

University Senate

December 8, 2010

Members Present

Members present at the meeting: 92

Call to Order

Senate Chair Mabbs called the meeting to order at 3:25 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes

Chair Mabbs asked for additions or corrections to the minutes of the November 11, 2010 meeting. Hearing none, she declared the minutes approved as distributed.

Report of the Chair

Mabbs thanked the committee chairs for their “behind-the-scenes” work this semester. She explained that the Senate would receive the result of their work in the spring semester.

Committee Reports

Reapportionment of the Faculty & Undergraduate Senators of the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences (CMNS) (Senate Doc. No. 10-11-25) (Information)

Mabbs explained that because of slight variations in total populations after the integration of the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences (CMNS), the Elections, Representation, & Governance (ERG) Committee has recommended an increase of faculty representation from 21 to 22 and undergraduate representation from 3 to 4. These changes will take effect during the election process for 2011-2012 senators. This report was included as an informational item to the Senate.

PCC Proposal to Suspend the Bachelor of Science Program in Physical Education (Senate Doc. No. 10-11-29) (Action)

Mabbs explained that the PCC Proposal to Suspend the Bachelor of Science Program in Physical Education was not an item for vote but an informational item. Any further action on this program will be considered in two years, and whether a discontinuation is recommended at that time, it will then be brought to the Senate for an up-down vote.

Nominations Committee Slate 2010-2011 (Senate Doc. No. 10-11-27) (Action)

A verbatim tape of the meeting is on file in the Senate Office.

Eric Kasischke, Chair of the Committee on Committees, presented the Nominations Committee Slate to the Senate and provided background information on the committee's work.

Mabbs opened the floor to any further nominations. There were none.

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion; hearing none, she called for a vote on the proposal. The result was 76 in favor, 0 opposed and 2 abstentions. **The motion to approve the slate passed.**

Proposal for Changes to the Optional Retirement Plan (Senate Doc. No. 10-11-30) (Action)

Robert Schwab, Chair of the Faculty Affairs Committee and Cynthia Shaw, Chair of the Staff Affairs Committee, presented the proposal to the Senate and provided background information.

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion.

Senator Tilley, Faculty, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, asked why there is a mandate for employees to contribute 2% to the optional retirement plan. He stated that this was an unfair mandate that should be removed.

Schwab responded that this was included to increase the likelihood of the proposal being accepted by the State Legislature. The committee did not think it would be accepted without the employees as well as the State contributing.

Senator Tilley, Faculty, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, asked about the advantage to the State if employees are mandated to contribute 2%.

Schwab responded that we recognize this to be so critical an issue that we too are willing to contribute during this difficult financial time. We are prepared to take on part of that responsibility without asking the State to shoulder the entire burden.

Senator Loeb, Faculty, Robert H. Smith School of Business, stated that he was aware of a state commission looking at health benefits for retirees. He asked whether they were consulted and what are the economic consequences to those who chose the pension system or the retirement system?

Schwab responded that the goal of this proposal is to increase parity between the two systems. He also stated that the state commission was not consulted.

Senator Lauer, Exempt Staff, College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences, stated that there was a past proposal that was declined but explained that this proposal is important to make us more competitive and is more humane to our employees. He also stated that other states that contribute at a higher rate require employee contributions and the state system also requires employee contributions

between 5-7%. He is strongly in favor of the proposal but is skeptical that it will get through the General Assembly because of the current economic situation.

Schwab stated that Human Resources surveyed peer institutions and found that the median state contribution is 10% so we are quite a bit behind them.

Senator Tilley, Faculty, College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, stated that faculty and staff are already contributing to their 403b supplemental account which shows their willingness to contribute. He feels that this proposal would force employees to throw their money away.

Schwab responded that there would be no impact for those already contributing. He also stated that there are various investment vehicles for employees in the optional system.

Mabbs called for a vote on the proposal. The result was 62 in favor, 9 opposed and 10 abstentions. **The motion to approve the proposal passed.**

**Special Order of the Day
The Draft General Education Implementation Plan
(Senate Doc. No. 10-11-31)**

Mabbs explained that the Senate approved the General Education Plan in the Spring 2010 semester. During this approval process, one amendment was approved which stated that the Implementation Plan be brought back to the Senate for review and approval. She clarified that the Senate approved the new General Education program last spring and Undergraduate Studies has been working hard to develop a plan for its implementation. We will now look at the result of that work and how best to implement the new General Education program.

Mabbs explained that the Senate's purpose today was to provide feedback to the Implementation Committee on the Draft plan. This is the Senate's opportunity to voice any concerns or suggestions that it may have so that the committee may consider them before finalizing the plan. Mabbs explained that the final implementation plan will be discussed and voted on at the February 9, 2011 Senate Meeting.

