BSUFA Faculty Senate

Date: April 18, 2005 – A continuation of the April 4, 2005 meeting.


Absent: P. Donnay, E. Hoffman, R. Koch, M. Papanek-Miller, M. Schmit

Excused: V. Boudry, J. Brouwer, C. Milowski,

Guests: Mary Ann Reitmeir, Deb Peterson, Dan Rice

Called to Order: 4:01 PM

Larkin: This is a continuation of the April 4 meeting. We will now have committee reports.

Student Services Committee
Reitmeir: Distributed a handout. Student and University Services Planning Committee has been preparing a report on Student Centeredness. We have developed a definition, identified indicators, and addressed assessment. To do this we surveyed faculty, staff, and students. We did follow-up on focus groups facilitated by Greer, a survey done by Peterson, and the Noel Levitz survey. We are currently doing data analysis and will hold a meeting in a week to get feedback on the preliminary data.

Brown: I move that we accept the report

Wolf: Second.

Motion carried.

Signature Themes
Witt: Milowski was going to present information on the signature themes, but in her absence, I will address the concerns that have been raised about implementation of the signature themes. The President and Provost have been going to the chairs with these themes. The themes seem to impact curriculum, hiring, and individual research agendas. The setting of curriculum, determination of faculty qualifications, and the setting of individual research agendas are decisions that have long been reserved to the faculty. Recent statements by the administration suggest that the implementation of these signature themes will necessarily involve them in what has heretofore been the province of the academy. For these reasons, I move that the executive committee, through the meet and confer process, is directed to clarify the resulting issues with administration. And, if needed, to make known the opposition of the senate to the insertion of administrative influence into what are the academy’s prerogatives.

Lee: Second. I speak in support of this motion. There have been mixed messages about the way the signature themes are being applied. I would like to see a written statement from the administration

Dunn: I would like to point out that we did ask administration to bring the signature themes to the departments. That is positive, and I applaud them for it. I don’t want to appear so confrontational.

Wolf: Are there specific questions that you think would be helpful to have answered, or do you want to leave it wide open?
Witt: I want addressed the issues of setting curriculum, qualifications of faculty, and setting of individual research agendas. Professors hired will be held accountable through the PDP process for the research they choose. I don’t know if that is really an issue, but it may be. Motion carried.

Academic Affairs Committee

Peterson: You should have received copies of the proposed Calendars for the years 2006/07 and 2007/08. I’ve received some comments and would like to offer them to you. Ivy Knoshaug requests that the Academic Achievement Conference be moved at least a week farther into the semester so students have a longer time to prepare. There wouldn’t be a problem accommodating this. She also requested that we move the end of the school year, moving commencement from May 11 to May 18 and from May 9 to May 16. This allows a longer break between fall and spring semesters. Faculty and students are tired upon in January when the come back. In the guiding principles, we stated that we wanted a full three-week break, and this will allow for that. Faculty and students were tired upon returning. It would also allow more time for J-term trips. Louise Jackson suggests that spring break occurs too early in the semester. Moving it a week shouldn’t be problematic, although we have to keep in mind the precinct caucuses that are held in March. The Tuesday evening meetings would be reduced from 15 to 14. Pat Welle requested that for 2007/08 we begin after Labor Day. This can be done if we eliminate all days currently listed as of and go through 12/21. That assumes 70 instructional days. It wouldn’t work if we increase to 71, which equates to a full 15 hours of seat time per credit. We’ve been struggling with finding calendars that are acceptable to everyone, and I don’t think that is possible.

Oldham: If working with spring break is to be considered, a point to be considered is that our students in Professional Education are heavily involved in student teaching. When our spring break and the school spring breaks don’t coincide, students may have as much as 2 weeks off. Having them coincide would also be a nice feature for students and faculty with children.

Peterson: Is there a way to work with the school districts on this?

Oldham: Their breaks are set in advance. You should be able to find out the information.

Welle: I want to applaud the committee for developing the guiding principles. We should think of our roles. We don’t want to move our own agendas but advocate for the students. It currently says 70 instructional days. We need some agreement with the administration before this gets farther down the line. Another issue, regarding coordinating with the schools district’s schedule. Can we share a day off with MEA? Can it be a faculty duty day, have high school students come in and see faculty even if BSU students aren’t on campus? A third question is how are we getting input from student senate?

