

Senate Summary

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Executive Committee Report

Academic Senate Executive Committee Secretary Larry DeVries reported that the Executive Committee met on April 21. After reviewing the Employer's Education Coalition or "Frasier Bullock" report the committee had no recommendations, but decided to take a wait-and-see stance. The committee also reviewed the request to change the name of the Graduate School of Architecture to the College of Architecture and Planning, RPT revisions, the final report of the Budget Formula Committee, and the update on the Conflict of Interest Policy. DeVries shared a quote via an overhead projector: "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance! Have a nice summer."

Academic Senate Election Results

Connie Bullis, Academic Senate Personnel & Elections Committee chair, introduced nominees for the Academic Senate President-Elect: K. Larry DeVries, Robert Flores, Xan S. Johnson, and Barbara Nash. After the first vote, a runoff election was held between Senators K. Larry DeVries and Robert Flores, as it is required that the winner has a majority vote. It was announced at the end of the meeting that DeVries is the new Senate President-Elect.

The ten new Senate Executive Committee members elected are Martha Bradley, Richard Ernst, Kenneth Horch, Paul Jewell, Xan Johnson, Walter Jones, Kirtley Parker-Jones, Maureen Laird, Laurence Loeb, and Rebecca Wassem. Senators voted for eight Senate committees. The results of this election will be announced at the August Senate meeting.

From the Administration

University of Utah President Bernie Machen expressed appreciation for the efforts that went into commencement. "To have it all come off as well as it did was a real joy for me to experience," he said, adding that he enjoyed the "intellectual and thought-provoking" commencement address delivered by Terry Tempest Williams.

President Machen reported that Cecilia Foxley, commissioner of higher education for Utah, will resign at the end of the year. Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) President Lynn Cundiff will leave SLCC at the end of the summer. President Machen said there is speculation that Nolan Karras, chairman of the Board of Regents and former speaker of the Utah House of Representatives, is going to run for governor. "For the moment, he's doing a very good job for the system and for us as well," he said.

Regarding the Executive Committee's discussion on the Employer's Education Coalition, President Machen mentioned that there were a couple of items in the report that were "compatible with what our view of higher education should be. One is moving from enrollment-based budgeting to program-based budgeting for the research universities. There's an attempt in that document to help define and circumscribe the roles and missions of the various components of the system. Limiting institutions in terms of the scope of programs they can become involved in is being recognized as a positive thing. If anything moves in that direction, I think we can support it enthusiastically, and I think it would be helpful to the state," he said.

President Machen commented, "We're moving along very well with promotion and tenure packets. You may not know it, but I read every one that comes through." He mentioned that the quality of the faculty joining the U's cohort will "matter for a long time. I take it very seriously and other people in the chain do as well."

In answer to a request for an update on the guns ruling, President Machen stated that because the University filed in federal court, U.S. District Judge Dale Kimball wants to rule on the federal issues the University raised about academic freedom and the possible infringement of it. "But there's a Supreme Court precedent that requires state issues to be addressed first. So Judge Kimball has asked us to file in state court. He holds jurisdiction over the federal report and will rule on that after we file in state court," President Machen said. The University's administration has recommended that the Board of Trustees vote to file in state court, as Judge Kimball advised. "If the trustees decide to file, we will file next week in state court and the state issues will be resolved. Then, without further hearings, the federal judge will rule on the federal issues he heard during the case," he said. Academic Senate Executive Committee President-Elect Andrew Gitlin made a motion for the Senate to offer a statement urging the trustees to file in state court as directed by the judge, which passed by acclamation.

When asked about the Affirmative Action Michigan Case, President Machen noted that there is a difference in perception among Utah "press types" and those in Michigan. Utahns, he said, have assumed the Michigan case will go against Affirmative Action; while in Michigan they are "about 100 percent on the other side." He predicted that there will be a 5-4 decision supporting the Michigan case and Bakke (with some possible restrictions)—with Sandra Day O'Connor providing the deciding vote.

When asked about the problem of graduate students not being granted visas to get into the U.S., President Machen noted it is “a national problem” confronting many higher education organizations.

