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**USU FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 24, 2008 • 3:00 p.m.
Champ Hall Conference Room**

Present: President Stan Albrecht, Doug Ramsey, Brian Atwater, Byron Burnham, Steve Burr, Daren Cornforth, Ed Heath, John Kras, Pat Lambert, Mike Parent, Adrie Roberts, Flora Shrode, Raymond Coward, and Tammy Firth

Excused: Jake Gunther and Vincent Wickwar

Invited Guests: Kevin Abernathy, Ryan Barfuss, Britt Fagerheim, Steve Hanks, David Cowley, BrandE Faupell, Marla Boyer, Will Pependorf, Michael Lyons, and Ronda Callister

Doug Ramsey called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

John Kras motioned to approve the minutes of February 19, 2008. The motion was seconded by Ed Heath and passed unanimously.

Announcements - Doug Ramsey

1. The next Brown Bag Lunch with the President will be held on Thursday, April 17, at 12:00 p.m. in Champ Hall Conference Room #136.

University Business

1. President Albrecht stated there was nothing new to report since last Monday's Brown Bag Lunch. He will be meeting with each of the colleges to talk about the legislature outcomes and how we plan to use the Tier II revenue. We are hoping for an increase in fall enrollment so it will generate enough money to cover the initiatives that were presented to the students. Tier I funds will be used to cover any compensation shortages from the Legislature.

Information Items

1. **ASUSU Smoking Resolution** – Doug Ramsey stated that he had received two calls on the smoking ban, so he asked Kevin Abernathy to update the committee. Kevin stated that there is no dispute that second hand smoke is not good. He read the resolution he is sponsoring with the assistance of the Bear River Health Department and Ryan Barfuss in the Health and Wellness Center. A similar policy has been implemented by 105 universities across the country. A committee member asked how many of them have a complete ban and how many just limit where people can smoke. Kevin stated he was unsure of the numbers, but several have designated areas where smoking is allowed. ASUSU is proposing a complete ban, but they are open to the idea of just limiting where people can smoke on campus. The intent is to make campus healthier for everyone. Pat Lambert cautioned against disenfranchising minority groups and pointed out that there may be ramifications on enrollment numbers. Kevin stated he talked to members of the International Student Council to get their opinion and they were offended by the stigma that all international students smoke. Kevin will try to get both smokers and nonsmokers involved when they write the final draft. Since this is an amendment to the existing policy, it will have to be put forth by the Health and Wellness Center, not ASUSU. After the final draft is written, BrandE Faupell will take it to the classified and professional employee organizations. Kevin anticipated that the final draft would come before the Faculty Senate sometime next year.
2. **PRPC Report** – Britt Fagerheim offered to answer any questions, but there were none. John Kras motioned that the report be moved to the Faculty Senate agenda as a consent item. The motion was seconded by Mike Parent and passed unanimously.
3. **Honorary Degree & Awards Committee Report** – Ed Reeve was not in attendance so the item was continued until the next meeting.
4. **EPC Report** – Steve Hanks stated that the Educational Policies Committee recommended approval of the following: A request by the Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Science to combine the present Horse Production Minor and Horse Training Minor into a single minor; a request from the Department of Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Science to combine the present General Animal Science Minor and General Dairy Science Minor into a single minor; a request from the Department of Elementary Education to implement a K-6 Licensure program; and proposed changes to the Academic Integrity Policy. These requests and several new courses that were approved can be viewed on the EPC website at <http://www.usu.edu/fsenate/epc/index.html>. Steve distributed an Academic Integrity Procedures flowchart and asked the committee if they wanted it to be brought before the Faculty Senate or if they should write to code first. Doug Ramsey requested that a subcommittee write to code before it is brought before the

Senate. John Kras questioned whether it should be brought before the Senate since it is part of the student code. Provost Coward stated that since it has to do with academic integrity, the EPC is interested in having feedback from the Senate. John stated that if that were the case the Senate would just be giving their vote of support. Mike Parent motioned that items 1-4 of the EPC report be placed on the next Faculty Senate agenda as a consent item and that item 5 be placed on the agenda as an information item. The motion was seconded by John Kras and passed unanimously. Additional code many need to be written in Section 400 of the faculty code to correspond with any changes to the student code.