Peterson: Faculty are open to having the MEA break. Admissions with new leadership is willing to try some new things, perhaps bringing students in on weekends. We can press again for our break in the fall to coincide with MEA. It makes sense for faculty and students with kids in schools. There has been a student representative on the calendar committee. Justin Perreault was in concurrence and spoke for student senate. Calendars were sent to other bargaining units. Everyone had a change to comment on the proposed calendars. 70 instructional days is one we brought forward to administration. The response was the Carnegie Report. The Tuesday/Thursday classes met the Carnegie rules, but the MWF classes were one day short of instruction. I understand people’s desire to start after Labor Day, and I think that it will be possible to project out through 2014. In those years when it is possible to begin after Labor Day, we will make every attempt to do so. It gets trickier to project the farther into September that Labor Day falls.
**Fauchald**: I had a question about commencement. You are talking about moving it deeper into May?

**Peterson**: Yes.

**Fauchald**: I just worry that faculty would be gone. If finals were done, I can see faculty being gone, not staying around for commencement.

**Dunn**: I assumed that you meant the start dates/shifting the whole thing.

**Peterson**: Yes.

**Fauchald**: I misunderstood. You are talking about moving the entire semester, finals, and commencement, not just commencement.

**Webb**: Was there discussion with administration to shorten finals from 5 days to 4?

**Peterson**: It is too complicated for this calendar cycle. We can look at it next time. We discussed with this students. This is a tricky situation. We will continue to look into this.

**Welle**: It creates lots of flexibility in scheduling finals. There would be an advantage to having finals from Monday to Thursday.

**Kippenhan**: You also need to be aware that if faculty take finals seriously and actually meet during finals week, there can be more conflict for students who have multiple finals on a single day.

**Peterson**: Carlson schedules with large lecture classes spread across the days and then fills in with smaller classes.

**Welle**: Are there other MnSCU schools that have 4 days of finals?

**Peterson**: Yes, one.

**Fauchald**: I move we accept the draft calendars.

**Wolf**: Second.

**Meyer**: What does this mean? We have talked about changing the calendars.

**Wolf**: I move that we amend the calendars so that scholarship day is the Wednesday closest to April 15.

**Fauchald**: Second.

Amendment carried.

**Meyer**: I move that we amend the calendar to move everything in spring semester one week later in May.

**Wolf**: Second.

**Fauchald**: Does that mess up Wolf’s amendment.

**Peterson**: No, his amend moves Achievement Day two by 2 weeks. The students still get one extra week for preparation.

**McConnell**: How does that affect summer school?

**Peterson**: Summer school will start in June, as always.

**Welle**: What about Martin Luther King Day? The devil is in the details. Will that fall during semester break?

**Dada**: One faculty member in my department asks that we have at least 10 days between summer school and fall semester.

**Kippenhan**: This amendment is only for two years; it doesn’t amend the guiding principles.

Amendment carried:

Discussion on original motion to accept the draft calendars.

Motion carried.

**Committee on Committees**
**Gritzmacher:** Distributed a handout indicating faculty who have self-nominated for committee seats up for election this spring, those seats that are contested and showing those seats that are vacant. Note that on the board is the slate of candidates for BSUFA executive committee seats. Ballots for contested committee seats and for all executive committee seats will be printed Wednesday and be mailed Thursday. They will be due by Thursday, April 28 at 4:00 PM. Ballots will be counted by Committee on Committees on Friday, April 29 and results will be announced at the May 2 Senate meeting.

**Planning Committee Review**

**Larkin:** As you know, BSU has hired a consultant to review the Planning Committee Structure. Dan Rice is the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development at University of North Dakota, Grand Forks. He has a PhD in Educational Administration, a certificate from the Management Development Program at Harvard University, and a certificate from the Dean’s Institute of AACTE Academy for Leadership Development. He has a Master’s of Divinity from Yale Divinity School. Clearly, he is highly qualified. Without further ado, here is Dan Rice.

**Rice:** It’s a pleasure to be here. I’ve been to BSU several times over the years, and I know many people here. This is my second visit here as a part of this review. I have a thick folder of notes from my previous visit and from this visit. Now I’ll review the information and return with recommendations. The original intent of the planning process that was implemented in 2000 was “to balance the needs to streamline the decision-making process while pursuing the stated goal for broader-based participation in decisions facing the entire campus community. The challenge will be to retain efficiency while remaining effective.” (NCA 2000 Self-Study) It doesn’t look as if that is the way things have turned out. Of the six planning committees, it looks as if two have worked reasonably well, one has worked very well, and they others have had mixed results. There are high levels of frustration, but there is also a feeling among nearly everyone I’ve spoken with that people are committed to the principle of shared governance. Some specific problems have emerged.

