

FACULTY SENATE Minutes
March 8, 2023

Present: Elizabeth Armstrong, Carla Billitteri, Emmanuel Boss, Tim Bowden, Ian Bricknell, Alice Bruce, Stephanie Burnett, Sabrina DeTurk, Paula Drewniany, Phil Dunn, Michael Grillo, Nancy Hall, Matt Hawkyard, Liliana Herakova, Cynthia Isenhour, Stephen Jurich, Jesse Kaye-Schiess, Andre Khalil, Amanda Klemmer, Eric Landis, Sara Lello, Sarah Lindahl, Margo Lukens, Ivan Manev, Dmitri Markovitch, Eric Martin, William Nichols, Elizabeth Payne, Brian Pitman, Deborah Rogers, Amber Roth, Michael Scott, MJ Sedlock, Kathryn Slott, Rosemary Smith, Sean Smith, David Townsend, Tim Waring, Manuel Woersdoerfer, Todd Zoroya, Joan Ferrini-Mundy, John Volin, Robert Dana, Emily Haddad, Meredith Whitfield, Nicole Lawrence, Kelly Sparks, Kate Kemper, Anosha Raziq, Jen Bonnet, Deb Allen, Daisy Dominguez-Singh, Ryan Weatherbee, Norm O'Reilly, Perry Bishop

Absent: Henri Akono, Susan Bennett-Armistead, Catharine Biddle, Debbie Bouchard, Kristina Cammen, Ana Chatenever, Mauricio Da Cunha, Nuri Emanetoglu, Mark Haggerty, Steven Kimball, Anil Raj Kizha, Danielle Levesque, Jessica Lewis, Shannon McCoy, Derek Michaud, Renae Moran, Harlan Onsrud, Bob Rice, Peter Van Walsum, Matthew Wallhead, Kody Varahramyan, Jake Ward, Chris Richards, Samatha Hegmann, Heather Ball, Jeff Mills, Nicole Lawrence, Peter Altmann

I. Welcome, Announcements, Approval of Minutes

Call to order: 3:15 PM

New Athletic Director Jude Killy was introduced to the Senate.

February 8th, 2023 Minutes:

Corrections: Amber Roth and Norm O'Reilly were added to the list of those present.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

It was brought up about shortening the length of the minutes and eliminating the excessive detail so that they would be easier to read. Nevertheless, the details are useful for those unable to attend meetings. Paula Drewniany suggested capturing the spirit of some comments but not writing them down word for word in order to have something that is easier for people to read and respond to.

Dee Nichols announced those that have put their names forward for Senate elected officers:

- Kathryn Slott for Secretary
- Todd Zoroya for Vice President
- Amanda Klemmer for President
- Ivan Manev for Board of Trustees Representative

Dee encouraged additional nominations.

II. Announcements and Updates from Administration

Provost John Volin talked about the national survey for student engagement that takes place every few years. The survey has kicked off and responses will be accepted until May. He also revealed that in the previous survey, they had received responses from 30% of students.

Jude Killy spoke about the academic achievements of student athletes. He announced that there were 334 student athletes with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 230 of them had maintained this GPA for the entire year. The cumulative GPA for all student athletes was reported to be 3.31. Jude Killy also informed the Senate that the men's ice hockey team would be hosting a playoff game against Vermont tonight and is hoping for a good turn out.

Provost Volin added there was an upcoming signing ceremony with Eastern Maine Community College, involving the construction engineering technology program.

Michael Grillo had a final announcement regarding the open session held by the state legislature and the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee regarding LD 512, an act to promote student enrollment and degree completion in the University of Maine system by providing tuition waivers for eligible students. Mike Tipping put forth the bill on behalf of the University. The bill aims to level the playing field between universities and community colleges with their tuition waiver act, LD 477. Mike Grillo encouraged members of the Senate to get in touch with members of the Education and Cultural Affairs Committee to support the bill. LD 512 is seeking parity support for four years of university education, recognizing the low percentage of students who pursue this path, which currently sits between 3.5% and 5% for students from community colleges. The bill's passage would create a direct path for tuition subsidies or tuition waivers for 50% of four-year programs, which could significantly boost enrollment.

