey, depending on the level of assistance needed.

Professor Seibert commented that proposals from submitted thus far for the distance education portion of the academic review envision the three universities sharing in this endeavor, rather than developing separate programs. He asked for feedback on this issue. Professor Mallik asked if there was any consideration of developing a hybrid model for delivery of distance education. Professor Seibert indicated that there was. Professor Campo reminded the group that the university is in the process of joining the course management system Unizin, used by many of the Big Ten institutions, but not by ISU or UNI. She wondered what impact this might have on working collaboratively with ISU and UNI on distance education. President Thomas commented that the TIER Sounding Board, a committee of representatives from various campus constituencies, was established in bring up just these types of issues. Ms. McLeran added that the Sounding Board has been extremely helpful in the TIER process thus far and that she expects a slightly expanded Board will continue to offer feedback at the institutional level throughout the course of the project.

- *Regent President Rastetter's Challenge: How To Rise to Top Ten Status Among Public Research Universities (Christopher Morpew, Associate Dean, College of Education and Michael Sauder, Sociology)*

President Thomas reminded the Council that at the December 2 Faculty Senate meeting, Board of Regents President Bruce Rastetter had urged the faculty to think about what it would mean for the University of Iowa to become a top-ten public research university. President Thomas indicated that she wanted to take some time at this meeting to discuss the topic and hear from various faculty members with expertise in university ranking systems. She added that President Rastetter would like to receive a brief report containing the faculty's thoughts on this matter.

Professor Michael Sauder, from Sociology, indicated that he has been working on rankings research for about 15 years. Most of his research has involved interviews with administrators across the country regarding how they and their organizations perceive rankings. Turning to President Rastetter's challenge to the faculty, Professor Sauder commented that he thought it unlikely that UI could rise into the top ten. He explained that most institutions are trying to raise their rankings by doing many of the things that we would do, and that sudden large jumps do not seem possible. Professor Gillan observed that those who produce the rankings pick specific criteria that they feel are important; those criteria may not be as important to faculty here. It is difficult to compare institutions that may have different values.

Professor Christopher Cheatum, from Chemistry, last year led a faculty committee in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences that examined the use of rankings. In the 1990's, UI attained the rank of 13<sup>th</sup> in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings. The university has been

progressively dropping in the rankings since then and now shares the 27<sup>th</sup> spot with several other institutions. Professor Cheatum distributed a handout listing the criterion categories upon which the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings are based. He pointed out that the criteria do not include, for example, research dollars, which do form a component of departmental rankings but not of university rankings. Nearly a quarter of category weight consists of undergraduate academic reputation. In the 1990's, this criterion was even more heavily weighted, around 50%. There have been other changes in the criterion categories, as well, no doubt contributing to UI's slide. The criterion that has grown the most since then is graduation and retention rates. The handout included comparative figures for Ohio State University, now ranked 15<sup>th</sup>. Professor Cheatum noted that OSU outperforms UI in both categories, and he suspected that this could be attributed to OSU's acceptance rate, now about 55% versus 80% for UI. This selectivity is crucial to both retention and graduation rates. The student-faculty ratio is more favorable at UI, on the other hand. UI likely also has a greater percentage of faculty with terminal degrees, but this criterion is not heavily weighted.

Professor Brophy asked who shifted the rankings weightings. Professor Cheatum responded that *U.S. News and World Report* itself did this, in response to changes in the culture of higher education. Reputation, as a criterion category, came under increasing criticism, with the perception that it is very difficult to change one's reputation. Instead, criteria for which there were quantitative data became more highly weighted. Professor Sauder commented that, although the publication seems to be making an honest effort to improve the rankings criteria, very different types of institutions are still being compared. Given the shifts in criterion weight, Professor Udaykumar asked if there was any possibility of UI rising in the *U.S. News* rankings. Professor Cheatum commented that the university's priorities had shifted somewhat, such as to an increased number of faculty lines. Graduation and retention rates would need to increase, however, and he expressed the opinion that smaller class sizes, living-learning communities, etc. cannot solve this problem; greater selectivity in admissions possibly could.

Past President Fumerton commented that it may be worthwhile for the university to publicize the areas in which it does well. For example, UI consistently ranks highly in surveys of student satisfaction among Big Ten institutions. Small class sizes are also a significant selling point, in response to student and parent concerns about attending a large research university. Research productivity of the faculty is another area in which the university excels. He added that President Rastetter had left it up to the faculty to define what top ten status means. Associate Dean for Research and Innovation in the College of Education Christopher Morphew observed that there are consulting firms, such as Academic Analytics, which research and publicize aspects of universities' profiles, such as publishing rates in subfields. It might be beneficial for the university to engage such a firm. Professor Mallik commented that she has found rankings of subfields to be reliable for the areas with which she is familiar. Associate Dean Morphew observed, however, that there have occasionally been problems with these subfield rankings, such as when departments that do not exist sometimes appear on the ranking lists. *U.S. News* has made efforts recently to prevent such errors from occurring.

