MINUTES  
Friday, February 10, 2012

PRESENT:  David Vlahov (Dean), Jyu-Lin Chen (Chair), Shari Dworkin (Vice Chair), Geraldine Collins-Bride, Karen Duderstadt, Jill Howie-Esquivel, Susan Janson, Hai-Yen Sung, Carolyn Wylie

ABSENT:  Miranda Kramer, Brad Aouizerat

GUESTS:  None

Chair Chen called the meeting of the School of Nursing (SON) Faculty Council to order on Friday, February 10, 2012 at 10:11 a.m. in Room N 319D. A quorum was present.

The minutes from January 13, 2012 were approved (Attachment 1).

Chair’s Report – Jyu-Lin Chen

Chair Chen distributed her report prior to the meeting. The report included a list of various subcommittees involved in the current Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and provided the new LRDP website (www.ucsf.edu/lrdp). She also reported that the plan for expanding Senate membership had received official endorsement from the Chancellors and Deans (Attachment 2).

Student Report

None

Report of the Faculty-Only Meeting (Attachment 3)

The faculty-only meeting was held on January 17, 2012 and attendees were given the opportunity to discuss any concerns, stressors, ideas, and recommendations, including issues related to the SON culture and faculty−administrative communication. Andrew Parker, Manager of the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, acted as a facilitator to guide the discussion and helped to ensure that everyone felt comfortable expressing their concerns. The feedback of the faculty from that meeting was then presented to the Dean and the Dean’s Council, who were very receptive and responsive. At the Full Faculty meeting on February 10, 2012, the Dean gave his State of the School Address and he responded to the faculty while open discussion took place. Dr. Parker was present to help guide and facilitate this discussion.

One Faculty Council member reported that an Administrator has been conducting individual interviews with faculty members seeking similar input to that of the faculty-only meeting. After the interviews are completed, recommendations were sent to the SON leadership, with a copy to the interviewee. The feedback coming out of those interviews was very similar to what came out of the faculty-only meeting.
Q: What were the key points or themes that came out of the faculty-only meeting?

A: The attendees felt that there has been a lack of transparency within the administration, that there has been a troubling level of uncertainty, that the flow of information is not working as it stands, that improved, direct forms of communication are needed, and that the anxiety has begun to affect students who are feeling stressed as well. Several attendees mentioned that the SON mission is not clear and that they want to ensure that the values of the SON are not undermined as decisions are made about where to cut programming. Another theme that was discussed was a lack of work/life balance that faculty fear will only get worse over the coming months and years.

Dean Vlahov: Given all of the expressed concern about transparency, what do you think is the single most important thing I can do to improve the situation?

A: Speak directly to the faculty and do not rely on the usual forms of communication of trickling down through Department Heads and the Councils. It is not working, especially now in these times of anxiety and uncertainty and when things are happening at such a rapid pace.

A: Have regular forums or updates where you tell faculty what is going on because things move and change so quickly.

A: We are in a significant period of change and this feeling of discomfort is going to continue for a long time. Thus, faculty need direct communication. Information is the one thing that can make people feel better. Even if it is not good news, it is very calming just to know the facts.

The Council discussed that it is important to adjust to Dean Vlahov’s methods of communicating versus the previous methods. The Council discussed the impending April 1, 2012 deadline for deciding which faculty may be let go and expressed a unanimous feeling that this would not provide faculty enough notice to make the life changes needed. The Council was uncertain about the timeline and wanted to learn more about the process and about how to get involved. The Council also reiterated the importance of continuing to provide support and concrete services for faculty who may need assistance moving forward.

A Council member, who also serves on the Master’s Program Task Force, explained that the Task Force has been meeting and looking at where the SON can make cuts, but that it is a very difficult process. The Task Force has been studying the reports prepared by the departments and programs and all other available information and the process is moving rapidly.

**Mission of the School**

The Council discussed what the mission of the school should be and the importance of keeping the mission and values of the SON in the forefront as the Task Forces consider making changes and as the school evolves over the next few months and years.

Members of the Council also expressed confusion about the last few months and the direction of the SON over that time. There appears to be a disparity between recent actions and the SON’s mission. The focus has been on a financial deficit and a commensurate cut in students and programs. The deficit triggered the crisis, but over time it seems that the goals have changed. Initially, the message was that if each department reduced their program by a certain number of students, then perhaps the SON could be successful and we could continue with quality education. However, now the SON is completely revisiting everything, seemingly with a new, but unclear mandate and it does not seem like the mission is always our guiding principle.

**Self-Sustaining Programs**
Several Council Members expressed concern about what the impact of the SON’s new emphasis on self-sustaining programs may be.

- Concern was expressed about what the Dean meant when he said, “We are no longer a public institution, but are now going to become a self-sustaining institution.” Some members felt that this emphasis might be better suited to a business model than the current mission of the SON and acknowledged that faculty discomfort may in part be a result of a lack of information and understanding of this plan.
- There was also concern expressed about the fact that the Chancellor’s office is offering financial incentives to help programs, such as the Global Health program, to become self-sustaining, even though they may or may not become viable. In the case of the Global Health program, it took them three years to break even. It is a concern in this economic environment to start borrowing money in the hope of becoming economically viable. Again, the Council felt this raised the question of what the SON’s mission and priorities should be.

The Council acknowledged that the SON can and should expand its self-sustaining programs, but that this will not substantially solve the problem. Unlike the School of Medicine, where they rely only in small part on state funding, the SON relies heavily on state funding and will not be able to cover the deficit through new self-sufficient programs anytime soon. The hard part will have to come from cuts and other changes or through convincing government to invest more in education.

**Doctoral Degree in Nursing**

The DNP discussion will be deferred to next meeting.

The DNSc to PhD degree conversion proposal went before the Graduate Council and was sent back to the Dean for further review within the school. When the Dean prepares his new report, the Faculty Council would like to request that the Dean involve faculty in that process.

**Senate Analyst’s Report – Carolyn Wylie**

None

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

The Faculty Practice Committee proposes that the SON develop a new award in memory of former SON faculty member Helen Martin who died in a tragic accident recently. The award would be the Helen Martin Award for Excellence in Faculty Practice and it would be for creating a supportive environment for students.

Chair Chen explained that there are currently 4 awards, with a total of $10,000 in financial incentives being offered to the faculty who win.

The Faculty Council recommended that the Faculty Practice Committee prepare criterion for the proposed new award and then bring the proposal back to the Faculty Council for consideration. If approved, the Faculty Council could forward it to the Dean’s office with a recommendation for possible funding.

Chair Chen adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m.
Senate Staff:
Carolyn Wylie, Senior Senate Analyst
carolyn.wylie@ucsf.edu (415) 476-4245