FACULTY SENATE
Tuesday, December 10, 2013
3:30 – 5:15 pm
Senate Chamber, Old Capitol

MINUTES


Officers Present:  D. Cunning, E. Dove, E. Lawrence, A. Thomas.


Guests:  S. Agnew (Press-Citizen), J. Brennan (Vice President, Strategic Communications), B. Butler (Provost), L. Crooks (Graduate College), J. Keller (Graduate College), S. Mason (President), G. Meyle (Daily Iowan), V. Miller (Gazette), L. Zaper (Faculty Senate Office).

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

II. Approvals
A. Meeting Agenda – President Lawrence indicated that two changes would be made to the agenda that had been mailed out to senators. Professor Susan Assouline would not present the Alcohol Harm Reduction Committee Three-Year Plan at today’s meeting, but at the February 11 Senate meeting. Also, one new appointment would be added to the list of appointments for approval; Vice President Thomas would present this addition. Professor Bohannan moved and Professor Pendergast seconded that the revised agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
B. Faculty Senate Minutes (October 22, 2013) – Professor Pendergast pointed out that in the discussion of the Faculty Activity Survey, it was the median, not the average, that was discussed. That change will be made to the final version of the minutes. Professor Bartlett moved and Professor Pendergast seconded that the corrected minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Committee Appointments (Alexandra Thomas, Chair, Committee on Committees):
   - Carolyn Jones (Law) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - John Westefeld (Psych & Quant Foundations) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Matthew Geneser (Pediatric Dentistry) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Nancy Langguth (Teaching & Learning) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Lois Cox (Law) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Vilia Tarvydas (Rehabilitation Counseling) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - David Mauer (Finance) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Samuel Burer (Management Sciences) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - John Whiston (Law) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Erika Ernst (Pharmacy) to the Judicial Commission, 2013-16
   - Matthew Brown (English) to replace Claire Sponsler (English) on the Campus Planning Committee, Spring 2014

Vice President Thomas indicated that the last appointment was added after the agenda had been sent out. Professor Treat moved and Professor Gillan seconded that the appointments be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Faculty Senate Elections Vacancy Tally – President Lawrence indicated that online nominations for the Senate will begin on January 31 and run through February 8. She requested that senators encourage their colleagues to vote and, if nominated, to agree to have their names put on the ballot for elections, which will begin February 28. Vice President Thomas moved and Professor Bartlett seconded that the Elections Vacancy Tally be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

President Lawrence thanked those senators who attended the reception for local legislators the previous evening. The reception was co-hosted by Faculty Senate and the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce. President Lawrence commented that the reception provided an opportunity for faculty members to thank our legislators for their continuing work on behalf of the university.

President Lawrence noted that an announcement has gone out from the Committee on the Celebration of Excellence and Achievement Among Women regarding nominations for Distinguished Achievement Awards for faculty and staff. She encouraged senators to submit nominations.

Because this would be Past President Ed Dove’s last Senate meeting, President Lawrence invited senators to join her in a round of applause to thank him for his service. She added that former Senate President Richard Fumerton would take up the duties of past president in the spring semester.
III. New Business

- President Sally Mason

President Mason began her remarks by commenting that earlier in the day she had been in Des Moines, discussing the proposed budget for the Regents institutions with Governor Branstad. She added that she was pleased that the Board of Regents, State of Iowa had proposed a tuition freeze for resident undergraduate students for the second consecutive year, contingent upon a 4% increase in state appropriations. President Mason expressed optimism for the prospects of this proposal. She noted that there had not been a consecutive two-year tuition freeze since 1975. During the Regents meeting last week, a decrease in the tuition for the College of Law was approved. President Mason observed that the law profession is in a state of flux right now. She added that it was necessary to balance enrollment with quality, and expressed confidence in the administration at the College of Law to maintain quality while also seeking to enhance enrollment.

