

Minutes  
Catawba College Faculty Senate  
Thursday, September 18, 2008

The Faculty Senate met on Thursday, 9/18/08 at 11 a.m. in the Rendleman Conference Room. Senators present were: Chris Zink (chair), Missy Barnes, Julie Chamberlain, Erin Dougherty, Carla Eastis, David Fish, Robin Roberts, and Sharon Sullivan.

Meeting minutes from 8/14/08 and 9/4/08 were submitted and noted to require minor changes (add S.Sullivan to the list of those present, change Dr. Zink to Prof). Motion made to accept as amended was seconded and passed.

Dr. Edith Bolick presented the senators with a revised version of the 2009-10 academic calendar. The initial version was short one week in the spring semester (the same problem as the 2008-09 calendar). Bolick proposes to add one week to the end of the term, rather than to begin earlier in January. The latter option would create administrative strains—for example, registration for new students would have to begin on the very same day that the college reopens after the holidays, and the day and evening programs would begin in the same week.

Extending the semester would move commencement to Saturday, May 15, 2010. Bolick and the senators discussed the implications of this move. Since preterm meetings are set to begin on August 10, 2009, this would mean that faculty obligations would extend past the 9 month period (Aug 15-May 15) that has been written into contracts for the past several years. Bolick noted that specific dates have not always appeared on faculty contracts; previously, the term of obligation was stated as “the academic year” with the official calendar as the guide. Bolick will suggest a return to that format.

There was a short discussion of the coincidence of commencement and Mother’s Day weekend over the past several years. Bolick and others agreed that this need not be preserved for tradition’s sake alone; some years it will fall that way and some it will not.

Fish and others asked for a few other clarifications regarding the calendar: Spring term begins on Wednesday to minimize the effects of Monday holidays on class schedules. Fall term begins on Thursday because orientation begins on Saturday, and registration and other activities require that much time. As Bolick noted, these needs may change when/if we go to an online registration process.

Roberts asked about the preterm meeting schedule, noting that this year (2008), the fall conference was held on a Tuesday. Why not Monday, he suggested? Bolick agreed that the 2009 opening conference should be on Monday.

Bolick would like to have the Senate look at the slate of pre-term meetings to confirm that schedule allows sufficient time for college business of all kinds (standing committees, department business, other programs like FYS) without too requiring too much.

Roberts then asked what the chances are that the spring opening convocation could be eliminated. Bolick responded that the fall convocation has become the time to recognize faculty

service, and spring convocation is a chance to recognize student accomplishments (other than those noted at the awards convocation). Zink said that the spring convocation also has the “charge to students” and that seems like a good thing to continue. Bolick agreed that as we look ahead for 2009-10, it would make sense to examine the programming for that hour to ensure that it is worth the effort and time involved.

Sullivan asked Bolick if the senators could have time to look over the 2009-10 calendar and do our own counting and confirming. Bolick agreed, and senators were to e-mail Zink before the next Senate meeting if they found any problems.

Barnes and Fish asked if the contracts could be more specific about “the academic year,” outlining pre- and post-term expectations. Zink suggested that a “post-term meeting” packet be created, like the pre-term packet, with dates and times set. He will ask Dr. Bolick to do this and bring it to the Unit Heads.

Sullivan suggests that we ask the administration to leave the dates off 09-10 contracts, because “August 10-May 21” might look very scary.

Moving on..

Sullivan reports on the subcommittee’s meeting with the president about the “vision of the college” project. Turner suggested three ground rules: no complaining, you can’t say “we’ve never done it/always done it/tried it and failed”, and leave names out of it.

Turner said that he wants each group (faculty, staff and students) to ask the same questions in the discussions. As far as we can tell, the staff council is not yet moving forward, nor are students.

Regarding the location and time: We have the Whitener room reserved every Friday in October from noon-1. Sullivan is looking for another time slot to accommodate the faculty who cannot attend at lunch Fridays.

It was suggested that we set up a listserv as well, so that people don’t have to speak if they’d rather write.

Sullivan explained the plan to have a few facilitators who would each would go to several different meetings. We would send two to each meeting, and have them overlap, to make sure that we **hear** everything.

Sullivan presented a draft list of questions to be used in the discussions. She will e-mail them to all senators, so all can provide input/changes/suggestions/refinements/etc.

Roberts said that the questions should be clear about what “realistic” means—one way is, with the students and the money that we have now (raises risk of complaint). Another perspective is, where do you want to go in five years (but how do we know what we’ve got?). We’ll need to make sure that we articulate and draw boundaries to guide the direction.

Sullivan proposes to have the Senate send an e-mailed letter out to all faculty explaining the process, listing the groups, and listing the questions ahead of time so that there's time to reflect before the discussions themselves.

Motion to adjourn at 11:54.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carla M. Eastis