FAM/By-Laws Meeting Minutes, Mar. 29, 2017, 11:00 am

Attending: Jason Vance, Carl Wise, Todd McNerny, Jannette Finch, Megan Gould.

Minutes recorded by Jason Vance.

- Approval of revised minutes from Dec. 5, 2016 FAM/By-Laws Meeting

- Approval of minutes from Jan. 31, 2017 FAM/By-Laws Meeting

- Motions to Split the Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs into Two Committees: The Committee on Graduate Education and the Committee on Continuing Education, and, to Form a New Standing Senate Committee: Adjunct Oversight Committee, were presented at the Mar. 14 Faculty Senate Meeting. Both motions were passed by the Faculty Senate and will be posted for Ratification.

- During the March, 14 Faculty Senate meeting, Meg Cormack presented a Motion to Amend the Standing Rules to require the Faculty Senate end at 7:00pm. The ensuing discussion identified that mechanisms exist to call for a quorum or motion to adjourn, and it may not be wise to force an automatic cease of the Senate meeting at 7:00pm if there is important business that remains to be completed (e.g. curriculum). It was further discussed that flipping the order of business might address some of the concerns raised by Senator Cormack in that a quorum is needed to conduct business, but is not needed to listen to reports and comment. Cormack's motion did not pass, and Senator Roxane DeLaurell made a motion from the floor for the FAM/By-Laws Committee to recommend amending the Bylaws to change the order of Faculty Senate Business, putting Business ahead of Reports. That Motion was seconded and passed, and referred to FAM/By-Laws for review, to draft the proposed language, and to report on the Motion at the April Faculty Senate Meeting.

- Discussion of the Motion to Change the Order of Faculty Senate Business:
  
  Todd McNerny provided some historical perspective regarding the importance of Reports presented to the Faculty Senate, especially those from Administration. Even as recent as 4-5 years ago, there were complaints that the Senate was a reactive body, that the Administration did not effectively communicate changes or intentions to the Faculty, that the Faculty were not involved in the decision-making, etc. These reports serve a valuable function to disseminate information and facilitate discussion and debate, in lieu of a memo buried in your e-mail inbox. Moving reports to the end of the Senate meeting, where the Faculty senators may be less attentive and more passive, may be a disservice to shared governance and to our constituents.

  It was further discussed that we would not expect the President to sit through the entirety of the Senate meetings (particularly, April's meeting) to deliver his semi-annual reports; thus, the Speaker of the Faculty would exercise his/her privilege to re-order the Senate agenda. Likewise, non-Senate visitors who attend and/or deliver reports and would have to sit through the majority of the Senate meeting before their relevant report(s) were delivered.

  The Committee discussed how the importance of shared governance is portrayed if Dept/School representatives are not willing to attend and participate throughout the entire Senate meeting? Jason Vance noted that we have an obligation to our constituents to be well-prepared,
present and attentive throughout the duration of the Senate meeting, regardless of the order of business. Changing the order of business will not address apathy or leaving the meeting early. One 2+ hour meeting per month should not be terribly onerous.

Changing the order of the Faculty Senate agenda would address the concerns of 1) maintaining a quorum throughout the deliberation of new business, and 2) allow the Faculty Senate to deliberate over business with less mental fatigue. However, it is not clear whether the overall duration of Senate meetings would change, to address Meg Cormack’s original Motion to End the Senate Meeting at 7:00pm. Although, one could argue that the discussion of business may be more efficient and less prone to confusion if addressed earlier in the Senate meeting, the presence of more Senators, who are more energetic early in the meeting, may prolong discussions of business. Todd also noted that our perception that many senators are leaving early may actually be those non-senator visitors who were present for reports or specific business (e.g. to be present during a discussion of a curriculum motion). We discussed whether losing a quorum has been an actual issue.

The Committee discussed the By-Laws and noted that Article IV, Section 4.L, which defines the order of regular meetings of the Faculty Senate, is consistent with that defined by Robert's Rules of Order. Article IV, Section 4.H empowers the "Speaker of the Faculty [to] modify the agenda in order that the Senate may address concerns in a timely fashion", and Article IV, Section 4.L declares that the order of business may be "subject to change by the Speaker of the Faculty as per Article IV, Section 4H or by a simple majority vote of the Senate." Thus, there are several mechanisms in the By-Laws that allows the Order of Business to be modified; and, it might be more productive to encourage the future Speaker of the Faculty, and our Faculty Senators, to exercise this mechanism when it is apparent that a given Senate agenda will not address concerns in a timely fashion (e.g. such as a February Senate meeting with numerous Reports and extensive curriculum changes proposed by the Curriculum Committee).

The FAM/By-Laws Committee summarized that the proposed Motion to Change the Order of Senate Business may not address the root of the problem, and 2) may impact the efficacy of how information in reports are disseminated to the senators and their constituents; and, 3) the By-Laws provide mechanisms by which the Speaker of the Faculty and/or senators may change the order of business to accommodate any given meeting's agenda. We concluded that the Committee will present the Motion to Change the Order of Senate Business, as instructed by the Faculty Senate, but will not recommend the Motion. Jason further suggested that we recommend that the Standing Rules be modified to include, "At the start of the Faculty Senate meeting, the Speaker of the Faculty will ask whether there are any objections to the agenda as presented"; as doing so will not bestow any new privileges to the senators, but remind them of their existing privilege to change the order of Senate business if necessary.

Todd advised that Jason contact the Parliamentarian (George Pothering) to discuss the matter further and obtain any additional insight and/or perspectives on the matter which may be summarized in the Committee’s report on the Motion. Jason agreed to do so and informed the Committee that a draft of the report would be forwarded to the Committee for review ASAP.

- Jason Vance briefly discussed the list of external links to College Policy that is referred to in the FAM. Academic Affairs can decide whether to incorporate these hyperlinks to the College Policy into the FAM document.