Communication with our national elected representatives remains robust. President Mason reported that about two dozen members of the university community traveled to Washington, D.C. in November for the second biennial Hawkeye Caucus. Collegiate representatives set up tables in the Cannon Office Building and provided information about our programs and our public engagement activities to our representatives, their staff members and many area alumni. President Mason also met personally with the members of our Congressional delegation and stressed the importance of what the university does for their constituents both here on campus and throughout the state. The visits were well-received. President Mason commented that one of her key messages to legislators was that the university is a hub of education and discovery that relies on funding from federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation to fulfill our mission and achieve our aspirations. On the local level, President Mason encouraged senators to participate in Hawkeye Caucus Day in Des Moines on April 2. During this annual event, UI students, staff and faculty members visit the Iowa State Capitol Building and highlight the university’s impact on the state to our local legislators.

President Mason indicated that she was one of six university presidents invited to the White House to discuss strategies to assist more academically-talented students from low-income families to attend college. She shared the university’s experience with several programs geared toward these students. Scholarship money for undergraduate students has doubled since the time that President Mason came to the UI; two-thirds of that scholarship money is reserved for high-achieving students who demonstrate financial need. President Mason noted that about 20% of our undergraduate students are awarded Pell Grants, indicating that they have significant financial need. About 25% are first-generation college students. As a first-generation college student herself, President Mason understands the challenges these students face. The Center for Diversity and Enrichment and the Chief Diversity Office offer a number of programs to support underrepresented students, first-generation students, and students from low-income families. The Iowa Edge program, for example, is a pre-orientation program that helps underrepresented minority students transition from high school to college, provides leadership training, and connects students with campus mentors. The retention and graduation rates of
students who have been through the program have consistently been in the 90% range. A new program is First Generation Iowa, which provides social, academic, and service opportunities to first-generation college students, including the opportunity to interact with other first-generation college students, staff, and faculty members. The Iowa Trio program has been in existence for many years, and assists low-income first-generation college students, along with students with disabilities.

Turning to recent achievements of university community members, President Mason noted that undergraduate student Zach Wahls has been named a Truman Scholar, the university’s sixth in six years. The Truman Scholar program recognizes college juniors who exhibit exceptional leadership potential and a strong commitment to public service. Junior Derek Heckman was named the university’s first Beinecke Scholar, a new national program for students in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Among recent major honors for faculty members, President Mason mentioned that Professor of Mathematics Philip Kutzko received the 2014 American Mathematics Society Award for distinguished service. Professor Kutzko has been instrumental in his department’s efforts to train a significant number of the nation’s underrepresented minority doctoral students in mathematics. Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering Jerald Schnoor has been named an Einstein Professor by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, while Professor of Education and now Dean of the College of Education Nicholas Colangelo has earned the international award for research from the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children. And, Professor of Creative Writing Marilynne Robinson was awarded a National Humanities Medal by President Obama in a ceremony last summer at the White House. Among the junior faculty members receiving awards and honors are Assistant Professor of Pharmacology Qi Wu, selected as a 2013 Pew Scholar in the Biomedical Sciences. Professor Wu will receive a four-year, $240,000 research award from the Pew Charitable Trusts. Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences Vinit Mahajan, also a clinician scientist in the Stephen A. Wynn Institute for Vision Research, received a $486,000 Doris Duke Clinical Scientist Development Award, designed to facilitate the transition of junior scientists to independent clinical research careers. The National Science Foundation recently selected Assistant Professors of Chemistry Sara Mason and Tori Forbes as recipients of the 2013 Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) Award.

