

Wake Forest University Senate 2007-2008  
Minutes

December 5, 2007

The University Senate held a special session in Room 145 Greene Hall on the Reynolda campus. The following members were present:

*Administration:* Jill Tiefenthaler, Deborah Best, Bill Leonard

*College:* Jane Albrecht, Carole Browne, David Coates, William Conner, Brad Jones, Dilip Kondepudi, James Kuzmanovich, Barry Maine, Kathy Smith

*Graduate School:* Suzy Torti

*School of Medicine:* Edward Haponik, Michelle Naughton, Martha Alexander-Miller, Mark Miller

*School of Law:* Tim Davis, Wendy Parker, Simone Rose

*Calloway School of Business and Accountancy:* Umit Akinc, James Cotter

*Babcock School of Management:* Derrick Boone, Robert Lamy, Brooke Saladin

*Divinity School:* Neal Walls

*Director of Libraries:* Lynn Sutton

*Staff:* Gary Alwine, Randy Cockerham

The meeting was called to order by Senate President David Coates at 4:03 p.m.

New Business

Minutes of the meeting of November 7 2007 were approved

Motions on Senate governance

The purpose of this special meeting of the Senate was to discuss and consider several motions on Senate governance. Senate President Coates began by providing some background on the motivation behind these motions and their recent history. He stated that the advent of the current administration had created a greater sense of trust and community within the University, offering the opportunity for the Senate to play a greater role in strengthening that sense of community. A study of the history of the WFU Senate and the role of Senate in other universities had therefore been undertaken. A report of these findings was presented in the September 19 meeting of the Senate. Following

further discussions with administration and an *ad hoc* Senate committee on October 29 2007, a concrete series of recommendations and motions for their implementation were drafted and presented to the full Senate for preliminary discussion at its November meeting. Based on a subsequent e-mail exchange between the senior leadership and Senate President Coates, it was decided that some of these motions required more discussion, but that others could be considered at the present meeting. Since the overarching goal is to improve the working relationship between the Senate and the University as whole, the Senate agreed to proceed according to these recommendations. Provost Tiefenthaler clarified that there had been no particular objections raised to any of the motions, but that due to the complex issues being considered, there had simply been insufficient time to weigh their consequences, and that at other institutions, changing Senate bylaws can sometimes take years to accomplish. For example, granting access to e-mail lists might create operational issues, and might conflict with existing policy.

Discussion then moved to individual motions.

Motion 1.

*That it should become the regular practice of the Senate to receive annual reports on the state of their particular academic unit from the relevant Dean, and on the state of the University as a whole from the President, Provost and Vice-Presidents for Finance and Administration.*

Discussion: The intent of this motion is that the Dean of each school will make an oral report; that the word “receive” is to mean a bullet-pointed oral report with supplementary written material as seems appropriate.

In the discussion of this and several other motions it was decided that a framing document or written preamble for these motions should be written to place these motions in context. One of the things it should include is a discussion of the role of the Senate.

Vote on Motion 1: Motion 1 was approved.

Motion 2.

*That it should become the regular practice of the Senate to organize an annual and widely publicized “state of the university” address by the President – in the Spring Semester – an address to which all faculty and staff on both campuses are to be invited.*

Discussion: change “both campuses” to “all campuses”. Delete “in spring semester”.

Vote on Motion 2: Motion 2 was approved as amended.

Motion 3

*That it should also become the regular practice of the Senate to organize an annual presentation to faculty and staff by the Senior Vice-President for Finance on the state of the University’s finances.*

Discussion: Change “University” to “Reynolda campus”

Vote on Motion 3: Motion 3 was approved as amended.

Motion 4

*That staff, as well as faculty, are encouraged to attend the addresses by the president and the senior vice president.*

Discussion: There was discussion as to whether this motion as worded was sufficiently empowering. A suggested revision was: That all members of the University community are encouraged and have the opportunity to attend.....

Vote on Motion 4: Disapproved as written. Motion 4 to be re-written and re-considered.

At the request of the administration, no vote was taken on motions 5, 7 and 8 at this meeting.

Motion 5.

*That the Senate Executive be given access to an e mail distribution system encompassing the entire faculty and staff of the constituent elements represented in its membership; and that it should use that distribution system to keep faculty and staff fully informed of Senate business and decisions.*

Discussion: The mechanics of implementation of this motion may be challenging. Further discussion with faculty/staff committees that deal with email communication were recommended. This motion will be re-considered at the February meeting of the Senate.

Motion 6

*That the structure of Senate Standing Committees be reset and extended, to create a system that both mirrors the distribution of functions within the senior Administration and enhances the capacity of those committees to dialogue productively with the relevant administrative officers on matters of general university policy.*

Discussion: Areas of administrative concern about this motion included integration with other committees, the meaning of the word “mirrors”. It was decided that this motion may be unnecessary, and its concepts best incorporated into Motion 7.

