ACADEMIC COUNCIL
Minutes
Monday, September 21, 2015 from 3:30 to 5:00 pm
CNS 200

Faculty Members Present: Professors Mousumi Bhattacharya, Beth Boquet, Dave Crawford, David Downie, Bob Epstein, Shannon Kelley, Alison Kris, Jen Klug, Phil Lane, John McDermott, Rona Preli, Susan Rakowitz (Secretary of the General Faculty), Kraig Steffen, Jo Yarrington, Amalia Rusu (Executive Secretary), Emily Smith, Debra Strauss (Chair), Joan Weiss

Administrators: SVPAA Lynn Babington, Deans Don Gibson, Bruce Berdanier, Bob Hannafin, Yohuru Williams

Regrets: Dean Meredith Kazer

0. Selection of Recording Secretary, Election of Chair and Executive Secretary for 2015-16
Dean Williams drew names – Yarrington not arrived yet, next alphabetical name Bhattacharya appointed as recording secretary. Deb Strauss (Rakowitz/Crawford) and Amalia Rusu (Rakowitz/Steffen) were elected Chair and Executive Secretary by acclamation.

1. Presidential courtesy

SVPAA/Provost Lynn Babington made the following remarks:

Welcome back to a new year! Looking forward to working together this year.

Most of you were at the general faculty meeting on Friday so I don’t want to repeat myself as my remarks will also be in the minutes. I do want to say however that I spent last year learning about all of the various programs, departments, centers, institutes and other academic initiatives. I also got to know individual faculty and continue to be impressed by the commitment faculty have to academic excellence, to our students and their interesting and amazing scholarship. As the heart and soul of the University, faculty exemplify a commitment to the ideals of a Jesuit education. I am proud to be your academic leader!

I also spent time earning the respect of my colleagues in other units on campus, particularly the executive leadership team. I believe this has been very helpful as we are working very well together on behalf of the entire University. We have been able to garner additional resources for the Academic enterprise and make sure that we are engaged in decisions across the University.

We have a busy year ahead of us as we continue to focus on teaching, scholarship and service and also on implementing the initiatives outlined in the strategic plan: 2020: The Way Forward.

Enrollment Update
Undergraduates – As of 9/15 - 968 freshman higher yield, stronger students (higher SAT scores, more merit scholars accepted our admission offer-40% male/60% female; 15% AHANA students 28 states/10 countries
Admit rate down 7 points (64.9%) Discount rate improved (42.7%)
CAS=389; DSB=384; SON=118; SOE=77
Graduates – As of 9/15 (note that 10/1 is the official date for a final count – 1164 (GSEAP=446, SOE= 244, SON= 224, DSOB= 142, CAS = 108) 63% female, 37% male).
38% students of color; 22% international

**Faculty**- At the new faculty orientation a couple of weeks ago, we welcomed 8 tenure track (economics, history, chemistry, IOM, marketing, electrical & computer systems, mechanical, SON) and 13 full time non-tenure track faculty. Please welcome them to your various departments.

**Faculty Searches** – At this present moment, eight tenure track searches are currently underway for the Fall 2017

CAS = 4- English (digital journalism), Communication, MPA/Politics and International Studies
DSB = 2- Management and Finance
SOE = Electrical and Computer Systems
SON = Senior Level position

**Faculty/Administration Dialogue**
1. Wine and Cheese reception with the President – regularly scheduled informal wine and cheese receptions with faculty scheduled throughout the year.
2. Deans & Directors meeting – Faculty leaders (faculty in administrative positions – deans, associate deans, department chairs, Center and Institute leaders etc.) regularly attend these meetings with the rest of the leadership in the University community.
3. General Faculty Meeting- President von Arx would like to attend at least one general faculty meeting each semester to discuss specific topics. We have him scheduled to come to the October 23 meeting along with Wally Halas, VP for Advancement to discuss the Campaign Launch.
4. Senior Leadership meeting – The Executive Committee of the Academic Council will identify appropriate faculty leaders to participate once a semester in one of the Senior Leadership meetings. For example - if the topic of the meeting is focused on admissions, the EC of AC may choose to invite the faculty representative to the Admissions committee of the BOT to attend.
5. Academic Council Executive Committee/Executive Leadership Team – Once a semester, these two groups will meet to discuss University issues. (Executive team includes President von Arx, Lynn Babington, Kevin Lawlor and Tom Pellegrino).

Professor Weiss pointed out that she is Math Department Chair, but has not been invited to the Deans and Directors meetings. SVPAA Babington said she will make sure that Chairs are invited.

2. **Report from the Secretary of the General Faculty**

Professor Rakowitz noted the following.
Information for new members: this is the executive arm of the General Faculty. Policy comes through us, either from other Handbook committees or from AC subcommittees. Calendar of meetings is in the Faculty Handbook, first Monday of each month. The March 14 meeting date needs to be approved because March 7 is during spring Break. It was approved by the Academic Council members.
Last year the Academic Council approved a number of Policy matters. The SVPAA approved them all, so the Journal of Record has been updated accordingly. Part of the GFS job is also to review all policy documents to make sure that they accord with approved policy. Prof. Rakowitz explained that in doing so, she noticed a lack of approved policies regarding graduate courses, despite graduate catalogues filled with policies, like a minimum GPA for remaining in good standing. She spoke to Assoc. SVPAA Christine Siegel about working with the Associate Deans to propose a set of common policies. That may be coming to us later this year.