Procedural Motion

Mabbs explained that the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) has submitted a procedural motion to help facilitate the discussion of the draft plan. The motion is outlined as follows:

1. In order to focus discussion on each topic, the draft implementation plan will be reviewed in 5 major areas:
 - a. General Education Learning Outcomes
 - b. Faculty Boards
 - c. Guidelines and Requirements for the Course Categories
 - d. CORE and the New General Education Program

e. Other

2. Speakers will be limited to 2 minutes on each topic.
3. Speakers may not speak a second time on a topic until all others who wish to speak have had the opportunity to do so.

Please note that there are no time restrictions on the total amount of discussion for each of the 5 major areas.

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion; hearing none, she called for a vote on the proposal. The result was 73 in favor, 8 opposed, and 4 abstentions. **The procedural motion passed.**

Mabbs invited Eric Kasischke, Chair-Elect, to the platform to time each speaker.

Discussion of the Draft General Education Implementation Plan

Mabbs explained that members of the General Education Implementation Committee and Donna Hamilton, Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies were invited to attend the meeting. Should the Senate have questions that need responses, she will direct Dean Hamilton or a committee member to respond. Mabbs then introduced Dean Hamilton to give a brief overview of the work of the Implementation Committee.

Key Elements

Hamilton stated that it is important to hear from the campus community and especially the students. The new program raises the requirements in fundamental studies, eliminates the SAT exemptions, requires professional writing of all students, and has a course in analytic reasoning and oral communication. These higher requirements speak to the quality of our university and to our desire to prepare our students for success at Maryland and when they leave. The program has four distributive studies categories (humanities, history, and social sciences, natural sciences and scholarship in practice) and three additional categories including understanding plural societies and cultural competence and the I-series. This will result in 40 credits in general education.

Implementation Committee's Work

Hamilton gave a brief overview of the Implementation Committee's work. In late May, 11 committees with 67 people total were appointed to write the learning outcomes of the various categories. They define the categories and come into play when the faculty design and submit courses for the program. They are posted on the Undergraduate Studies website for comment. The Implementation Committee developed the membership and responsibilities of the boards. The faculty boards, comprising 62 faculty members, will implement the general education program on an ongoing basis. The majority of the boards have been appointed, and their first task will be to review course submissions. They will begin their work in late January. The Implementation Committee also created guidelines for course categories. They speak to both fundamental studies and distributive studies. They specify the number

of courses to be taken in each category, which courses can be double-counted, and criteria unique to individual categories.

Hamilton explained the relationship between CORE and the new General Education Program. CORE will continue for several years after the new program is implemented to serve current students and many incoming transfer students. Courses approved for the new program will be assigned CORE categories as needed. She promised to serve those students still under CORE. The new program will begin in fall 2012. The online course submission opened on November 10, 2010 and will remain open until April 15, 2011.

Hamilton stated that faculty recognize opportunities for themselves, their students, and their programs in these new categories. This program opens the door for faculty to put in place the curriculum that best represents them and the university they want Maryland to be. This curriculum development can have a transformative effect. We look forward to continuing this work together.

Mabbs thanked Hamilton and opened the floor to discussion of the categories.

General Education Learning Outcomes

Senator Crisalli, Undergraduate, College Behavioral & Social Sciences, stated that she is currently the Vice President for Educational Affairs of the Student Government Association (SGA). She thanked the committee for their work. She also stated that she saw the value in removing the SAT exemption. She thought scholarship in practice was invaluable but asked that there be emphasis on experiential learning.

Senator Cohen, Faculty, College of Computer, Mathematical, & Natural Sciences, suggested that on page 13 for scholarship in practice, the 5th point be changed from impacts and impacted to affects and is affected. He also stated that he was still unclear as to what counts as scholarship in practice. He asked that this area be clarified.

Senator Miletich, Undergraduate, College of Arts & Humanities, stated that in the distributive studies category, he would like it to be listed as arts & humanities instead of just humanities.

Senator Yuravlivker, Graduate Student, College Behavioral & Social Sciences, stated that he felt it was a good plan and an excellent step for the university. He is happy to see oral communication included in fundamental studies because this is really important. He suggested that "listen carefully" be included as a third required element.