President Mason commented that sustainability remains a high priority for the university. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education recently awarded the university a gold rating in its Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System, in recognition of our sustainability achievements. President Mason stressed these achievements are a team effort by the entire university community. Turning to the university’s place in other national rankings, she noted that the UI has again appeared among the top thirty public universities, according to U.S. News and World Report. Forbes magazine has ranked the Tippie College of Business management program among the top twenty nationally. For the ninth straight year, the UI has been designated a “best buy” by the Fiske Guide to Colleges. The UI is one of only twenty-one public universities from the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada to have achieved this designation, which recognizes high academic rankings, an inexpensive or moderate price, and a high quality of student life. U.S. News and World Report recently ranked the UI sixth in the nation on its list of best colleges for veterans. President Mason thanked
faculties and staff for all they do to help the veterans on our campus. There are over 600 veterans currently studying at the UI and that number is expected to grow.

Because the topic of the new buildings on campus often comes up when she is speaking, President Mason presented a slide show on these many projects. The first project featured was the Library Learning Commons, now complete. Students had been consulted early on in the project regarding what features would attract them to the library and the space now contains those amenities, such as individual and small group work spaces and a café. The space remains open all the time except for closures late on Friday and Saturday nights for cleaning and is often filled to capacity. President Mason urged senators to visit the Commons if they have not already done so. On the west side of campus, construction on a new children’s hospital is underway. Visible at this point is the vast crater that will eventually hold a three-level underground parking structure for the hospital complex. Construction of buildings to replace those lost in the flood of 2008 continues in various places across campus. The new School of Music building is going up on the corner of Clinton and Burlington Streets. Four hundred free performances will take place each year in this facility when it is completed. The building will feature two concert halls and an outdoor patio. A new studio arts building, also designed by Steven Holl, will soon go up near Art Building West. The last project presented was the new Hancher Auditorium, going up close to the Levitt Center.

In concluding her remarks, President Mason invited senators to the upcoming Presidential Lecture by Professor of Theatre Arts Alan MacVey on Sunday, February 23, at 3:30 pm in the Levitt Center.

Professor Pendergast asked about the status of the electronic cigarette issue on campus. President Mason indicated that she had asked for various campus constituencies to be consulted for their views on this topic. She observed that there is little data on which to base any decisions at this point. Professor Gillan asked about the future of the art museum. President Mason responded that the university is considering options for the art museum now that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has definitively turned down the university’s request for funds. A request for information has been put out, and by spring options may become clearer for a new building.

President Mason thanked senators for their work on behalf of their colleagues and thanked the Senate officers for their leadership. President Lawrence commented that the Senate officers are uniquely lucky among their peer institutions for the access they have to the central administration and are grateful for the strong commitment to shared governance that exists across the campus.

• **Vice President for Strategic Communication Joe Brennan**

President Lawrence introduced Vice President Joe Brennan, who was appointed to his position in August 2013. She indicated that Dr. Brennan has twenty years of experience in higher education public relations and marketing, holds a Ph.D. in English, and publishes in peer-reviewed journals on topics related to communication in higher education. The Office of
Strategic Communication is currently conducting site assessments across campus, giving faculty and staff the opportunity to provide input on what the Office can do for the university.

Dr. Brennan commented that he is still learning about the university and its culture and has been impressed by the people and programs here. He then shared his preliminary thoughts about institutional communication. He observed that there are very talented people working in communication both in the central office and across campus. Communication is a dynamic field, however, and continued growth is necessary to meet rising expectations. He advocated for becoming more “intentional” in the university’s approach to communication, or, in the words of a dean he had spoken with, “taking control of the institutional narrative.” This would involve defining and clarifying what makes the university distinctive and understanding who we really are, and then telling stories that illustrate that identity. The communication professionals in the various units have indicated that they are looking for guidance, for the facilitation of collaborations, and for support for professional development.

Regarding channels of communication, traditional forms of media remain very influential and it would be to the university’s benefit for its communication professionals to establish stronger ties with journalists not just in Iowa, but around the world. It is also important to focus on social media, which continues to grow in prominence. Advancing the university’s digital presence is a high priority and the university’s home page is undergoing a reconstruction, in order to better serve the site’s visitors and users. Video - on television, on demand and on the web - has emerged as an important tool in today’s media landscape. Dr. Brennan added that this work is done not merely to share with the world the good work that the university is doing, but also to tell any difficult news in a forthright manner, in order to build trust and create understanding with audiences both on and off campus, which is the ultimate objective of institutional communication. This generates the support needed for the university to carry out its academic mission.

