

## SEC/VPAA JOINT CONFERENCE MINUTES

January 22, 2013  
2:30 – 4:10 pm

Senate Conference  
140 McFall Center

MEMBERS: David Border, Michael Buerger, Mark Earley, Rachelle Hippler, Paul Johnson, Dan Klein for Greg Rich, Sarah Rainey, Rodney Rogers, David Sleasman, Alex Solis, Sheri Wells-Jensen, Elizabeth Wood.

PRESIDER Vice Chair, Sheri Wells-Jensen called the meeting to order.

OLD BUSINESS None

### NEW BUSINESS

Honorary Degree Nomination Provost Rogers reviewed the nominee's qualifications for this honor, stressing outstanding service to BGSU -- in a wide range of capacities and roles -- as well as notable success of this BGSU alumnus in the business arena.

SEC discussed concerns about the *Charter* statement that faculty have responsibility for oversight regarding conferring honorary degrees and decided to investigate previous precedents in bringing nominations for honorary degrees to the full Senate for approval. The motion to obtain information about past practice in this regard carried unanimously.

A fact check of previous honorary degree nominations revealed that -- for at least the latest 4 years -- recommendations regarding nominations put forth by the BGSU president have gone directly from the SEC to the Board of Trustees per procedure specified in documentation of the Honorary Degrees Committee's purpose and function. A majority of SEC voted to approve the nomination put forward at this meeting.

SEC then voted unanimously to examine and possibly clarify procedures for making honorary degree nominations in the future at a subsequent SEC meeting. The point called into question is whether the intent of the *Charter* statement about faculty review is fulfilled by a vote of the Honorary Degrees Committee (which has elected faculty representation) followed by a recommendation from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, comprised of Senate officers, senators, and two student representatives.

## WRITING IN GENERAL EDUCATION WRITING GROUP (WGE)

Senate Chair Earley reviewed the list of volunteers for this group and solicited suggestions for additional members. A Firelands rep will be added if a faculty member is interested volunteering to join in the group.

With that potential addition to the membership, SEC voted unanimously to approve the proposed complement of members so that the group can be convened and its work of writing a recommendation for consideration of the faculty at large can begin.

## AD HOC CHARTER COMMITTEE

Proposed formation of a group comprised of the Senate Chair, the Senate Office secretary, the Board of Trustees secretary, the Chair of the Amendments and Bylaws Committee (A & B), one additional A & B member, and the BGSU Faculty Association liaison to Senate was approved by SEC. SEC further recommended that two additional union representatives to be appointed by the BGSU-FA President should be added to the group. Its charge will be to clarify 1) what parts of the *Charter* are in force versus what parts are in abeyance because they are subject to collective bargaining and 2) what will be the *Charter's* role in the future. Earley will contact ComCom and request that they confirm the establishment of this ad hoc committee.

## ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The Provost addressed the recent reaction to his remarks in the January 15th Senate meeting regarding benchmarking staffing at BGSU with other Four Corners institutions and the prospect of reductions in the total number of faculty positions. He reminded SEC that a good many of the reductions will likely be effected by attrition from retirements and voluntary separations.

In addition, he discussed the basis for such action including but not limited to the following:

- Balancing resources with needs so that BGSU can meet all of its financial obligations.
- Paying continuing faculty commensurate with salaries at peer institutions.
- Adjusting curriculum where appropriate to align with a changing environment throughout higher education.
- Preserving the quality of a BGSU education by implementing parity between class sizes in various disciplines. Extremely small classes will be closely monitored.

Rogers announced that IPEDS data benchmarking BGSU's staff numbers in classifications other than faculty are being examined. After the numbers have been analyzed, a report will be forthcoming. He also clarified that the IPEDS

count of faculty includes all person with faculty rank, regardless of whether they have administrative responsibilities or are full time classroom faculty.

After entertaining questions about the manner of deciding whether to fill faculty positions and about the potential impacts of faculty cuts, the Provost assured SEC that faculty input is welcome. The intention is to be strategic about filling vacancies and where possible to address academic needs in creative ways without either automatically maintaining past faculty positions or sacrificing the quality of a BGSU education. Having consulted with deans, chairs, and academic department heads on a case-by case basis about top priorities in filling vacancies, he would like to engage faculty in a robust discussion of staffing. The intention is to coordinate staffing plans with the Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee, the BGSU-FA, and -- if desired -- to host additional college meetings and/or open forums on the topic.

ADJOURNMENT 4:10

Respectfully submitted Elizabeth J. Wood, Faculty Senate Secretary