Minutes from the Regular Meeting of the USAO Faculty Association

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

Signed in as present:


I. Call to order by President Dr. Steve Weber at 11:10am.

- Opening Announcements as members sign in:
  
  o N. Osborn is distributing surveys for the FAC. Please complete and return to her at the close of the meeting or ASAP.
  
  o D. Reigh is distributing surveys for the Distinctiveness/Rigor Committee. Please complete and return to him ASAP.

II. Approval of Minutes.

- Minutes of the 09/01/09 regular meeting of the USAO Faculty Association were delivered electronically on 10/01/09 and were posted on the Faculty Association Page of the USAO website. Without correction or amendment, a motion to approve by K. Lamar was adopted.

III. Treasurer’s Report

- C. Elder announces: the balance of account is $732.71 following the most recent deposit of collected dues.
• Dues are being accepted during the meeting. Receipts are available.

IV. Regent’s Report

• Nothing requiring Faculty Association action or consideration is reported.

V. Committee Reports

• Convocation/Commencement Committee: N. Osborn announces that this committee will meet after Fall Break.

• Handbook Committee: L. Hester announces that this committee will meet once all members have been identified. He asks members of the committee to contact him this week.

• Tenure and Promotion: to meet in the Spring Trimester.

• IDS Committee: J. Long reports that the committee met in September and also hosted an open meeting for faculty to discuss a review of the core curriculum.

• Resource Committee: S. Weber has no report.

• Distinctiveness/Academic Rigor: D. Reigh announces the approval of a research endorsement and a cultural endorsement. A syllabus is being developed for teaching the presentation of research. All is contingent on funding, but it is useful to develop and have a structure in place for implementation in the future. Volunteers are still being accepted to this open committee. All are invited.

• S. Weber announces that significant changes were accomplished at the OK State Regents Annual Course Equivalency Project Faculty Committee Meeting. J. Loutsch clarifies: USAO Life Science Lecture and Life Science Lab courses now are accepted by transfer at other OK schools as non-major biology credits.

• Faculty Advisory Council: N. Osborn continues to be our representative to this meeting until 12/09. Report from the 9/09 meeting: USAO was the only OK Higher Ed. Institution to continue insurance coverage through HealthChoice. Overall increase of 7.6% in costs, including increased co-pay from $25 to $50 for office visits. Bill Crane retires in 1/2010. The opinion poll, distributed today, will be used to determine the agenda for
the FAC in 2010. Next Meeting of FAC is 11/7 and is open to interested faculty members, particularly anyone who might volunteer to serve as our representative to these meetings in 2010. Contact Nancy Osborn for more information.

VI. Old Business

• J. Bruce announces that the OSLEP course offerings for Spring 2010 are now listed as courses in the Spring Class Schedule. Students who are accepted to this program will be eligible for USAO credit and financial aid. Courses are listed at the end of the schedule as OSLEP with J. Bruce as the advisor of record. He will be available to advise students about the application process and to answer other questions about the program.

• S. Weber announces that he has talked with Kelly Brown about the suggestion to have a faculty research shelf in the Library. She is very excited to work with faculty on this. Funding is an issue. K. Brown reports: Student research can also be shelved. Currently, student research is held in archive, and to make it available for public use, students must provide written permission. J. Long suggests that she will incorporate this into the requirements for Senior Honors Projects.

• S. Weber announces that Steve Breerwood has designed a “Creativity Portal” for the website. He is accepting student submissions of art, video, creative writing, and abstracts for display on the web. Please refer your students to him with questions.

VII. New Business

• S. Weber announces: There have been some minor changes to Faculty Committee structure/members in anticipation of “Sandy’s Master Committee List.” This list has still not been released, but should be available in the next week…? This will finalize University and Faculty Committee assignments for this year.

• S. Weber announces: Anna Marie Pratt approached chair Council about a proposal to change the manner of administering course evaluations. A software package is available that will allow online evaluations, will allow faculty to customize the questions on the evaluations, will send reminder emails to students, and will eliminate approximately 6,000
pages of paper used for this task each trimester. Discussion followed. Faculty offered questions:

- What is wrong with the way we’re doing this now?
- Will this be optional, if implemented?
- What are the costs?
- Will this encourage students who are not regularly attending class to evaluate the course?
- Does the assessment office need less to do?
- Will this be used for the NSSE too?
- How is security handled to authenticate who is responding?
- Why is this being considered before online enrollment?
- Is this a philosophical shift from an internal survey used by the instructor to evaluate the course to a survey used to evaluate the instructor?
- Will the format of the evaluation change and will the faculty retain the authority to design the evaluation to serve our needs?

Some members of the faculty were strongly in support of the use of online tools for this purpose. Others have concerns and want to ask questions of those who advocate/use the software. Still others strongly prefer the face-to-face distribution of evaluations. S. Weber will contact Anna Marie and ask for a presentation to the faculty to discuss these issues.

- N. Warden announced that the faculty needs a “watchdog” to monitor the creation of the calendar for each academic year. This spring trimester is published as a 16-week trimester. Discussion follows: This was an
oversight, and thanks to Nancy’s announcement, the spring schedule is being changed. Classes will not resume on January 4th, as printed, but instead will begin on Friday, January 8th, 2010. Comment: “Don’t tell the foreign students.”

VIII. Announcements

- K. Lamar announced the 3rd floor “informal” Art Department Faculty show this month.

- K. Davis announces the October 6th, final night of the Mendelssohn Festival at 7:30pm in the Ballroom featuring dramatic scenes, music by students, faculty, and guest artists, and a lecture on The Romantic Self by Dr. Rees. Also: plan ahead to participate in the March 2010 Festival that will “piggyback” with the Africa Symposium and explore interdisciplinary aspects of African influence on Art and Ideas.

- C. Walker reminds everyone to attend the October 29th Giles Symposium. Flyers are distributed. There is a free banquet sponsored by an anonymous donor. Please RSVP. All: “Will there be wine?”

- J. Loutsch announces the “pep rally” to educate and excite students about James Nachtwey’s visit; they will be screening War Photographer and talking about issues. Monday, October 26th, 6:30pm, amphitheatre.

- S. Brown announces that October 10th is the opening of the juried 7-state Art Show. Visit the gallery in Davis Hall for a great show.

- J. Knapp announces a charter bus to art museum in Ft. Worth for the Kimball Exhibit: mini-movies that bring paintings to life. 10/22 7am-8pm.

- J. Loutsch announces Cancer Awareness Week. T-shirts, Raffles, movie being shown. Call her for details.

- J. Long asks everyone to check their email for an announcement about workshops being offered by Meagan Rodgers for faculty who want to learn about integrating writing into their courses.

- D. Reigh announces the upcoming Grand Opening of the Alternative Energy Lab. Send your students.
- R. Edmondson announces that the Campus Garden group is building a greenhouse and implementing a campus-wide composting project. Contact him for more information.

- S. Breerwood asks everyone to encourage students to attend the International Day of Climate Action on October 24. He is taking a van to Norman for the demonstration. Go to 350.org for more information. Sign up sheet is available.

IX. A motion to adjourn made by K. Lamar was adopted - adjournment at 11:48am.

Respectfully Submitted,

K. Davis