Dr. Brennan noted that President Lawrence had asked him to consider in his remarks how best to showcase faculty members’ teaching, research, scholarship, and creativity in a national format, while also balancing the need to communicate within Iowa with the need to communicate outside Iowa. He did not find these two goals to be incompatible. It is essential for the university to reach both audiences. He noted as an example a recent article the university produced about research conducted by UI faculty members indicating that young children who are messy eaters may be better learners. The story was picked up by various media outlets, both within Iowa and across the country. In conclusion, Dr. Brennan encouraged senators to contact him, as he welcomed their thoughts and feedback.

In response to a question about the changing landscape for healthcare facilities in today’s competitive environment, Dr. Brennan commented that patient recruitment and research study subject recruitment were of vital importance to his office. He added that there has been a pooling of resources between the central office and the hospital and health-science college communication offices to better tell the story of the outstanding health care and health-related research going on at UI. Professor Pendergast asked if there were plans to form relationships with scientific organizations that promote new ideas and new research. Dr. Brennan responded
that there were plans to do so, through professional organizations such as the Association of American Universities (AAU). Additionally one of the university’s science writers hopes to host the annual meeting of the Midwest chapter of the National Association of Science Writers on campus soon. The office is also looking into participating in an AAU initiative called Futurity.org, which showcases university research and creativity. Dr. Brennan stressed that we need to advance the university’s message across multiple media and through a range of partnerships. A question was raised about whether efforts were being made to inform the public about the impact of the new health care exchanges on the hospital. Some health plans now being offered exclude UIHC from their networks; this may not be clear to consumers choosing health plans. Dr. Brennan commented that showing the quality and impact of our health care enterprise raises the profile of the institution immensely. He added that the business needs of the university are crucial to his office’s work and that communication serves and supports the mission of the university.

Professor Bohannan observed that students do not often know what research projects their professors are working on. This is information current and prospective students want to have. While we need to enhance our communication with outside constituents, we also need to focus on communicating with students. She also suggested that participants in the Writers’ Workshop may have particularly compelling stories to tell about the university. Dr. Brennan commented that he shared this emphasis on the importance of internal communication and added that faculty, staff and students are the best and most credible ambassadors for the university. He commented that the office is trying an additional new approach to “hometown news,” for which the university sends press releases to media outlets in students’ hometowns about their accomplishments. Students are provided with URL’s to stories about their accomplishments which they can then post and share on their social media sites. News about the university spreads very rapidly in this manner.

Secretary Cunning asked if there were plans to communicate the importance of graduate student education, both in terms of graduate students’ research contribution and their work as instructors. Dr. Brennan commented that this is a topic he has been considering. He added that the research mission distinguishes the UI from many other higher-education institutions and it is important to tell the stories that make this distinction clear. Professor Pendergast cautioned against focusing solely on Ph.D. students, when Masters degree students frequently remain in Iowa and do excellent work here. Dr. Brennan commented that the public is hungry for good stories about all types of students.

• *Funding for Graduate Education (John Keller, Associate Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate College)*

Dean Keller began his presentation by mentioning that the Council of Graduate Schools sponsors an annual national dissertation prize in several categories. The UI is tied with Yale University for the greatest number of dissertation prizes (five) awarded to one institution. There have also been thirteen UI finalists through the years.