Faculty committees are getting up and running. The Committee on Committees has worked hard on filling the vacancies on all faculty committees.

New business – President’s address to the General Faculty – as can be seen in the materials for today's meeting, the President no longer wants to make an annual end of academic year address to the Faculty. Instead, he intends to address the faculty in October with VP Halas regarding the capital campaign, and give an update on strategic planning in January with SVPAA/Provost Babington. Prof. Rakowitz indicated that if the Council wanted to discuss this change, it could be a future agenda item.

RecPlex issue – There is language in the Faculty Handbook and MOU-BPO that guarantees a faculty shower and locker area in the RecPlex. Currently it is not there. It is not a desirable state. Now during the renovation this can be addressed. SVPAA/Provost Babington has agreed that she and David Frasinelli will meet with a group of interested faculty to discuss how best to bring the new facilities into compliance with the Handbook guarantee. Professor Rakowitz has already lined up a male and a female faculty member who have expressed concerns about this issue for this subcommittee. She asked for a volunteer from the Council and Professor Crawford volunteered.

3. Report from the Executive Secretary

a. Approval of minutes
   Motion [Rusu/Yarrington] to approve the minutes from April 27, 2015
   Professor Weiss noted that on page 6 the first number should be 59 (not 60). On page 7 all wordings are semester. Previously the words were terms. Do we need a consistency here? Professor Rakowitz commented that we can check this with Heather Petraglia. Professor Crawford said that at least the last one should be semester. Prof. Rakowitz said she would contact Dean Petraglia with the question about "semesters".
   The minutes were approved as corrected.

b. No correspondence

c. No oral reports
   No discussion on items 4, 5, 6

7. New Business

a. Election of members to Honorary Degree committee
   Professor Rakowitz said she has three names – Faith-Anne Dohm, Dennis Keenan and Dawn Massey. All three were elected by acclamation.
Motion to reorder to 7c [Rakowitz/Steffen]. Motion carries unanimously.

c. Discussion of formation of a committee to discuss Post-Tenure Review.
SVPAA Babington noted that she would really like to have a system of annual review. Currently there is a system for non-tenured faculty and for merit pay. The idea is to add a post-tenure review to it to make it a comprehensive annual review system. A committee needs be formed to do this. Professor Crawford asked what would be the purpose of the committee. SVPAA Babington replied that to put in place an annual review system. Maybe it can look into other Jesuit schools and see what is happening there. Professor Downie noted that many businesses are going away with Annual Review, so why are we considering it now? Also it is important to consider what makes sense for us in terms of teaching, research and service. Maybe a comparison with top twenty liberal arts schools will be better. Professor Yarrington asked SVPAA to elaborate on about the context she is referring to. SVPAA Babington responded that she just did a review that has some percentages to fill up. She has no preconceived notions; but would like to see what businesses are doing. Professor Boquet said that it seems that we are talking about the composition of the committee. We have a Rank and Tenure Committee, Faculty Development Committee, Committee on Non-tenure Track faculty – where can we pull the members from? Professor Strauss added that Faculty Salary Committee should also be included.

Professor Rakowitz said that it is not clear what the SVPAA is proposing, because the current Merit system for standard merit is doing exactly the same thing. What rationale is there to overthrow the current merit system? How can we talk about composition without re-inventing everything? Also how do the Handbook committees liaison with this committee? Professor Yarrington asked what the goal of the annual review was. Professor Epstein noted that the General Faculty has agreed to the formation of a post-tenure review committee. So we have to do this. Professor Strauss noted that the current system will stay in place unless a new one is agreed upon to replace it. Professor Weiss noted that in the College there is a pre-tenure review system.

Professor Kris said that it seems that we need to decide on the composition of the committee. She proposed a committee of 7 members from the General Faculty – 3 from the College and 4 from the professional schools (1 each). Professor Lane seconded the proposal and added that the purpose of the committee is to address the post-tenure review issue. Professor Downie noted that the committee should liaison with all relevant Handbook committees. Professor Boquet said that this is a high stakes committee as there are long-term implications for salaries, etc. So a system with people who are identified in a standing committee should be involved. Professor Preli asked her whether she is suggesting that handbook committee members be part of this committee. Professor Boquet said that either way could work. Professor Klug said that is it assumed that the recommendation would come to the Academic Council to be vetted.

Professor Rakowitz expressed discomfort at the disproportionate representation of the professional schools. Two may be adequate for the number of faculty. Professor Kris said that it is not so much as representation but for more information. Also the perspective of the non-tenure track faculty should be incorporated. Professor Yarrington reiterated that the Rank and Tenure Committee should get a voice. Professor Steffen spoke against the motion. It is a major challenge to bring together Faculty Salary, FDEC, R&T and to choose people who are really interested. Professor Lane spoke in favor of the motion. Half of R&T have less than two years’ experience. Salary committee does not have anything to do with this committee. The Academic Council can recommend the members.
Professor Boquet said that faculty got into handbook committees in order to discuss these issues. We cannot make changes to the charge of the handbook committees.