III. Jeff St. John: Unified Catalog and Framework for Multi-Campus Programs

Jeff St. John began with two updates from ongoing unified catalog work. Last month, a note was shared with all students that provided a link to a course search mechanism. This tool was developed to allow students to search system-wide summer offerings across all universities. As a result, they received a lot of feedback and a lengthy list of necessary improvements was made. The aim of this tool is to allow students to see what courses are available without having to go

through 6-10 clicks into Maine Street. The plan is to take the feedback and improve the search mechanism further. Once implemented, an update will be provided on any apparent impact on enrollment.

Dee Nichols asked whether the unified catalog designates which university is offering the course when students search for it. Jeff St. John answered that students can currently search by keyword to see available courses, but they aim to make the search mechanism more sophisticated so that students can enter specific details to get better results. The idea is to make it easier to see what courses are being offered, where, and into specific offerings. Dee pointed out that there are only three accredited courses in the system's College of Education, and students cannot go to other universities for these courses, so he suggested creating a way to make it easier for students to see if the universities offering the courses are accredited.

Jeff St. John stated that several provosts and faculty governance council members had expressed concerns about the transfer work being done this spring. They wanted to understand the exceptions campus by campus regarding practices and policies to identify any procedural or technical barriers impeding students. The suggestion was to reach out and try to achieve an alignment or a fix to remove those barriers. They emphasized the need to talk to students who have changed or experienced transfer between institutions, either within or outside the system, or students who frequently take courses elsewhere in the system and transfer those credits back to their home institution. To understand the student experience with the unified catalog, a small student panel is being put together with the help of the registrars and the Chief Student Affairs Officer. The goal is to have at least one student from every university in the system on the panel. They are looking to hear all perspectives from this panel.

Mike Scott asked for clarification regarding the unified catalog that is being offered to students and whether it can show if a course is accessible to a student depending on location, day of the week, etc. Jeff St. John said that is something they are looking to account for in order to provide all relevant information to a student when they view a course. Mike Scott followed up asking if this will impact infosilem. Jeff St. John said he doesn't know but will make sure it will not impact it.

For the second update, the NECHE team had pointed out the limited progress UMaine has made in developing a plan for assessing multi-university programs, which include property

departments, diversity programming, and other models. There is a need to ensure that when reporting on assessment data for individual programs or individual universities, it is done in a way that doesn't distort or eclipse the individual nature of the data. The second area of concern was the plan for setting program outcomes for multi-university delivery in two different areas. Firstly, for a multi-university program where students are enrolled in a program that is routinely delivered across two or more institutions, and secondly, for programs where colleagues at different campuses are routinely jointly delivering courses. It was agreed that the governance council was looking at the proposed model for doing that work, with the actual content of learning outcomes being faculty purview. Additionally, Mr. St. John accepted an invitation to work with the Academic Affairs Committee on the academic calendar issue.

IV. MOU Regarding Formation and Initial Governance of MCEC

MJ started discussion regarding this memorandum of understanding regarding the Maine College of Engineering and Computing, which has already been brought before Southern Maine engineering faculty and their Faculty Senate and ultimately resulted in a passing vote. At Monday's Faculty Governance Council meeting, MJ was asked by faculty from other campuses about what action the UMaine Faculty Senate has taken on this MOU but it hasn't come to our Faculty Senate yet. Through this discussion it became unclear if this is something that should be brought before the Faculty Senate. MJ also clarified that this MOU is set to be voted on March 26th at the Board of Trustees meeting. MJ proposed that should the Senate do something regarding this MOU that it is done via special session or during the March 22nd Elected Senate meeting.

Ivan Manev added context to the meeting with the University of Southern Maine Faculty Senate: they voted to approve, but there was a statement that this was under the assumption that their Engineering Department would not be absorbed by UMaine. As far as the Senate's approval of this, they might decide to vote to support the MOU, to support it with either some recommendations or with concerns, possibly recommend against it, or decide to not review it at all.