Vote on Motion 6: Motion 6 was disapproved.

Motion 7

*That the relevant by-laws of the University Senate be reset to establish the following committees, with the following terms of reference.*

- (a) *A Planning Committee. It shall be the task of this committee to enhance the academic mission of the University through a regular exchange of information, concerns and views with the Provost.*
  
- (b) *An Oversight Committee. It shall be the task of this committee to oversee the manner in which resources are raised, used and allocated in the pursuit of that academic mission, through a regular exchange of information, concerns and views with the Senior Vice-President for Finance.*

- (c) A Fringe Benefits Committee. It shall be the task of this committee to assess (and where appropriate, seek to enhance) the adequacy of compensation packages for all categories of faculty and staff, through a regular exchange of information, concerns and views with the Vice-President for Administration.
- (d) A University-Integration Committee. It shall be the task of this committee to establish, deepen and widen productive intellectual synergies within the University community: in the first instance through a regular exchange of information, concerns and views with the appropriate Deans.
- (e) A Senior University Appointments Committee. It shall be the task of this committee to nominate appropriate faculty and staff to all key ad hoc committees created for broad university purposes; to participate in the final stages of the selection of senior university administrators (at the level of deans and above); and to nominate to Senate potential recipients of honorary degrees: all in the first instance through a regular exchange of information, concerns and views with the Provost

Discussion: Return with detailed changes to title and charges of each committee for final settlement in February. Settlement will not initially involve by-law changes, but be implemented under the power to create/dissolve committees awarded to the Senate President in the existing by-laws. If the new experimental committee structure worked, then incorporation into the by-laws at a later date would be appropriate.

Motion 8

*That it should become the practice of the Standing Committees of Senate to be briefed on new or imminent changes of University policy in their areas of competence, to discuss these changes with the relevant senior administrator, and to report the content of that discussion to the full Senate.*

Discussion: It was decided that this motion may need some qualification (e.g. the addition of “when appropriate”) or may not be needed at all. It has some similarities to motion 2 or 3 and could be discussed in the framing preamble to these motions.

Motion 9

*That it should become the practice of Senate to hear regular reports – from both the Vice President for Administration and the Senators representing staff on the Reynolda campus – on the election, agenda and deliberations of the Staff Advisory Council.*

Discussion: The intent of this motion is that “regular reports” is to mean at each of the Senate’s meetings, when feasible.

Vote on Motion 9: Motion 9 was approved.

Motion 10

*That the number of Senate meetings be increased from two to three per semester, beginning in the fall semester of 2008.*

Vote on Motion 10: Motion 10 was approved.

At the request of the administration, no vote was taken on motions 11-15 at this meeting.

Motion 11

*That the number of elected Senators should be increased: from 12 to 16 from the Undergraduate College; from 3 to 4 each from the graduate school, the Calloway School, and the schools of Law and Business ; from 1 to 2 from the Divinity School; 6 to 8 in the Medical school; and from 3 to 4 from the staff on both the Reynolda and Bowman Gray campuses*

Discussion: The source of the number of Senators was not clear. The motivation for this motion was the increased burden to be taken on by the Senate. In addition it would increase the number of individuals involved in governance. However if the Senate becomes too large, individuals no longer feel accountable. Tabled for further discussion in February.

Motion 12

*That all Senators elected to serve as additional Senators from the fall semester 2008 should do so for a term that phases them in with the existing rotation.*

Discussion: Since motion 11 does not operate, this motion does not operate.

Motion 13

*That Senate should standardize the procedures for the selection of faculty and staff Senators to ensure that all such senators are elected by secret ballot open to the full body of the appropriate faculty/staff group.*

Discussion: Deans should be consulted regarding this motion. A deletion of the words "by secret ballot" was suggested, since not all elections are conducted by secret ballot.

Motion 14

*That it should become the normal practice of Senators to serve on the same Standing Committee for the entire four years of their term.*

Discussion: Tabled to February meeting.

Motion 15

*That a budget line be established for Senate expenses, including an honorarium for administrative support, with the President of Senate charged to organize that support in whatever way expedites the most effective administration of Senate business. If existing administrative staff be used for that purpose, the honorarium to be normally in the region of a one-time 10% increase in their salary.*

Discussion: A 10% salary increase was felt by some to be excessive. It was suggested that the amount of support be left unspecified. Tabled for further discussion in February.

Motion 16

*That it should become an early additional charge on each senate committee to address ways in which, within their specific spheres of activity, they can strengthen linkages*

*between the two campuses by engaging in dialogue with appropriate administrators and committees on the Bowman Gray campus.*

Discussion: Change “between the two campuses” to “across campuses.”

Vote on Motion 16: Motion 16 was approved as modified.

Senate President David Coates invited additional comments from all interested parties. The intent of the Senate is to further consider and come to a final resolution on motions tabled at this meeting at its February meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzy Torti  
Senate Secretary