President Machen’s announcement that campus light rail will open on September 24, 2003, was greeted with applause, to which he responded, “As a dentist I love being definite.” When asked how the U will maintain traffic, he answered, “Just stay tuned.”

Report on Xeriscaping

Senate President Katharine Coles reminded the Senate that the body passed a resolution in fall 2002 encouraging the University administration to work toward xeriscaping on campus. Mike Perez, associate vice president for facilities management, reported to the Senate on xeriscaping at the U, explaining that the administration endorses the concept and interprets it to mean not rocks and cacti, but “drought tolerant-type materials, which we think are smart.” Facilities management has adopted standards this year that will require all new installations on campus to involve these types of materials—drought-tolerant and native plants, drip irrigation rather than conventional irrigation systems, and alternative types of turf. Perez reported that during the non-growing seasons, the campus consumes approximately 2 million gallons of water per day. In July and August of 2001, the campus consumed 7 million gallons of water per day. The following summer (last year), the U reduced water consumption by approximately 25 percent. “Our goal is to maintain that production, yet still keep things alive. We want to be stewards, even leaders here at the University,” he said.

Additional Business

Senate President Katharine Coles honored Senate Secretary Nancy Stroud as a vital part of the Senate and recognized her for her professionalism. She also paid tribute to Senate Parliamentarian Paul Mogren for his long-term commitment and service to the Senate.

Senator Andrew Gitlin thanked Katharine Coles for her service to the Senate, saying, “Kate has done a tremendous job in running the meetings and getting things done in a timely manner. Your tireless work has been so appreciated.” He presented Coles with a vase and commemorative paperweight. At the end of the meeting there was a motion to thank Coles for an exceptionally good year.

Debate Calendar

The Proposal to Change the Name of the Graduate School of Architecture to the College of Architecture and Planning passed unanimously without discussion.

Information Calendar

The Final Report of the Budget Formula Committee was included with the Senators’ agenda packet. Several members of the committee were present to answer questions. When asked what was going to happen to the recommendations, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dave Pershing replied that the report contained many “good ideas, several of which we’ve already begun to implement. One of the key recommendations is that we look into the coming year to realign the balance between the money we put into rewarding SCH growth and the quality side of the model. I like that recommendation as it fits

with the concept of a freeze in enrollment, especially in light of the fact that we haven’t been able to put new money into the quality side in the past two years. That’s something we have already told the deans we are going to do. And we are going to take along with it several other recommendations,” he said.

There was some discussion about information in the report on the competition between and the duplication of courses. John Francis, associate vice president of academic affairs and undergraduate studies, responded that the Curriculum Review Board’s authority and resources are sufficient to help resolve interdepartmental and inter college course duplication conflicts.

When asked how far along the University is in the budget transparency or formula, Pershing said, “As the budget gets tighter, it is more important for us to be open about it. We’ve tried to make that pretty clear.”

Senate President Coles gave a brief update on the Conflict of Interest Policy, which she said is not in the drafting stage, although progress is being made toward coming up with a draft for next year. She said that after meeting with committee and administration members about the direction the policy should take, two crucial elements became clear: The committee must be completely free to do its work; and the document must represent the will of the committee and the people whom they think they are serving.

President Machen announced that there will be two changes made to the interim Conflict of Interest Policy. For purposes of the policy, “family” will be defined more narrowly, as “spouse, domestic partner and/or children.” Second, President Machen said that the trigger amount of equity or royalties will change from \$2,000 to \$10,000, a broader plan. “Our hope is that before this time next year, we will have a policy that has been approved by the Senate and that it is a workable solution that keeps us moving forward,” he said.

New Business

The University of Utah Student Wind Power Proposal, which was brought before the Senate, would be reevaluated after four years. “Wind power is coming down very rapidly in price so at that point we might not need the monies,” a spokesperson for the proposal said, noting that the U would not need a site as there are a variety of mechanisms through which wind power is available. “The U would be buying into or buying the output of another site,” she noted. President Machen explained that wind power costs more than buying power from traditional sources and that the students who have taken the initiative are so committed to the idea that they will pay the differential. The Senate passed the resolution by acclamation.