

FSAC Minutes

April 7, 2005

1:00 - 3:00 Sue Jameson Room

Present: Sue Hayes, Kris Montgomery, Geoffrey Skinner, Tia Watts (proxy for Carmen Works), Helmut Wautischer.

Meeting began 1:05 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: Approved with one new business item, Academic Freedom Statement.

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the 3/17/05 minutes is postponed until next meeting.

Announcements:

S. Hayes will act as chair for today's meeting. Tia Watts replaces Jen Lillig as proxy for Carmen Works.

Reports:

S. Hayes has no report from Professional Development Subcommittee.

B. Houghton communicated by e-mail that there is no report from Academic Affairs.

H. Wautischer has no report from Academic Freedom Subcommittee, however, there is an action item added to today's agenda.

Business Items:

Item 1a, Academic Freedom Statement.

AFS has researched appropriate language for an Academic Freedom Statement that is binding for SSU in its protection of academic freedom for faculty and students. Developing such statement is part of the AFS mission, and time sensitive due to recent national controversies on academic freedom.

After extensive discussion, FSAC agrees on the following wording:

"Academic freedom is the unrestricted search for knowledge and truth and its free exposition in the scholarly community. This is a special freedom necessary to the mission of the university. Academic freedom is vital to ensure the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of the professors, the students, the institution, the academic community, and the public. Faculty and students must be able, under the principles of academic freedom, to seek knowledge and truth and to express and defend their viewpoints in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Professional responsibility is the logical correlative of academic freedom. As members of a profession possessing the right of self-government, the faculty has the duty to define the rights and responsibilities necessary for

preserving, pursuing, and teaching knowledge and truth. All members of the academic community have the responsibility to conduct themselves in ways that will promote the achievement of the purposes for which academic freedom exists.

The exercise of academic freedom must be judged by standards established by the faculty in accordance with the expertise and authority of the faculty.”

The statement was unanimously approved and it was agreed that S. Hayes will present it to the Executive Committee.

Item 1b, Access to Programs for Students With Disabilities. Linda Lipps submitted the changes to the policy, section II.C 1-5, as discussed in last meeting. First reading of the remaining parts related to faculty continues. Section II.C-6, replace “questionable requests” with “faculty should bring such requests.”

Section II.C-7, Lipps agrees to inquire and report back to FSAC if there is any potential conflict with the collective bargaining contract, especially for lecturers.

Section II.C-8, expand “electronic information” to include that any and all required information for a course is accessible to students in a suitable format. Potential conflict exists with web sites produced by publishers. SSU owns screening software for IT to check on accessibility. L. Watts sees potential pedagogical conflicts if PDF-files cannot be used: on-line material is at times used by students to copy/paste assignments.

Section III.1 Lipps states that as part of a good-faith effort, faculty is advised to keep documentation of interaction with students. In case of conflict, missing documentation might bring negative ruling. Wautischer requests that “appropriate documentation” needs to be stated more descriptively.

Section III.4 Replace “Appropriate Administrators” with “the individuals designated as Appropriate Administrators.”

Item 2, Course Outline Policy: Moved to next meeting.

Item 3, Course Repeat Policy: Moved to next meeting.

Adjourned 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Helmut Wautischer.