Senator Orlando, Faculty, College of Arts & Humanities & Senator Petkas, Exempt Staff, Resident Life, stated that they applaud the work of the committee. They registered an objection to the term and concept of "cultural competency". They stated that this construct implies a level of basic qualification or threshold that once attained allows a student to check that item off a list of desired learning goals. It also implies that we would all agree on what we would define as cultural competency and

that all cultures would fit into one learning model. They have serious doubts that individuals are ever truly culturally competent. No one can afford to check attainment of such a competency off his or her learning list. Therefore, they proposed the term “cultural capacity” as an alternative. They suggest that teaching capacities encourages students to learn empathy for others, self-reflection and cognitive complexity. It also encourages students to continue to discover ways to listen and to articulate how listening allows them to understand and to be understood. Capacities have no threshold. They also imply that learning is not a finite task but a lifetime commitment. Capacities become habits and establish the basis for ongoing engagement and learning that enables students to be constructive citizens in a diverse community, society, and world. They encouraged the committee to substitute “capacity” for “competency” in the plan.

Hamilton thanked Orlando and Petkas and agreed to review their suggestion with the committee.

Senator Leone, Faculty, College of Behavioral & Social Sciences, stated that “cultural competency” has a technical meaning especially in the domain of public health. He stated that their comments are consonant with the ideals in the document. He will try to facilitate discussion on this issue.

Hamilton asked Orlando and Petkas to send her an electronic copy of their statement.

Senator Nolet, Undergraduate, College of Computer, Mathematical, & Natural Sciences, stated that in the learning objectives under I-series 1st paragraph second page, “a signature course could take students inside a new field of study where they may glimpse the utility, elegance and beauty of disciplines that were previously unknown, unwanted, disparaged, or despised. He stated that all of the I-series courses he has seen thus far are very interesting and relevant.

Hamilton stated that what is embedded in that statement is the awareness that some topics in the I-series may be controversial but we welcome that.

Faculty Boards

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion of the *Faculty Boards*. There was no discussion on the topic.

Guidelines and Requirements for the Course Categories

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion of the *Guidelines and Requirements for the Course Categories*. There was no discussion on the topic.

CORE and the New General Education Program

Mabbs opened the floor to discussion of the *CORE and the New General Education Program*. There was no discussion on the topic.

Other

Senator Cohen, Faculty, College of Computer, Mathematical, & Natural Sciences, stated that he has concerns of how the new plan meshes with the honors program. He asked whether there was an attempt to build in sensitivity to the needs of the honors program to strengthen it. The biggest danger is that the new plan may make the honors program less attractive. It appears that I-courses are honors courses for the masses. He asked whether honors courses could count as I-courses? He also asked whether the committee would build in some protection for the honors program or a way to mesh in the honors program into the implementation plan?

Hamilton stated that the committee has recommended that honors courses count towards the I-series requirement.

Doug Roberts, Member of the Implementation Committee, stated that they have also discussed how programs in Gemstone could count now towards General Education. We want applicable course work to count. Gemstone could satisfy Scholarship in Practice. They are also proposing one of their required courses as an I-series course. We are having similar discussion with College Park Scholars so that things students are doing in their programs can be applicable to the General Education requirements. This is something that they could not do in the past.

Hamilton stated that the committee is working with College Park Scholars to maximize courses getting General Education credit.

Senator Kronrod, Graduate Student, College of Arts & Humanities, stated that it was a great plan and commended the committee for its work. He suggested that it would be good for students to have guidelines on when to take general education courses and how they fit into their major course work. Suggested timelines or proposed plans, specific to each college, would be useful.

Hamilton stated that this would be work that the advisors will do by way of the 4-year plan process.

Senator Buchanan, Faculty, College of Agricultural & Natural Resources, asked how this new plan would impact our ability to attract transfer students?

Hamilton stated that this aspect is not complete. They have talked to the System. There is a lot of revision going on right now in the State with regard to general education. We still have a lot of work to do in this regard. We are a transfer friendly campus with a great commitment to community colleges and 4-year institutions. We get some of our best students by transfer. We have to work hard to make this work.

Elizabeth Beise, Member of the Implementation Committee, stated that we have had many conversations going on in many circles about transfer students. We are discussing how to transfer courses back to community colleges so that students can complete their associate's degree. This is an issue that we are paying a lot of attention to at this time.

Senator Tamari, Undergraduate, Robert H. Smith School of Business, asked whether I-series courses could be expanded to lab courses?

Doug Roberts, Member of the Implementation Committee, stated that there is already one I-series course in Biology. We have approached other science units with lab courses and encouraged them to submit course proposal. There is no restriction on lab courses for I-series. We hope that people rise to the challenge because it would meet the needs of our students.

Nariman Farvardin, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost, expressed his views about where we stand relative to the general education effort. He is impressed by the efforts by everyone involved over the last several months. He expressed gratitude for everyone behind the scenes as well the committee. He added that the university administration would do everything humanly possible to make this program one that we can all be proud of and that will make the educational experience of our students, second to none.

Mabbs thanked Hamilton and her committee for all of their work.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

Senate Chair Mabbs adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.