

Faculty Senate Technology Council

Minutes, April 29th, 2013

Present: Corsetto, Florenthal, Harris, Ó Broin, Northington, Nobler, Wagner, Harris (Chair)

0. Meeting called to order 330pm.

1. Minutes of the 2/11/2013 meeting of the FSTC were accepted (Northington proposed, Harris seconded)

2. Ó Broin agreed to take minutes.

3. Harris explained what happened at the last Faculty Senate meeting. Although called to speak at said meeting, Harris's report on behalf of our council was accidentally confused by Senate members with a parallel discussion on online teaching that was being discussed by the Senate for several years previous. Our proposal to the senate was therefore drowned out in a discussion on procedural difficulties (such as faculty caps on numbers of courses that can be taught) that was more relevant to the other proposal.

4. Ó Broin noted with disappointment that there appeared to be some duplication of responsibility, with the Senate apparently continuing a discussion about online teaching without any consultation with our council, and wondered if the council could be included in that discussion. Harris suggested that the scope of the project was somewhat bigger than our plans, but nevertheless noted that the other online-teaching project, apparently being convened by Academic Standards, had not yet actually begun, with the organizer of said project unable to begin it because of other responsibilities.

5. Northington noted that the College of Education had already had their new online M.Ed. program approved; Corsetto noted that a similar program in Library and Media Studies had been approved, and Florenthal noted that another had been approved in Professional Sales. It was universally noted that online education seemed to be progressing without input from our Tech. Council. Wagner and Harris noted that this was possible because the programs were not new, but simply online iterations of existing classroom-centered

programs. Wagner and Harris also noted that there was a mistaken ongoing conflation of online courses and online programs among faculty.

6. Ó Broin, with the support of Florenthal and Corsetto, noted the difficulties this engendered for us. If the Faculty Senate was debating an online education project in which we had not been consulted, and several colleges were already planning online versions of existing programs, it seemed that our council had no clear reason for working on the matter, as our work was being duplicated elsewhere. This led to the council proposing that we urgently approach the new chair of the faculty senate (to be elected the same week as this meeting) with the following declaration:

"In light of recent discussions in the Faculty Senate regarding Online Programs, and particularly given that several colleges have already begun the process of offering existing programs online, that the Faculty Senate Technology Committee would urgently request a restatement of our charges, placing a clear emphasis on our role as consultants to the Faculty Senate."

7. Wagner and Florenthal proceeded to a discussion of how we might develop a readiness scale for faculty and students contemplating online teaching. Florenthal noted that such scales were already available in other institutions, and Northington added that we should develop our own scale, specifically directed to WPUNJ students.

8. This discussion brought the council to student and faculty needs. Florenthal suggested that the students and faculty be surveyed about their needs in online classes. Ó Broin asked if we had considered surveying those faculty and staff who had already participated in online classes, but it was noted that such a survey had already been done. Florenthal noted that one major difficulty lay in getting full-time faculty to teach online courses, as there seemed to be some fear that student assessment of such classes can often be negative. Ó Broin offered that the existing assessment forms could continue to be used, but weighted differently for online teaching (assuming online evaluations differed systematically from classroom evaluations).

9. Ó Broin suggested that the Tech Council might raise its profile by setting annual or twice-yearly goals of approaching the Faculty Senate with workable,

well-thought-out proposals. Having such goals would give the council direction and ensure that its existence was known to members of the Faculty Senate.

Meeting adjourned 435pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Ó Broin

Addendum, Harris

Members who have indicated they will return to the council for AY 2014:

Corsetto, Adjuncts

Florenthal, CCOB

Miller, Admin

Nobler, COAC

Northington-Purdie, COE

Wagner, Library

Unknown:

VanDyk, COSH

Open seats:

College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Professional Staff