Interinstitutional Faculty Senate
November 2012
Portland State University
Minutes

Attendance: Bob Mason OSU, Ike Nail WOU, Robert Kyr OU, Jeff Johnson EOU, Laura Zeigen OHSU, Jeff Stewart OHSU, Kate Hunter-Zaworski OSU, Tom Seppalainen PSU, Maude Hines PSU, Darrell Brown PSU, Jeff Dense EOU, Grant Kirby OIT, Charles Lane SOU, Sarah Andrews-Collier PSU

Guest: Melody Rose, OUS Vice-Chancellor for Academic Strategies

12:45 Meeting started

1:00 introductions completed

Role of IFS and meetings/venues

There was general concern about participation in IFS and people being absent from meetings. The general consensus is that we all care to be a relevant body and that to do so we need to be a "united voice of faculties" (Kate) and promote a collaborative front. We discussed the history of how IFS came to moving its meetings to different campuses and what that meant for a greater feeling of solidarity and collegiality. Bob reported that he had good talk with Chancellor Pernsteiner, and that the Chancellor felt that he looks to us, and the legislature will look to us, as a voice of the faculty.

The IFS president has an opportunity to speak to the Board of Higher Education (Board) at every Board meeting. We should make sure that we have good representation at the meetings and that the IFS president has a list of talking points that we prepare from him/her. We have, in the past, not been prepared to present a united front and have, potentially, lost some legitimacy as a body.

Discussion of what might happen with the system ensues (which continues later, when Vice-Chancellor Rose arrives to talk with us), including a discussion of whether IFS currently has a voice. There is some concern that when the Board meetings came solely to Portland it reduced IFS' ability to adequately support all the campuses. We have lost connections by not traveling. We miss connections with Board members and legislators by not traveling.

Rob: Resolved that IFS meets at a different campus for some of its meetings during an academic year, unless extenuating circumstances arise.

Unanimous affirmation.

We discussed meetings on various campuses and identified our meetings and locations for the next calendar year. We are tentatively planning to meet on Jan 25/26, 2013, in OSU. March 15/16, 2013, at Western. May 10/11 at EOU. Sept 27/28, in SOU. November 22/23, 2013 at PSU.
Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB)

There was considerable discussion about the OEIB and our perceived lack of participation by OUS institutions and faulty in its deliberations. There was general consensus that IFS, as a representative of faculty system-wide, needs to be a genuine participant. It is unclear what authority we would have to compel the governing agents to give us a seat at the table. “We need to ask for one” (Jeff D.). There is some concern that the meeting at Lane Community College was rather pro forma rather than a sincere attempt to garner new ideas or give a real voice to the faculty. The communication that was promised back from the OEIB never materialized.

The OEIB, and the academic compacts, concentrate predominantly on output metrics and not on quality assessments.

There are several community college individuals and one OUS faculty (Samuel Henry, from PSU) on the OEIB.

Although the OEIB is appointed by the governor, and we have no statutory authority to demand a seat, we can mobilize our own campuses, then come back to the governor, and say we represent every higher education institution in your state, and we say that 3 or 4 times, until we have more representation. We discussed the likelihood that we would be successful/useful in achieving our goal of having a real voice, with no real conclusion. There is some dismay that the OEIB will be reporting to the legislature in January/February, with only two more open meetings where we can voice our opinions. Those days are November 26th and December 6th. Both meetings are in Salem.

IFS Constitution and By-laws

Some discussion centered about potentially reviewing and rewriting, as appropriate, the constitution and by-laws of IFS.

The issues that came to the fore were: 1) creation of standing committees (none were identified as needed at this point), 2) creating reports that can be used to give a sense of the IFS, including dissenting opinions when appropriate, and 3) moving the meetings among the various campuses.

Executive committee is the president, president elect, provost council rep, secretary, and immediate past president. This committee can serve to deal with items that come up and we cannot meet as a committee of the whole.

No decision was made regarding addressing this at this time.

Subcommittee on Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs)

There was a discussion prompted by changes to faculty titles due to changes in OARs. Fixed term faculty are getting moved to instructors and it is causing problems with the new labels from the OARs. The discussion clarified that the concerns and problems differ across campuses. The issue is important and this is a clear area where IFS can and should weigh in.
Darrell: Move to create an ad-hoc subcommittee to look at the OARs related to faculty ranks as designated by the president of IFS. Seconded by Jeff Stewart.

Passed unanimously. Asked Maude, Rob, Jeff D. and Kate to look into this.

The subcommittee can go back to their campuses and find other interested individuals to help sort through the issues so that we can make some headway on how IFS should/can work to assure that the OARs do not create a new set of problems on the campuses. The subcommittee should be prepared to report back to IFS on its status at our next meeting, in late January.

OUS Academic Strategy Meetings

Sarah emphasized that we need to get ourselves to the Academic Strategy meetings, that there are important decisions made there and we should be a part of them.

Vice-Chancellor Melody Rose

The Vice Chancellor introduced and we discussed, the OEIB and the other institutional components of governance of higher education (Board, OUS, Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)) and the current status of their relationships. From the discussion, it seems clear that the relationships among the institutions are still in flux. OEIB has formed a governance and policy committee will be putting its documents on the website. The first pass at the OEIB as a structure probably reflects the governor’s thinking. Currently there is a structure where investing in education probably sits in OEIB and delivery sits in the community colleges and OUS institutions. No one appears to believe that the structure that currently exists is optimal, and there will probably be some additional sorting out of roles. It will be important to pay attention to the Governor’s budget, as that will give some ideas about where his priorities lie.

We discussed how IFS should weigh in on issues over which we have concerns. We discussed the efficacy of having IFS be present at the upcoming OEIB meetings and the possibility that we may want to be prepared to provide our opinions to the legislature during the up-coming session. After the Dec 6th meeting, the OEIB will be presenting their report to the legislature. OEIB was created by the legislature at the Governor’s request; it has a sunset clause of 2015.

Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) created by legislature, they deal with higher education and community colleges. They are currently charged with coming up with recommendations regarding 1) textbook affordability, 2) credit for prior learning, and 3) Western Governors’ University.

HECC is charged with making a recommendation to the legislature to advance WGU. A primary issue here is that full acceptance of WGU expansion would mean Oregon Opportunity Grants (OOG) could be used to attend WGU and that OOG are already too small; our institutions may have to pay more if OOG goes to WGU. There was some discussion about whether this is a major concern, as there are few students who actually use WGU and we have some strong OUS competitors in that field (EOU, OSU are two that come quickly to mind).
HECC has put together an advisory group to work on credit for prior learning; the Vice Chancellor is on that group. HECC is to provide an inventory of what types of credit for prior learning looks like at all types of higher education, maybe will make some recommendations. The Vice Chancellor has created a taskforce to look at credit for prior learning and will be getting input from all the OUS campuses.

A summative assessment exam for 11th graders in Oregon will be started in 2015. The Vice Chancellor indicated that the goal is to test at 11th grade, and students can then remediate or accelerate. We discussed how we, as OUS institutions could be involved with this process, mostly around the opportunities to contribute to the acceleration. Some expressed that high achieving 11th graders may “coast” through their senior year and then forget some of what they learned by the time they entered our institutions. We would like to help mitigate that problem.

Melody left.

Meeting adjourned.