Dean Keller indicated that his presentation would touch on themes common to graduate education nationally, not just at the UI. He has given a version of this presentation to the
Council of Deans, the Graduate Council, the Directors of Graduate Studies, and the DEO’s in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Dean Keller reminded the group that several years ago, under former Provost Wallace Loh, a new university strategic plan was adopted. One of the major efforts in that plan was focused on graduate and professional education. Among the key issues for graduate student success were

**supporting curricular innovations that promote quality and timely degree completion; aligning program enrollments, resources, and market demand for graduates; linking funding sources to program quality, centrality, and student success; strengthening graduate education through realignments to promote intellectual synergies; and enhancing career advising and improving placement in academic and nonacademic environments.**

A task force on graduate education completed a report in 2010, [http://provost.uiowa.edu/files/provost.uiowa.edu/files/SITF_Graduate.pdf](http://provost.uiowa.edu/files/provost.uiowa.edu/files/SITF_Graduate.pdf). Many of the recommendations from the report have been followed, including more than 70 program actions (terminations, restructuring, name changes, and new programs). Some recommendations are still in the process of being addressed, such as restructuring the biological science programs and emphasizing the success of a diverse student body.

Dean Keller then directed the group’s attention to a slide showing data on Ph.D. enrollment, average completion rates, and the median time to degree in a wide range of disciplines. He noted that, in spite of progress made in this area, there are still seven programs with a median time to degree of over seven years. One third of programs have a completion rate of over 67%. The Graduate College considers the range of two thirds to three quarters to be a good goal for graduate program completion. He commented that a doctoral completion rate of only 67% is not considered acceptable in many professional colleges. A third of the university’s doctoral programs have a completion rate of less than 50%, a particularly concerning statistic for the Graduate College. This situation is not unique to the UI, however. Completion rates across campus range from the upper 20%-lower 30% to the upper 70%-lower 80%. Regarding initial placements of graduates, only those in the business fields go primarily into tenure-track positions. The vast majority of graduates go into some other type of non-tenure-track academic position. Graduates from the Colleges of Education and Engineering often go into non-academic positions as their initial placements.

Focusing on current dilemmas with doctoral degree programs, Dean Keller commented that receipt of a doctoral degree does not guarantee entry into a stable career as a faculty member. Recent Ph.D.’s in the sciences are remaining for longer periods of time in post-doctoral positions, while those in the humanities and social sciences may stay for years in adjunct or lecturer positions. It remains unclear whether there is currently a shortage or surplus of doctoral degree recipients. There would seem to be a surplus of doctoral degree recipients who are prepared primarily for an academic career, while in the national job market overall, there seems to be a shortage of doctoral degree recipients who possess strong research skills. The mission statements of many of our doctoral programs indicate that they are preparing students for a range of employment possibilities, but it is unclear how much success the programs are having in meeting this goal. Both the university’s strategic plan and the exit surveys of graduate students indicate a need for career services for doctoral students. However, most faculty members, departments and colleges are not able to provide this assistance, and the university’s Career Services office works only with undergraduates, whose student fees support the office.
The Graduate College is exploring a joint hire with Career Services who would focus on graduate students.

Given the situation that Dean Keller has just portrayed, it may be necessary again to review the viability of our graduate programs, looking specifically at applicant pool, time to degree, percent completion, and employment opportunities. There has been a national conversation lately about the function of the dissertation. In the past the dissertation was often seen as the rough draft of one’s first book, but that model may no longer be relevant in the rapidly changing world of scholarly communication. The University of Iowa may be uniquely poised to contribute to this national conversation about the dissertation, because of its history of accepting creative work on an equal basis with scholarly work in fulfillment of graduate degrees. The Graduate College is also seeking to enhance student services, by establishing a comprehensive set of opportunities and experiences, and promoting success in the “new” post-Ph.D. environment. Some institutions around the country are considering reducing the number of their graduate students, giving them greater financial support, and training them for a range of employment opportunities. While reducing the number of graduate students may seem counter-productive to the Graduate College, Dean Keller expressed the opinion that this may be what needs to be done to better prepare graduate students for the current job market.