Mike Scott said he views this as internal to the unit at USM. He felt this is not something the Senate should look at as it's about the USM Engineering program maintaining their desire to exist. He doesn't see that the Senate has any role in this.

Dee Nichols added that about the same time last year the USM MOU came forward and UMaine Faculty Senate decided to send a sentence back just saying we support the faculty of USM. Some wanted the Senate to weigh in, others felt it was not really our business.

John Volin said USM approved this MOU last May, but it didn't go to the full Board of Trustees as other things were happening, so the item was pulled. One of the key factors was the transition to a new Dean of Engineering.

Alice Bruce brought up that in the MOU it says that discussions are ongoing with other units and will be addressed with supplements to this MOU. She felt it will be hard to think about approving an appendix when they're not approving the full thing. She thought the language of supplements to the MOU doesn't really work, and she felt that supplement is wrong because it implies a subordinate or dependent status.

Mike Scott said there is still a lot of evolution of this issue coming forward and still a lot of unknowns. President Ferrini-Mundy added that she is very pleased with the discussions they've had with people at USM and that she's excited about the possibility of moving forward with this. She also said she'd be happy to answer any questions about this MOU.

MJ said the general sense that she wants to give in a response is that we talked about it, we support our colleagues, and there's no need to take it further.

V. MOU Regarding Inclusion of SCIS in MCEC

SCIS = School Computing Information Science

David Townsend opened discussion stating that everybody in the College of Engineering and Computer Science should have received a memo that they are going to have an information session which will be March 28th at 12 PM in the Bangor room in the Memorial Union. This will be used to hear from all affected parties to see if there are any potentially significant academic impacts of this MOU. David added that he's already heard from faculty that there are some serious concerns. After this information session, the Senate can then determine what message to send to the administration.

Dee Nichols added that the hearing is for comments and concerns. Our role is to determine the potential academic impacts. Dave Townsend elaborated, saying this will help bring information forward to the Senate so they can make this decision.

Mike Scott clarified that the PCRRC will determine whether a motion should come forward to the Senate. He said that two members from every college need to be on the PCRRC to deliberate. The PCRRC determines whether a motion comes forward or not.

Dave Townsend said it is set up for this review that they need two members from each college. The only college with two members currently is the College of Engineering, so they need other colleges to add one more member. The listing is on the Faculty Senate website and the meeting is 12 PM on March 20th.

MJ said there is more to come in the next meeting about this and since we will be coming off this March 20th meeting, it can start to get to a point where response can be provided and things can start to happen. However, meetings for this year are running out and the Senate may need to move quickly. MJ added that there is an awareness that the procedures for PCRRC are flawed and not clear and need some kind of overhaul. Finding out the exact terms of the path forward for this issue is something that still needs to be figured out.

David Townsend clarified that MJ is discussing the guide book for operational procedures for PCRRC which were approved in 2007 and 2008 which speak to reorganization programs and the creation of new academic programs. Since this guide book, the system has come up with instructions on forming academic programs which were followed last year but don't work well with what was approved in 2007 and 2008. The old language treats reorganization programs and academic programs as a single entity and that is the main problem.

Dee Nichols reminded Senate members that as the academic year winds down, senators who serve on committees should already be thinking about next academic year and setting goals.

VI. Questions of the Administration

All Faculty Senators are invited to address a question to any member of the Administration during this time. Respectful questions on any topic of campus business are welcome.

Dee Nichols started by talking about the integrated catalog between UMaine and UMaine Machias. Some programs have worked well with this collaboration but other programs like Education are struggling due to a lack of faculty. This has led to students being forced to go to other places like Presque Isle. UMaine Machias isn't accredited and doesn't desire to be so the necessity to ensure students know what courses they can and cannot take is important. As for faculty, a lot are retiring and can't be replaced, thus leading to more and more online courses, which may be non accredited. Dee brought up an article he saw in the Bangor Daily News that talks about even though UMaine is fully open post COVID, many courses are still online.

