

Faculty Senate Minutes
12:30-1:30 P.M.
23 April 2010

Members Present

Aram Hajian
Vahan Bournazian
Byron Crape
Emil Babayan
Gagik Gabrielyan
Varduhi Petrosyan
Tatevik Zohrabyan
Melissa Brown

Members Absent

Lusine Galajyan
Irshat Madyarov*
Tom Samuelian*
Arthur Drampian
Erik Guevorgian*
Arman Vatyanyan*

Guests

Kenell Touryan

* Indicates excused absence

Faculty Senate Agenda:

23 April 2010

- Quorum Call
- Approval of March 19th minutes
- Presidential search update
- Ad-hoc committee: Reviewing the student evaluation forms
- Committee reports
 - Curriculum committee
 - Ethics & Grievance committee
 - Committee on Extension programs
- Other business
 - Brownbag/faculty development seminars
 - Website updates

MINUTES

1) Quorum Call

Quorum present

2) Approval of March 19th minutes

The minutes of the 19 March 2010 Faculty Senate meeting were adopted after the comments made by Varduhi have been incorporated (moved to adopt by Vahan and Emil seconded the motion with no objections).

3) Presidential search update

Nothing to be reported. The AUA board had the meeting but the results were not known yet.

4) Ad-hoc committee: Reviewing the student evaluation forms

As a result of the committee's efforts, a draft evaluation form is in progress. Aram circulated it which indicated what might be considered to be changed. For example, the two questions of the old evaluation form "Well organized lectures" and "Well conducted lectures" were of similar kind, thus have been folded into one question in the new draft of the evaluation. As a result, the total number of questions is reduced and in addition three mini-essay-type questions have been included, to encourage feedback from the students. Moreover, the drafted form also has a separate "about the student" section, which is to give a better, more accurate evaluation of the class and the lecturer.

The discussions about the draft form of the evaluation continued. Vahan raised his concern about the student section of the evaluation form, which he thought might intimidate students. To prevent such

issues, he suggested to make the form continuous and not have separate section about student. Byron's argument for this was that major US universities have adopted similar approach of including student section in the evaluation forms. The argument for having "about you" part in the form was to achieve rational information by a student who is aware enough and has reflected on himself as well before evaluating the lecturer. Gagik agreed with Aram and Byron, while Vahan stressed the fact that it is about the course, how interesting it was, not the student.

Byron added that they are contemplating the idea of having focus groups (students) to test the form. The form will be much more useful if the ultimate purpose of it and the audience who it will be used by will be clearer. During the discussion, Aram noted that the form will not be considered perfect by everyone and only through useful comments/feedback can we improve it. Vahan then suggested to include a question on whether or not the objective of the course was met, but Byron claimed that hardly any student cares about the objective of the course, rather what they care about what they have learnt. Given that there were many suggestions on particular questions of the draft form, Aram asked all to send comments, give feedback so that during the next month or two changes will be made. However, care should be taken in that AUA is not like most US universities in the way of stakeholders, hence the objective of the evaluations will tend to be somewhat different.

5) **Committee reports**

- **Curriculum committee**

The committee had a long meeting on issues such as probation and dismissal policies, which are delicate issues and need to be taken seriously and with care. Self-studies are also in progress.

- **Ethics & Grievance committee**

Nothing additional to report.

- **Committee on Extension programs**

Byron reported that the committee is making progress, although they might wait a little in devising or prompting changes until the start of the new AUA president's service. The discussion was centered on oversight and Byron added that it is not only AUA problem, but rather a broader problem existing in US as well. In fact, he claimed that in US (over 40 universities) only directors of the extension programs are responsible of the program and there is no oversight. Aram suggested that chair can discuss with the administration proposed changes and role of the committee. Not accredited and not part of AUA is what Byron said that they are pushing for the disclaimer to include. Varduhi mentioned that unlike the curriculum committee work, where there is no conflict of interest situation, the Extension committee faces such an issue, as some of the Deans that need to OK an Extension course curriculum may have a conflict of interest and may be against the Extension to implement a new course. At the end, Byron said that many issues need to be discussed including the method of advertising of the programs, the criteria to judge the course, etc which will then be discussed with the administration.

6) **Other business**

- **Brownbag Seminar**

Aram suggested including it in the monthly meetings and discussions. The first brownbag seminar will take place on April 30th by Allen Amirkhanian on discussion and analysis of construction sector in Armenia.

- **Website Update**

Aram said he would be sending updates to the website.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tatevik Zohrabyan.