Turning to recent trends in graduate applications and admissions, Dean Keller noted that last year the number of applications to the Graduate College dropped by 2.6% (about 200 applications). About 25% fewer students (approximately 350) were admitted. Total enrollment therefore decreased almost 6%. Over the past several years, students seeking Masters degrees have been the group with the largest decline in enrollment. Regarding financial support for graduate students, Dean Keller indicated that sources of support include teaching assistantships (about $27 million), research assistantships (about $28 million), Graduate College funding (about $10 million), external fellowships, and private fund raising. The Graduate College allocates its resources in the following ways. About $9.2 million is distributed through tuition (COGS) scholarships. Competitive fellowships comprise about $6.2 million; these include Presidential Fellowships, Ballard-Seashore Dissertation Fellowships, and various others. Strategic Initiative Funds (about $4 million) are divided into three different categories. Competitive awards go to individual programs, while non-competitive awards largely go to graduate students who experience an unexpected loss in funding from other sources. The Graduate College also has funds to support interdisciplinary programs directly (the third category).

If we are to consider reform of graduate education, Dean Keller continued, we must re-examine the role of graduate assistantships on campus. Doctoral students play important roles in the mission of a research university, teaching undergraduate students and contributing to research efforts. However, support of a teaching assistant, including tuition, stipend and benefits, at a 50% appointment can total up to $40,000. This can put a significant strain on departmental and collegiate budgets. Extramural budgets are also decreasing. In concluding his presentation, Dean Keller urged that we respond to the challenges that the current state of graduate education has presented. Programs must be reviewed, especially in terms of their size and the scope of their offerings. The university must focus on comprehensive development of doctoral students, so that they are prepared for non-academic careers. We must consider
alternative modes for delivering instruction and conducting research. And, we must allocate our resources more strategically. To this end, the Graduate College is reviewing its top recruiting fellowships, the Presidential and Dean’s fellowships, because the recipients have had a completion rate of only 68% over the past decade. The College is also looking carefully at the competitive awards component of the Strategic Initiative Fund, to see if those funds are being used as effectively as possible.

Professor Durham asked why time to degree is a factor in quality. Dean Keller answered that students who are in an appropriate program, with the necessary amount of mentoring and financial support, should be able to finish their degrees in seven years. Professor Pendergast asked if there was any information on why graduate student admissions are down at the university. Dean Keller responded that similar trends among applications and admissions are occurring at many of the other Big Ten universities. Professor Pendergast commented that faculty members may have reduced research funding, so they may have fewer resources to support graduate students. And, if students are taking longer to finish their degrees, that also impacts the amount of funding available for new students.

Professor Treat commented that the completion rates of students who receive Presidential and Dean’s Fellowships may vary substantially among departments. She suggested that, rather than eliminating the fellowships entirely, those resources be directed toward those departments whose recipients have been successful. Dean Keller responded that the Graduate College may look into doing this, especially with the Presidential Fellowships. Also, since these fellowships are primarily recruitment tools, perhaps they could be offered for only the student’s first year. Professor Gillan commented that it might be useful to know, of the students who do not complete a Ph.D., how many do receive a Masters degree, also a significant accomplishment. Dean Keller responded that the Graduate College tracks Ph.D. completion because this is the student’s objective upon entering. If the programs were in the practice of awarding Masters degrees, and then deciding which students should pursue the Ph.D., this would be beneficial for both the students and the university. He added that the average completion rate for all graduate programs (including Masters degree programs) hovers around 75%. In conclusion Dean Keller stressed that the Graduate College is continually adjusting resources to meet its goals of recruiting, retaining and graduating qualified students.

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

V. Announcements
   • The next Faculty Council meeting will be Tuesday, January 28, 3:30-5:15 pm, University Capitol Centre 2390.
   • The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Tuesday, February 11, 3:30 – 5:15 pm, Senate Chamber, Old Capitol.

VI. Adjournment – Professor Pendergast moved and Professor Gillan seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously. President Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 5:21 pm.