Minutes from the Meeting* of the USAO Faculty Association

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

* The regular meeting of the Faculty Association is on the first Tuesday of each month at 11:10am. By consensus of the members, a special, short meeting was called on the second Tuesday in January.

Signed in as present:


I. Call to order by President Dr. Steve Weber at 11:03am.

II. Approval of Minutes.

- Minutes of the 12/01/09 regular meeting of the USAO Faculty Association were delivered electronically on 1/08/10 (on 12/02/09 minutes were posted on the Faculty Association page of the USAO website). Without correction or amendment, a motion to approve was adopted.

III. Treasurer’s Report

- C. Elder announces: the balance of account is $796.71.

- A voice from the crowd: “Let’s split it up and put it in our retirement accounts.”
IV. Regent’s Report

S. Weber attended the December Meeting of the USAO Board of Regents.

His notes:

• A faculty representative from USAO was invited to the capitol to celebrate the contributions of Gov. Henry to Higher Education. No member of the Faculty Association Executive Council was able to attend.

• Adjunct appointments for Spring Trimester were approved.

• The President provided “Q& A Sheets” for use by our Regents as they make appropriate contact with the State Regents (to plead our case for needed support). The Board was very receptive to this charge.

• S. Huguenin provided an article announcing that Texas State Higher Ed has a plan for the creation of Public Liberal Arts Colleges in Texas (4 total). We’re far ahead of them, and the value of what we do is evident in their mandate.

• New Recruiting materials were reviewed. They are “sharp.”

• President Feaver has been talking directly to the Chancellor about our financial situation.

V. Committee Reports

• Monday Meeting of The President’s Executive Council
  
o No official minutes will be sent. These are S. Weber’s notes:

  o Spring Enrollment is holding at the same numbers as the fall.
At the meeting of the Council of Presidents, USAO was the only school that could not report at least a 7% (as high as 17%) bump in enrollment. Our admission standards are the reason for this.

There is an anticipated shortfall in excess of 1.6 billion statewide. We are currently absorbing a 10% cut in appropriations. We’re spending “rainy day” money.

The President holds it as a high priority to protect the new hires.

There will be convocation of Faculty and Staff together with the President on Monday at 3pm.

Enrollment Management reports very high numbers of inquiries and high numbers of applications.

B. Brown clarifies: So much is new about the way we are recruiting that it’s hard to compare with past years. After this year, we’ll have data that can be used to compare with future numbers. Regardless, it seems very positive.

- Resources Committee

  S. Weber met with the President who carefully looked at each item on the list of resource concerns and requests. There are a great number of very legitimate needs. He particularly noted a need for a Human Resources representative.

- Convocation/Commencement Committee: No Report.

- Tenure and Promotion: No report. The first meeting is generally organized by the Vice President (Huguenin); Committee will elect its chair at the first meeting.

- Handbook Committee: No report.

- IDS Committee: No report.

- Curriculum Committee: No report.

- Distinctiveness/Academic Rigor: No report.

- Faculty Advisory Council: No report.
(All committee reports were tabled until Feb. to allow a short discussion of Old/New Business.)

VI. Old Business

- S. Weber reports that Jim Hopkins believes that we will have online enrollment ready for Summer.
- N. Warden reports that Joe Evans has called her about the academic calendar. However, she didn’t get any information about it yet. The faculty discusses this. We all prefer to have a full week after Thanksgiving Break before starting finals. We’d rather start later in the summer and end later in December.
- S. Weber reminds us that they will print a new catalog for 2010-2012.
- We talk again about the 40K cap on retirement contributions. We’re all confused. Can VP Coponiti come and talk to the faculty about this?

VII. New Business

- S. Weber announces that “Committee 16” had a first meeting and will continue to meet until its task is accomplished. Katie will be sending out notes from these meetings and keep the faculty up-to-date on the progress of the committee.
- Z. Simpson asks: If people will not be appointed for 2010-11, when will this be announced? The general understanding is that faculty will be informed in/by March if their appointment is not intact.
- S. Breerwood asks: If we are cut, will we be allowed to work Summer 2010?
- Other questions: What is happening with summer? How are summer hires determined? Are summer courses reviewed before being approved? Who does this? Are we wasting money by offering “electives” in the summer? It is assumed that Committee 16 and/or Division Chairs will address these questions.
• Professional Development Travel money has not been “cut” but is limited to only what was budgeted to each division in the fall. All faculty members should continue to propose projects and apply to conferences. It’s good for your CV, even if you can’t go.

VIII. Announcements

□ Congratulations to Erik Guzik on the arrival of Liam!

□ L. Thrift announces a new show in the Gallery.

□ K. Bohannon announces the next DWPAS on February 23.

□ J. Loutsch announces the Mardi Gras Bakesale on Monday.

□ K. Lamar announces the Sophomore Review show coming next week.

□ MLK Day is Monday, even though we’re not taking the holiday.

□ Look at the calendar online for events. Contact Sherry to post!

□ Some divisions are meeting today.

IX. A motion to adjourn made by K. Lamar was adopted - adjournment at 11:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

K. Davis