John Volin responded by first saying that UMaine Machias is down to 21 full-time faculty. They are looking at how to strategically reprioritize with one position being special education. There have been conversations with UMaine Machias about this issue; although this discussion is specifically about special education, these conversations are happening all the time. This is a work in progress, they are focusing on certain areas, creating pathways in others. All things are being worked on, there is a structure in there and a plan.

Mike Scott felt that as smaller campuses rely on larger campuses for course delivery, it will have major impacts down the line. If Machias is relying on our College of Education to deliver courses, it works for them and that's a conversation that's taking place.

Dee asked since UMaine Machias now is approved to have an undergraduate special education program, that due to the unified catalog, can UMaine have an undergraduate program?

Provost Volin said there is a lot to work out. He and President Ferrini-Mundy met with Machias students and they do have to rely on a lot of UMaine courses and vice versa. So these students have to pay UMaine tuition and can't afford it. These things have to be worked out.

MJ brought up an email she received about a new initiative to limit the selling of hard copy textbooks in the bookstore. She mentioned that most people had received an email about the new system, but were not clear on the details. It appeared that there would be an opt-in system for purchasing hard copies as opposed to the traditional model. MJ wondered about the reasoning and goals behind the change.

Kelly Sparks responded that the new system was indeed an opt-in model, and offered to find out more information and report back. MJ expressed concern that when she received the email, she had not understood that it was the instructor who would have to opt in, rather than the students. She was worried about advising a large number of students and ensuring that they understood what they were getting when they participated in the new system.

David Townsend said he was notified by a salesperson from the publisher that the textbook is available electronically and automatically being billed to any student that registers for that class. He felt it sounded inexpensive and convenient, but when he wanted to place an order for hard copies, he was told it was one or the other and wouldn't be able to order hard copy books for the students. That course is for first-year students, and at the end of semester they would no longer have access to an electronic textbook, and they would be billed twice because they still need the book for the following semester. Kelly Sparks asked if the concern is about the requirement of time to choose between hardcopy and electronic and keeping the foundational text over multiple semesters. David said that was right.

There was a comment of concern that it would automatically bill a student whether they may or may not want to buy the textbook. David said students can opt out of buying it and Kelly Sparks said she'll follow up on that. She is not sure how a publisher could charge direct to a student bill but will learn more and report back. She understands it can be confusing and feels like there is an expectation to pay for the book.

MJ said her understanding is that the system has been used for some classes but now expanding to other classes. She felt it was confusing on how to advise students how to get a hardcopy or not buy a book at all and how they opt out of the electronic copy. Something to follow up on as well, may be how the digital textbooks are accessed, like if a student needs 5 different programs for 5 different books. Kelly Sparks feels it will be helpful to come back with the state of how digital access to these textbooks work and go through questions.

Brian Pitman asked why the library can't purchase textbooks: have this inclusive initiative be complemented by the library buying textbooks. David Townsend added that he bought copies and donated them to the library; there is not a policy about putting copies in the library but a policy against the library buying the textbook. There was a comment that faculty can request copies from a publisher to put in the library and that is free and can be checked out for a limited time.

Ivan Manev said in defense of the new system, that in his experience it is cheaper for students to get the electronic versions, and not only get the book but exercises. The bookstore can be cheaper than direct from the publisher.

Provost Volin said that today UMaine earned the military friendly school designation and wanted to share that with the Senate.

MJ said she forgot to mention at the beginning of today's meeting that Meredith Whitfield has moved up to chief marketing and communication officer and that UMaine will be looking for a new chief of staff to fill her role that was left behind. MJ also mentioned that coming up there will be a lot of motions coming forward and bylaw updates, one being to have four members of UMaine Machias join the UMaine Faculty Senate. MJ lastly said that the Associate Provost for Student Success and Strategic Initiatives will serve on the various General Education committees. The Provost asked if we might be willing to have a more general designee of the Provost's office so that that person might change depending on the role that an associate provost is playing with the exact work that that committee is doing at that time.

Dee added that there is language already crafted to add UMaine Machias reps in our Faculty Senate bylaws.

VII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned 4:25

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Slott

Prepared by Wyatt Scribner