

# **Committee on Academics**

## **Senate of the Associated Students**

**Minutes for Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 4:00 P.M.**

**The Joe Crowley Student Union, President's Conference Room in the Center for Student Engagement**

### **1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Senator Kohler called to committee meeting on Academics to order at 4:07 pm in the President's Conference Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

Senators Blair, Crupi, Kohler, and Urquidi were present.

Senators Henderson and Crooks were absent excused.

A quorum was present.

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Parker apologized for starting early. He said that last year, ASUN's senate had the chance to name a member to their reviewing committees to look at the core humanities and writing. Next year, they will look at philosophy, history, English, nursing, and biotechnology in order to keep going with the review process of ever undergrad program in the next five years.

Dr. Mensing said they review the programs by department.

Dr. Parker initial they planned on reviewing by core objectives but decided to change to program departments.

Dr. Parker said he was there to offer suggestions and answer any questions they had about the silver core and the verification process and any other questions they had. The main purpose of his visit was to ask them if they wanted to sit on some of the reviewing committees they had.

Dr. Beattie wanted apologize for not letting them know about the formal meeting. They had a secretary not show up but they needed to start the meeting, otherwise they would get into trouble if they didn't.

Senator Kohler said they wanted senators on that committee since there would definitely be people interested. They could make that into a project so that all committee members sit on a committee. He couldn't say for sure because Senator Kohler is the vice chair of the committee.

Senator Blair asked how often the committees met.

Dr. Parker said it depended on the committee. The core board will meet monthly and others might meet a couple times a month, but nothing is regular; they really only meet when they need to get things done. For reverification, they did not need to meet since they voted and reviewed everything and could

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Posted at 1664 N. Virginia St. Reno, NV 89557 in the ASUN Center for Student Engagement inside the Joe Crowley Student Union, Frandsen Humanities Building, the Ansari Business Building, The Mathewson IGT Knowledge Center and online at [www.nevadaasun.com](http://www.nevadaasun.com).

If you would like a copy of any of the agenda items listed, please contact Chair of Academics Dahlia Henderson, at 775-784-6589 or at [senatorhenderson@unr.edu](mailto:senatorhenderson@unr.edu)



conduct all their business online. Some committees like to meet regularly and others just when they need to.

Senator Kohler asked how it would change the silver core from what it used to be.

Dr. Parker said there were some additions in ethics. Because diversity was split into two parts, global context and diversity equity. New core objective called science technology and society, which has been harder to implement than originally thought. Some majors changed from two capstones to one. Core humanities courses were reduced to 2 classes instead of 3. Two science classes are still required but only one must have a lab now. Philosophical changes involve how the core will change over time and analyze how students are doing throughout their time.

Dr. Mensing thought the biggest thing was that it will no longer be course-based. Based on the learning requirements. Gaining diversity and ethics, might come from various sources or be met by just one class.

Dr. Parker said that a handful of classes might meet three course objectives at a time but that is not common.

Senator Blair asked if the core humanities got reduced to two because diversity was split into two parts.

Dr. Parker did not know why. He came into the university after that happened.

Dr. Mensing said they were independent decisions. The decision was what they were doing and why they needed to do it. The why became that they believed students need increased knowledge of ethics and diversity.

Dr. Parker said there is still general education including the English and science requirements that are statewide. Most general courses did not change much.

Dr. Mensing said the regents required the general courses.

Dr. Parker said they had 14 core objectives and only some of them also cover the major objectives.

Senator Blair asked if he could go over what the application course would look like.

Dr. Parker said yes. It can be a thesis or some kind of service project. Dr. Mencing was on the committee and he said they had several recommendations. The best way was to integrate service learning into the classroom. Some students will do projects others will do practical applications; the point is to take what is learned in the classroom and apply it to the real world.

Dr. Mensing said they wanted to get students to take something beyond a presentation and apply the knowledge to create something like a dance, conference, creation of management plans, etc.

Senator Kohler asked if the goal was for the projects to be more hands on.

Dr. Parker said yes it was part of the 14 new core objectives.

Dr. Mensing said the number came down from the 25-30 courses around the country that they were considering.

Senator Blair asked if the nursing and biotechnology programs were being taken into consideration because they are specialty programs.

Dr. Parker said there was no reason; it is just their turn next year to be reviewed.

Dr. Mensing said a schedule is created and that is what they adhere to based on their policies. Every department has to go through an assessment and review. Trying to integrate the new curriculum into the preexisting department reviews. Over the next five years, every course will be reviewed.

Dr. Mensing said one one of the part of the reevaluation is the assessment of these classes and what is being done. Having a student perspective is very important to him because it is based on student outcomes and this is uncharted territory.

Dr. Parker said he would like student participation in the four committees. Committees 04, 08, 01, 03 will be meeting regularly this semester and others are expected next semester.

Dr. Parker left the meeting.

#### 4. MINUTES

There are no minutes to approve at this time.

#### 5. OLD BUSINESS

- a) Senator Reports:

**Senator Blair**

She set up a meeting with her dean to pitch the idea for a new capstone class that incorporates a project in which students would work with other students from different majors. Projects would be within the community.

