

**Faculty Senate Meeting Summary Notes**  
**11am, Manderino Room 408**  
**10/18/18**

Present: Laura Giachetti, Peter Cormas, Peter Heh, Cassandra Kuba, Robert Mehalik, Michael Perrotti, Loring Prest, Paul Sible, Ryan Sittler, Mathilda Spencer, JP Staszal, Kimberly Vanderlaan, Robin Weaver, Ellen West, Jennifer Wilburn, Kausar Yasmin, Kirsten Schaffner, April Wright, Mark Lennon, Jana Bonafini.

**Call to Order**

- 1) Review/Approval of 9-6-18 Summary Notes

**Old Business (if time permits) – Will postpone old business to allow for more time for the guest speaker to present the topic.**

- 2) **Faculty Website**
- 3) **Orientation for New Faculty**
- 4) **Faculty Senate By-Laws**
- 5) **Faculty Senate Executive Committee Report**
- 6) **Faculty Senate Mission Statement Proposal**

**New Business**

- 7) **Guest speaker – Dr. Dan Engstrom (Associate Provost & Associate VP of Student Retention, Office of Student Retention) \*Note\*:** Dr. Engstrom will be addressing the proposed schedule change.

**Topic, proposed change in university schedule:**

Identify a problem- Changing to a 4-day week for students would be a major shift in the culture of the university. Equate to completing a dissertation or thesis, need to identify a problem first before jumping to recommendations. This change in schedule would not be implemented until after Fall 2020. It is noted that the university has a lot of unprepared students, but we are not alone, this is a problem for most if not all universities. Students are not prepared academically, socially, and with organizational skills.

1. Demands of reading and writing are different in college than in high school. A lot more reading (High schools assign 3 pages, universities assign 3 chapters). Takes time and effort that students are not used to giving. Notice reading and writing is referenced, not math, this is because math changes per

- majors; whereas, writing and reading are across the board. Generation Z & Y communicate differently.
2. Generation on tight rope- this is the first generation to identify parents as being their heroes. These students are not college ready.
  3. In the past, we asked students to adapt, now we must adapt to their needs.
  4. Persistence/Graduation rate is poor. There are a multitude of issues. Referred to the handout provided to compare CalU's statistics to the stats within the PASSHE system. Finances are not the primary problem. Students may or may not be academically prepared.

Someone asked if the writing center resulted in better grades. Questioned the dissertation example provided by the speaker, stating that the literature review should be done before proposing a solution.

D. Engstrom explained that there are issues beyond the control of the university i.e. family illness, family lost job, clinical mental health issues. Need to concentrate on what is within our control, so administration is asking for input.

It was suggested faculty need more training on PTSD to better handle the needs of some veteran students.

D. Engstrom- administration is asking, how can we develop a better community? What is best for our students? Administration is meeting with groups of faculty to ask what do we need to consider. Administration looked at other universities to identify potential new practices (The College of New Jersey, La Roche, and Akron). Trying to look at student preferences. Higher percentage, approximately 75% of our students, are commuters.

There was some question as to the method of collection of data and/or if the correct question was asked when collecting this data. A suggestion was offered that perhaps it would be better to ask how many students live within 10 miles of the university? How often do students need to work? How engaged are they in the campus community? Should ask their understanding of the effort required for school work? Should asking, student preference regarding when to start classes. Bringing this topic for discussion by the group and the faculty body at-large. Need to discuss the data and consider solutions.

D. Engstrom explained the mocked-up schedule framework. Note: Three-hour classes are for grad students and special courses such as art and specialty classes.

Concern was expressed regarding how a 4-day schedule might impact student advisement.

It was suggested a cultural aspect of the campus for students must be considered (students need to feel a sense of connectedness to the university).

It was mentioned that there is a great deal of education research that addresses the importance of creating connectedness.

D. Engstrom stated that students have likes and interests. The university started learning communities to put students together who share similar interests. This was done in part to try to improve retention of students.

It was acknowledged that some faculty may be concerned with how a 4-day student schedule would impact them and the courses that they teach.

D. Engstrom acknowledged that some faculty may be concerned about this change. However, noted as the need to hire new faculty rises, the university may be able to attract better faculty. Also, a 3-day schedule may attract more students.

Someone asked how the graduation rate is defined. Does it have to be defined on a 4-year basis. D. Engstrom explained that it is a requirement for universities to define the graduation rate on a 4-year basis. There are national standards which are based on this data.

Someone expressed concern about student time management skills. Worried that students needing to work hard on a limited amount of days may cause more stress for students. Faculty need to facilitate the learning experience and make students accountable. How is the 4-day schedule going to improve retention.

Someone expressed decreasing from a 5-day schedule may have a negative impact on student research efforts. The student's schedule may be so packed that they won't have time for research.

Someone asked why Wednesday rather than Friday was chosen as a meeting day. Expressed concern regarding whether or not there will be enough time to schedule the 3-hour lab courses her program requires.

Someone asked if there is something else that can be done that could result in the same effect.

Someone asked if there was literature about underprepared students and if there were other models available that could be followed.

Someone questioned if the schedule change will really improve student retention.

Another faculty member thanked Dan for the work done thus far. Stated the university does not have a history of change. Suggested that some program/department may have different needs than other program or departments. Recalled when he attended college, a 4-day school week would have likely been beneficial to him.

Someone asked if the group thought students would attend event offered on non-class days.

Time ran short. D. Engstrom wrapped up the presentation and encouraged faculty to reach out to him regarding additional questions and/or ideas to improve student retention.

B. Mehalik announced the conclusion of the meeting and reminded everyone of the next scheduled meeting day on November 8, 2018.

8) **Next meeting:** November 8<sup>th</sup> and December 6<sup>th</sup>

## **Announcements**

**Adjournment 12:03 PM**

**Recorder:** Robin Weaver