UW Senate Meeting Report prepared by Zoe Barsness, UWT Faculty Senate Representative

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2:30 p. m. Savery 260 (UWS)

The second senate meeting of the year opened with a report by the Senate Chair, Jack Lee.  Chair Lee provided an update on development of legislation to support a new faculty salary policy.  He indicated that any changes proposed to the faculty code to will leave in place existing procedures for annual merit review discussions, although the frequency with which merit review conversations with senior faculty must occur may change.  Chair Lee also reported that the Faculty Salary Policy Working Group will be continuing discussions with faculty councils and schools throughout the winter while simultaneously drafting code.  The current plan is to bring a proposal for any needed changes in faculty code language to the first meeting of the Faculty Senate in Spring 2014.  It is the Working Group’s hope to conduct a second round review of proposed language changes to the faculty code at the second senate meeting of the spring quarter in preparation for a vote of the full faculty at the end of spring quarter 2014.  If this timetable is achieved, then a transition to the new faculty salary policy would occur over the summer and fall of 2014.

In light of the fact that jump raises will be 12% and tier raises 8% under the new system, a Senator  from UWS Arts & Sciences asked whether or not jump raises will be backfilled for those promoted just prior to the transition to the new faculty salary system.  Chair Lee reported that the idea behind the new step raise system is that the proposed changes will reduce need for retention raises.  According to the modeling that has been done, overall salary costs will remain in line with current totals as regular raises lower the incidence of retention raises.  In order to accomplish the intended net zero impact of the policy, it is therefore unlikely that promotion raises will be backfilled for individuals promoted just prior to the transition to the new salary system.  In light of the senator’s report that some colleagues were considering delaying application for promotion as a consequence, Chair Lee acknowledged that there may be a need to discuss this issue further.

Chair Lee was also asked how the new faculty salary policy will apply to Lecturer track faculty.  He indicated that full-time and part-time competitively hired lecturers will have a faculty tier structure parallel to that which will be established for tenure track faculty.  There will also be the possibility at all ranks for a Dean or Chair to request an additional tier if needed.   The new faculty salary policy, however, will not apply to non-competitively hired faculty.  There has been some discussion about making a special case for grandfathered non-competitively hired lecturers.

President Young followed Chair Lee with his report to the Senate.  President Young briefly discussed changes to the University’s communication structure and development of a formal communications strategy for the UW to facilitate consistent messaging to the UW’s various constituencies, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.  He reported that the legislative session will be short.  Although he doesn’t expect more cuts to higher education during the session, he also doesn’t expect any additional funding infusions.  The UW is pushing hard for full funding of state need grants for students in need, however .  Since the UW makes up the difference in state need grants, any increase in state funding for state need grants will have a direct positive impact on the UW’s bottom line.  He indicated that the biggest debate during the legislative session will likely be around tuition increases that are occurring at other schools.  He doesn’t anticipate much one time or ongoing money to be forthcoming from the legislature for building initiatives.  Finally, President Young reported that he had spoken to the Senate Executive Committee about the creation of the UW Innovation Institute.  Some funding for the institute will come from payments from athletics and some the Presidents New Initiatives fund.  The UW will also work to increase private funding for the Institute.  The purpose of the institute is to provide bridge funding for projects that have the potential to secure larger grants down the road from other funding sources.

In response to a request for more information about the relationship between the Lecturer Task Force newly appointed by Provost Cauce and the Tri-Campus Policy Council, Chair Lee reported that Kate O’Neill, the Vice Chair of the Senate will be chairing the Lecturer task force.  By virtue of her Vice Chair position, she is an ex officio member of the Tri-campus Policy Council and is also a member of the Faculty Salary Policy Working Group.  She will serve as one of the bridges between the TCP council and the Lecturer task force.  She indicated the Lecturer task force is just getting started.

Steven Bell, Director of Corporate Sponsorships reported out on the initiative begun three years ago to develop a centralized and standardized policy regarding corporate sponsorship for all schools, colleges and campuses of the UW system.  Two ongoing committees with representation from across the UW have been established to vet discussions and agreements with any particular corporate sponsor.  The University of Washington Sponsorship Policy is outlined in Executive Order No. 15, of the Faculty Code.

Two items of unfinished business were on the agenda: “Conduct second review of proposal to submit legislation amending the Faculty Code to the faculty for approval or rejection.” This considered Class A Legislation: Changes to 24-33 A Statement of Principle:  Academic Freedom and Responsibility. The Senate had requested amendments to the language of the proposed legislation during its first meeting this fall.  The legislation was directed to the “Code cops” who edited and fixed the clarity of language.  The amended version was then been approved by SEC and President.  On December 5, 2013, the Senate approved these amendments as well.  The proposed changes will move forward to a vote of the full faculty for approval.

Second, Diane Morrison, Faculty Senator, Social Work, presented a revised Class C Resolution: Resolution concerning the University of Washington English Language Lecturers.  The Faculty Senate voted to endorse the Class C resolution supporting the International and English Language Programs (I&ELP) Extension Lecturers in their efforts to obtain a fair contract.  The 70 full-time Extension Lecturers, housed within the Education Outreach program, formed a new union, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local #6486, in fall of 2011. They have been bargaining with the UW Administration for a first contract since March 2012.

More information on Senate can be found at <http://www.washington.edu/faculty/facsen/>. UWT Senators this year are Libi Sundermann, IAS, and Zoe Barsness, Business.

Thanks,

Zoe Barsness

UWT Faculty Senate Representative