- First, it appears that often the planning committees are doing a lot of work but very little planning. Additionally, there is confusion about what four of the committees are actually supposed to be doing. There also seem to be a number of parallel committees within the University. Many people serve on multiple committees and are talking about the same topics.
- Second. There is inadequate feedback as things go through the various stages of the process. Things seem to disappear and no one seems to know where they have gone. The feedback loop seems to be missing.
- Three. There are a number of structural problems. The charges don’t seem to reflect what some of the committees are doing.
- Finally, membership is limiting. Sometimes there are people who should be able to contribute their expertise, but they aren’t on the committee.

Generally, the process is too cumbersome. If everything goes smoothly, it takes at least 4 months to navigate through the process. If there are any delays, it takes much longer. People have been willing to put forth the energy for input, but given the little output, they are feeling that it just doesn’t seem to be worth it.

Again, lots of frustration. There is lots of energy for input, but based on little output, it doesn’t seem to be worth it.

1. Not all feedback has been negative

   - There is a desire to make the process work better.
2. The current structure brings together the major constituents as a group. The major bargaining units are involved and students are involved. That the process brings people is a good thing. The lack of productivity is another.
3. The process was set up to be decentralized and allow for initiatives. In theory, the process is open to lots of ideas. Again, that is good if it results in something.
4. When asked if we should scrap the process, the feeling is that people don’t want to lose the togetherness.

**Welle:** Do you have any overall comments on a better way to make shared governance work? At the beginning, I truly believed that if we had a culture whereby administration truly valued the concept of shared governance then this could work. How can we move forward maintaining the decentralization and constituent representation?

**Rice:** There is a bit of catch 22. The process is frustrating and cumbersome and encourages people to go around the process. That undercuts the validity of the process and violates the principle of shared governance. The process must be more effective and efficient. There is always a problem with shared governance. It is easy to do something if you are an administrator. Shared governance takes time. There will be some degree of inefficiency and you have to be willing to recognize that and work with it. But, my sense is that the process is so difficult that the incentive to go around because it is so cumbersome. There are exceptions. The Student and University Service Committee seems to be working well. Another thing is that leadership is critical on the committees.

**Donovan:** Not so very long ago this body took the initiative to exclude that Academic Affairs Planning Committee from the loop on the Academic Master Plan.

**Fauchald:** We have a unique situation in that we have bargaining units. Some have fewer than five people. We also see shared governance as a faculty issue. MAPE originally didn’t want to be involved. Now they do. MSUAASF people have consider themselves to be faculty. I see IFO with the potential to lose ground. The heart and soul of this institution is our credentials, not the credentials of other staff.

**Welle:** Do you have recommendations to streamline the process? We need a definition of planning. If we address that, we can do a lot to make it more workable if we really have planning on the agenda.

**Rice:** I don’t have recommendations yet. That is my next step. You are right; we need to separate strategic planning, which is looking at the external environment from internal planning. But, you need to look at both external and internal environments. There are many external threats to BSU; the declining population, the drop in high school graduates, the economies of the small surrounding communities. These are serious and frightening enough that the institution must figure out how to deal with them. If you are bogged down with internal problems, it takes away from your ability to respond to the external threats. I will propose a means for you to separate out the external issues.

**Witt:** Having run a regional planning commission for a number of years, I’ve recommended that we look at tactical and strategic planning. The response has been that we would lose 4 to 5 years. The second part is that most of us have PhDs and we are experts in our particular fields. We have never said that we are experts in planning. We need some common definitions on what planning is. We also need to decide what methodologies to use. The administration isn’t too sure about this whole process. Their encouragement of small groups to solve small issues might be helpful in the short run, but in the long run could be disastrous.

**Oldham:** Regarding losing the loop, do you see an existing mechanism or an external new one?
Rice: I think you don’t need a new mechanism. There are people in place who ought to be able to do that. Somebody needs to be responsible to provide that feedback at the big picture level and at other levels within the organization. I don’t know who that should be. You have people spending time and energy thinking they are accomplishing something and then they never hear about it again, or you read about it in the paper. That isn’t unique to BSU; it’s a problem in lots of places.

Dada: I think open communication and transparency are key. It seems that we as faculty we are valued the least.

Dunn: Appreciate the need to differentiate between strategic and tactical planning, but we also need to understand the relationship between the two. I hope you will encourage the administration to look at other models other than the business model. We are complex institution. There should be a good university model. We need training to plan and time to plan. We need this to become experts in planning. Lots of people are just plain burned out.

Fauchald: I need to remind everyone of the budget forum on April 28.

Adjourned: 5:15 PM