Chair’s Report

April 25, 2012

1. Faculty Senate Planning Team Meetings Over the Summer

In order to best transition between new Faculty Senate leadership, I will be asking this year’s Planning Team and next year’s Planning Team (emails will be sent out to request volunteers for this once council membership has been determined) to meet a few times this summer. In addition to helping new Senate Leadership become aware of continuing council and Senate issues, we will look into several other questions that arose during this year, such as:

a) Is the Faculty Senate’s structure the most efficient and effective to best meet the needs of our faculty?

b) Is there a better way to distribute some of the responsibilities of the Chair of the Faculty among Senate Leadership to be more effective and responsive?

c) What is the best agenda outline for Faculty Senate meetings (should external reports be in writing and report time be used for question/answer periods)?

If the joint planning teams develop any suggestions during the summer, these will come to the appropriate councils for follow-up and consideration by the full Faculty Senate in the fall.

1. No Changes to the Faculty Constitution and By-laws of the General Faculty

I had thought we’d made changes to the Faculty Constitution and By-laws of the General Faculty in the Fall, which would require a vote of the General Faculty, but in double-checking, the only changes we passed were to the By-laws of the Faculty Senate (on proxy voting and sending out agendas). The proposed changes to the Constitution were with regards to adding a Faculty Senate Parliamentarian and those were tabled indefinitely as we couldn’t get a trial run (no one was willing to serve). Thus, it appears we will not need a vote this year on any changes as amendments to the By-laws of the Faculty Senate only require passage by a 2/3 vote of Faculty Senate.

1. Next Year’s Senate Leadership

We still need council chairs for the Academic Policy and Review Council and the Faculty Affairs Council. As we have had no volunteers as of Sunday, April 22, it looks as if we will be asking people to consider serving once we know results of all Senate elections. Please consider this option. We will also need volunteers to serve on the Senate Planning Team from next year. Any college not represented by the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Council Chairs or Senior Faculty Assembly Delegate will have a senator serving on the Planning Team. Thus, once council chairs are determined, a call will be made for volunteers for the Senate Planning Team. Please be checking your emails!

1. Follow-up on Senate Vote on Amendment One

When our resolution and the vote count was shared with the Faculty Assembly with the request for consideration in their March 30 meeting, the Chair of the Faculty Assembly was concerned that discussion of this resolution would constitute a violation of The UNC Policy Manual 300.5.1 on political activity. She was advised by GA legal counsel to hold off on a vote at that meeting and seek further information on policy. Since that time, the Chair of the Faculty Assembly spoke to President Ross and made the following statement: “Official statements on behalf of the University or any one of the campuses can only come from the Board of Governors.  Every employee has the right and some might say even the duty to speak as a citizen.  The interpretation of the rights of bodies like Faculty Senates and the UNC Faculty Assembly to weigh in on bills being considered by the General Assembly is open to interpretation.  Campus bodies should heed the best counsel of their legal staff and the UNC Faculty Assembly should heed the best counsel of UNC General Administration legal.”

I had also checked with Mary Ann Lochner to make sure we had not violated policy in voting on our resolution. In speaking with Chancellor Belcher, it appears as if this is a grey area which could go either way, but there is no intent to re-examine the resolution or vote on the part of the university.

1. Thank you to all senate members completing their current term with this meeting:

Heidi Buchanan

Beverly Collins

Chris Cooper

Elizabeth Heffelfinger

Christopher Hoyt

David Hudson

Luther Jones

David McCord

Kadie Otto

Mack Powell

Phil Sanger

Chuck Tucker

Cheryl Waters-Tormey

Thank you for all of your service to our faculty! And best wishes to all for a safe, happy, and productive summer.