5. **Criminal Background Checks** – David Cowley presented the proposed policy to require background checks of certain prospective and existing employees of Utah State University as required by House Bill 196. Until the process is working well, they are proposing to only perform background checks on all new employees whose positions involve a significant contact with minors or are considered security sensitive, existing employees who exhibit signs of reasonable cause, and concurrent enrollment faculty who have unsupervised access to K-12 students. They are considering having the background checks performed by a company named Hire Right. The cost is \$40 per applicant and will be paid by the hiring department. The search will be performed by using the prospective employee's social security number. They will check the public records every place the person has lived within the last seven years and a national criminal database search of all states (except five). The turnaround time is one and a half days. A background review committee will be established to review any positive convictions and candidates will be allowed to respond to decisions. Provost Coward asked how many universities use this approach of who to perform a background check on. David Cowley stated that all universities have something similar to this and that we will continue to ask everyone for self-disclosure of any previous convictions. The Provost asked about the liability of not having a plan to perform a check on all existing employees. BrandE Faupell stated she did not want to address the legality issues, but agreed that with 3,700 employees it is possible to miss something. David Cowley suggested that the policy could stay as it is, but they could add something about phasing in background checks on all employees over a period of time. Doug Ramsey questioned what would happen if a tenured employee had a positive result on their background check and who will decide what is acceptable. The Provost added that a positive result on a prospective employee would not disqualify them from being considered. David Cowley stated that one of the roles of the review committee would be to determine such things, but that those details are not part of the policy. This is the first committee that has reviewed the proposed policy, but they will be seeking input from several committees. John Kras motioned that the item be placed on the next Faculty Senate agenda as an information item. The motion was seconded by Pat Lambert and passed unanimously.
6. **Relocation Assistance Policy** – BrandE Faupell stated that due to IRS changes, our Relocation Assistance Policy for faculty and professional employees needs to be amended. She turned the time over to David Cowley. David reviewed the changes and stated that the IRS was basically just questioning which expenses are legitimate business expenses and which should be claimed on personal income taxes. He will continue to encourage everyone to use the state contract and that expenses should be paid directly to the moving company when possible. Everyone will need to disclose to new employees that USU follows the IRS guidelines. Mike Parent motioned that the item be placed on the next Faculty Senate agenda as an information item. The motion was seconded by Steve Burr and passed unanimously.

Old Business

1. Mike Parent motioned that the discussion on code changes to Sections 405.7.2(1) and 405.8.3(1) be untabled. The motion was seconded by Pat Lambert and passed unanimously. Ronda Callister distributed a handout with the suggested code changes. It will allow a candidate to submit up to two names of potential reviewers that they feel should not be involved in the promotion and tenure review process because they have strong opposing views on research approaches. Byron Burnham asked if there have been problems in the past. Ronda stated that she had heard stories that it may have happened and that this would help stimulate the discussion of who should review the packet. Ed Heath worried that it may end up hurting the candidate instead of helping them. Steve Burr added that the Chair may not be familiar with the discipline and agreed that the discussion could be helpful. Byron Burnham stated that he understood the rationale, but he did not feel it was reflected in the policy. Ronda stated that she would see who else uses this approach and would write a second proposal expanding it to say "not to an institution". Will Popendorf suggested allowing faculty to submit the names of positive and negative reviewers, but not limit it to two. Ronda stated she was open to that idea. Ed Heath motioned that the item be placed on the next Faculty Senate agenda as an information item. The motion was seconded by Pat Lambert and passed unanimously.
2. **Nominations for Committee on Committees** – Doug Ramsey turned the time over to Will Popendorf. He stated that there were no volunteers at the last Faculty Senate meeting, but that it is an elected position by the Senate so he will have some names within the few weeks.
 - a. **Committee on Committees Report** – Will Popendorf explained that the report of new senators will be given at the next Faculty Senate meeting. Ed Heath motioned that these items be placed on the next

Faculty Senate agenda as new business. The motion was seconded by Flora Schrode and was passed unanimously.

3. **Faculty Evaluation Form** – Michael Lyons distributed an amended report. In 2005 the committee was asked to simplify the evaluation form, reduce bias, and possibly make it available online. Later that year, the committee solicited input from the faculty. Responses varied, but everyone agreed the evaluation form needed to be simplified. In 2006 the committee drafted a new form and it was used to evaluate summer courses. Two sample forms were submitted to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for their review. Byron Burnham questioned whether it would be better to use a national survey that has been validated because the numbers will be questioned during the P&T review process. Michael stated that a high number of campuses use their own forms. Byron pointed out that it is a rating; it does not place worth on the course. Michael reminded everyone that evaluation forms are only one instrument that departments use, but questioned whether they needed a broader process. The last question on the form, regarding the overall quality of the instruction, seems to be the most important. The committee requested the addition of medians and/or a histogram of the distribution of student responses to questions be made available. Ed Heath motioned that the item be placed on the next Faculty Senate agenda as an action item. The motion was seconded by Mike Parent. Both evaluation forms will be presented to the Faculty Senate. If they select one, it will then go to the President as a recommendation. It was added that an online evaluation form would allow departments to add additional questions of their own. Bryon suggested customized instructor forms. Mike thought that many instructors are already doing that and added that the U of U, which has an on-line evaluation process, ensures that all students fill out evaluations before student grades are released. He will talk to the U of U to see how well it is working. The motion passed unanimously. Pat Lambert mentioned there is a bias in the review process against women and minority faculty members. She suggested adding average class size to the evaluation form summary report.

New Business

1. **Election of Senate President Elect** – Doug Ramsey stated that Ed Heath was the only nomination for Senate President Elect. Mike Parent will consult the code, but he thought paper ballots would be required at the next Faculty Senate meeting.
2. Darren Cornforth introduced Kelly Kopp (Plants, Soils, and Climate Dept) and stated she will be the FSEC representative for the College of Agriculture in the fall.
3. Steve Burr requested that due to the hit-and-run accident on campus last week, the subject of crosswalks be added to the next FSEC agenda under Old Business and that the appropriate people be invited to discuss what can be done to make campus crosswalks safer.
4. Will Popendorf questioned whether the University Assessment Coordinating Committee is still needed because they have not met in the past five years and the Chair is currently vacant. Doug will figure what happened to the committee.

Adjournment

Mike Parent motioned to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Steve Burr. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by: Tammy Firth, Office of the Provost, 797-1840