Professor Epstein spoke in favor of the motion. Professor Preli suggested if it would be appropriate to get another motion to get recommendations from this committee through handbook committees. Professor Rakowitz said she needs some guidelines on what to send out to the General Faculty in a call for nominations. Professor Crawford said that the first charge of the committee would be to figure out the process and how to vet the process by handbook committees. Professor Strauss said that means there are two things here: 1) Charge of the committee – that is already in the language of 2015-16 MOU; 2) Process – how to do its work regarding the post-tenure review system.

Professor Weiss asked who would be the representative from administration. SVPAA Babington said she would be it. Professor Rakowitz asked whether the Academic Council wants her to look into the nominations to see who has served on faculty salary, R&T, FDEC committees. Then Academic Council can select the members.

**Motion [Kris/Lane]: To form a committee of 7 members from the General Faculty – 3 from the College and 4 from the professional schools (1 each) to discuss the feasibility of a post-tenure review system as stated in the 2015-16 MOU.**

Motion passed unanimously.

SVPAA said that she forgot to give any conflict on Athletics. Wednesday December 9 is a reading day. The Women’s Basketball team is playing home that evening at 7 pm.

d. Consideration of the President and Provost's invitation to faculty leadership

SVPAA Babington said that she would work with the AC Executive Committee to invite faculty members to the senior leadership meetings. Depending on the agenda, faculty from relevant committees will be invited. Deans and VPs will also be invited to the monthly planning meeting. This semester senior leaders would like to meet with faculty leaders from the AC Executive Committee. Instead of the same person going all the time, it may be better to invite faculty associated with the agenda topic. Professor Rakowitz asked the members of the Council if it is ok for the AC Executive Committee to select the faculty. It was the consensus of the Council that this was acceptable. SVPAA Babington said that these meetings are informal and that the AC Executive Committee can decide. Professor Boquet said that she feels that these are pretty important meetings. It is important to involve the handbook committees. The Executive Committee will be sensitive to the roles of the handbook committees. Professor Steffen asked to make sure that the appropriate handbook committee member will be chosen. SVPAA Babington agreed saying that that is what she said. Professor Bhattacharya asked what the timeline was. SVPAA Babington replied that the first invitations will go out immediately after setting the agenda.

7. b. Committee on Conference with the Board of Trustees: preparation for October meeting

Professor Mark Demers came in. He said he has two things to report. 1) The committee will meet with SVPAA Babington the next day in the afternoon. 2) A survey was sent out to the faculty in
May 2015 on what gives them joy and frustration. This was approved by the Academic Council. We did not get a lot of response, but a few meaningful comments are:

i. Multiyear MOU stressed instead of Annual contract;
ii. Purpose of University resource allocation - academics should remain at the center of resource allocation, including construction projects.

Professor Lane said that we want to ask the Board what they want to hear from the faculty. How much time do we have? Professor Demers said that meeting is 8:30-10:00 am. We get 30-40 minutes. SVPAA Babington said that part of the by-laws of the committee is to review the goals of last year. Upon hearing that the Board members would be meeting in one of the newly renovated classrooms, Professor Epstein asked if they could come and visit DMH 349, the classroom that he teaches in, which is not renovated. Professor Crawford suggested that the survey response rate needs to be higher than 5%. Professor Rakowitz said that she has a concern that the Committee on Conference with the Board of Trustees was not invited to the Board's June meeting. She is especially concerned because the 2020 plan was discussed in that meeting. Professor Yarrington asked whether there was any “joy.” Professor Demers said that working with students was a “joy” as reported. Professor Yarrington said that maybe that is worth reporting.

Professor Downie suggested sending out the survey one more time. He said that multiyear contract is a constructive feedback because it would save time for faculty and they can focus more on academic activities. Professor Epstein said that faculty would like to have more access to Board of Trustees’ decisions. It is evident that faculty wants to spend time in teaching. We would like to see the Board see us teaching in a class so that they get a sense of what faculty is doing. Maybe a select faculty member can give a presentation. Professor Klug said perhaps we can take some of the marketing material to include what we do – promotional videos on faculty by the media center, the huge range of it. Dean Williams said that the Board has very little time. So maybe the commitment to institutional health can be emphasized. Say that we are willing to work with the University on long term University plans. Professor McDermott noted that with regard to the response rate we were very busy in May. We would love to repeat the survey. Professor Lane asked whether this body has ever approved the 2020 plan. SVPAA replied that the AC elected faculty representatives to the steering committee that approved the plan. Professor Demers said that last time it was an open-ended survey. Do you want certain things to be put in check box type questions? There was agreement by the members to repeat the current survey.

**Motion to adjourn [McDermott/Rusu]** at 5:00 pm was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Recording Secretary
Mousumi Bhattacharya