Professor Sauder noted that alternative ranking systems can be beneficial to institutions. He explained that colleges of law, for example, have only one ranking system, *U.S. News*. Colleges of business, on the other hand, have several respected ranking systems and business colleges

may be ranked differently by the various systems. Establishing legitimacy for a new ranking system can be difficult, however, especially if the criteria used varies from established norms. Professor Morphew commented that he was skeptical that UI could obtain top ten status merely based on the nature of the competition, for example, the University of California system, with a vast state population to draw from, or the state flagship universities in Virginia and North Carolina, with a long history of substantial funding as well as larger population bases. Professor Mallik stressed that the University of California system made a conscious effort to improve and therefore rose in the rankings over the years. While it may not be possible for UI to rise as high as the UC system, that should not be an excuse for complacency.

Professor Brophy commented that, based upon his own experience with *U.S. News*, much depends upon those who are involved in generating the rankings criteria. Professor Cheatum was of the opinion that UI might still rank 13<sup>th</sup> if the weightings of the rankings criteria had not changed. Professor Mallik was skeptical of this. Professor Cheatum expressed dismay, however, that our freshman retention rate is only 86%. Past President Fumerton thought this retention rate might be linked to our admission criteria, which require the university to accept any in-state student who is in the top half of his/her graduating class. He observed that there are ways to increase graduation rates that may not be very ethical, and added that graduate programs are under great pressure to increase their graduation rates, even if that might lead to letting students through who are not qualified.

Professor Kolker asked for clarification of the purpose of the report to be submitted to the Regents, was it to provide context for UI's current ranking, or was it to lay out UI's values and goals? President Thomas responded that this was an opportunity for faculty to guide the conversation regarding their aspirations for UI. Vice President Bohannon added that she believed that this was President Rastetter's effort to allow faculty to define their goals for research, given faculty members' strong and vocal commitment to the university's research mission. Secretary Vaughn observed that this would be an opportunity for faculty members to advocate for needed resources. Past President Fumerton added that once we have established goals for ourselves, we can then begin to convince others of the importance of those goals.

President Thomas called for a motion to establish a working group that would further discuss the issue of how UI could become a top public research institution, from the faculty perspective, and write a brief report for the Regents on how this could be achieved.

Professor Muhly moved and Professor Mallik seconded that a working group be formed to study the possibility of the University of Iowa becoming a top public research institution and to prepare a brief report for the Board of Regents on how this could be achieved. The motion passed with one opposing vote.

Professor Morphew commented that this report could be an opportunity to illustrate for the Regents the tension between what the Board is asking of UI, particularly in light of the proposed performance-based funding model, and what criteria are important in national rankings. Aspects of the tension to highlight would include differential missions, differential tuition, the push towards admitting more in-state students, and admission selectivity, all of which would

impact UI's ranking among public research universities. Vice President Bohannon concurred and commented that this report would let the Regents see what trade-offs are being made.

- *Presidential Search (Alexandra Thomas)*

President Thomas commented that the Regents have assured her that the search for a successor for President Mason will be an open and transparent process with much faculty involvement. Soon after President Mason announced her retirement, President Rastetter came to campus and spoke with various members of the university community, including many faculty, regarding what we should look for in a new president. The search committee will include faculty, staff, students, alumni, etc, and will probably number around twenty. Several Regents are expected to serve on the search committee, as well.

IV. From the Floor – There were no items from the floor.

V. Announcements

- Linda Snetselaar, Associate Provost for Outreach and Engagement, announced that the UI has received the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This designation recognizes the university's efforts to focus on community engagement. Associate Provost Snetselaar and Professor Colin Gordon, of History, were both involved in leading an application process that benefitted from the participation of numerous individuals on campus. The designation will be in effect for ten years.
- The call has gone out for nominations for the Michael J. Brody Award for Faculty Excellence in Service to the University and the State of Iowa. Please encourage your colleagues to nominate someone. The deadline to submit nominations is Thursday, March 12.
- The online committee recruitment drive is scheduled to begin tomorrow, Wednesday, January 28. Please encourage your colleagues to participate.
- Nominations for Faculty Senate elections are currently being sought. Last week faculty in colleges with Senate vacancies received mass emails instructing them to submit nominations to the Faculty Senate office. Please encourage your colleagues to participate.
- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Tuesday, February 10, 3:30 – 5:15 pm, Senate Chamber, Old Capitol.
- The next Faculty Council meeting will be Tuesday, March 3, 3:30-5:15 pm, University Capitol Centre 2390.

VI. Adjournment – Professor Muhly moved and Professor Vos seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously. President Thomas adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.