**Senator Crooks**

**Senator Crupi**

**Senator Kohler**

He said the first meeting for the undergraduate research forum was later this day at 5:30pm.

**Senator Urquidi**

He is meeting with his dean in the coming week to discuss the college of engineering and if there is anything he needs to do.

**Senator Henderson**

- b) Major and Research Fair

Senator Kohler said the fair will be Tuesday October 11 from 11am-3pm. Each person in the committee has to put out 5 flyers for the event.

Senator Kohler asked if there are any new speakers for the event.

Senator Blair said she was unable to get any new speakers but helped Senator Crooks and Henderson send out an email to the honors program but did not receive responses.

c) Anatomy Models

Senator Kohler aid that the biology department has received new models and the biology help center has been using them a lot.

d) Healthy Studying

Senator Blair said she thought the event was geared for finals time to encourage healthy studying habits. She suggested informing students about study techniques such as taking short breaks and doing something that distracts students from their studies for a little bit.

The event is to inform students on how to study as well as giving out free note pads, post-its, stress balls, etc.

Senator Kohler asked if she thinks they should table for the event in the knowledge center.

Senator Blair said she wasn't sure if tabling for the event would be effective versus just having the event.

Senator Kohler suggested also reaching out to counseling services because they have a similar event called the Quick 5 program.

e) Re-writing the definition of the academic committee

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

a) Study Nights with ASUN

b) Director of Undergraduate Research, Dr. Scott Mensing

Dr. Mensing thanked the committee for having him.

He said he had been working with Senator Henderson and Kohler and thought it would be a good idea to show up periodically to stay informed and because ASUN academics funds a lot of research.

He said that laterr that day the first undergraduate research meeting was being held to try and have a discussion for students doing research or wanting to do research and have something outside the cycle of either writing proposals or contributing to the symposium.

About 17 RSVP'ed for the meeting.

He asked if the international research students received the emails.

Senator Blair said she didn't receive one.

Dr. Mensing said the first meeting will be to get to know everyone doing research and answer questions that students may have. Ideally students will present some work for feedback. Mentors will talk about why they mentor and how they work with students. Also discuss applying for conferences and writing abstracts. Everything associated with publishing work.

They plan to have the meetings regularly but don't have a schedule yet.

Dr. Mensing wanted to update the committee on international research awards. The deadlines for the early research are due January 31<sup>st</sup>. they are working to get the mentor names from the study abroad programs.

They are looking to add at least one new program. They will add Shang Hai, China if enough mentors sign up. Also looking to add Leon, France. Representatives from these countries reached out to the university to have a program.

It provides more opportunities and but more students will be funded so the \$10,000 funding budget will not go as far. He wanted everyone to keep in that in mind when students are picked for the research projects.

He also said that based on the way it was written, the funding can be increased if the committee wants to but he is not asking for an increase at this time.

Dr. Mensing is hoping to get more applications this year.

Senator Kohler asked if more students will be accepted with the new programs.

Dr. Mensing said yes. Some of the programs said they would like two students to attend so the student has a companion. Only one program accepted two students the last time because there weren't enough applications.

Senator Blair asked if there is a marketing campaign to reach out to more students this year.

Dr. Mensing asked the committee what they thought was most effective. He wanted to reach out to more people.

Dr. Mensing said they have a new intern that should be able to do the PR project. He wants to start advertising in November.

Senator Blair said that talking to the professor to discuss the research projects with their classes. Many professors in her classes regularly share jobs and study opportunities to the class.

Senator Urquidi said making flyers that are passed around to students is still the best way to tell a large number of students.

Dr. Beattie said last year they had an election survey that asked students how they found out and how they would prefer to hear about ASUN events. The survey results said four of the top five were direct contact such as discussing in class. The other one was email and none were social media.

Senator Kohler suggested reaching out on all the campus listserves. He also suggested working with InkBlot to create posters and create an ad for professors to share in classes.

Dr. Beattie said the senators could also create a memo and share it with Shannon Ellis because she has a list serve that goes out to all students.

Senator Blair said she would like to be on the campaign because she can share real life experience from being in the program.

Dr. Beattie mentioned working with InkBlot on a short video with students that participated in the past and have professors share the video in their classes.

Senator Blair suggested publishing pictures from the students experiences.

David Miller, Dr. Mensing's assistant, asked about the TV ads at the Joe and around campus and if they notice any positive feedback from the advertisements on the TV's.

Dr. Beattie said that he had received some good feedback but not much response.

Senator Blair said she had never heard anyone mention the TV's.

Senator Kohler said students sometime look at the TV's but not for more than a second.

Senator Blair thought the most effective TV is the one in the @one. Suggested applying for a time to put up an ad.

Senator Urquidi said he likes the TV's the but most of the buildings have outdated or do not have TV's.

Dr. Beattie suggested talking to the Joe staff about featuring a video ad before the weekly movie in the Joe Theater.

Dr. Mensing said he is presenting to six of the SCI 110 classes.

Senator Blair said she is able to go to the classes as well to present her experience.

Dr. Mensing said it is pivotal to reach out to the younger students and it is important for a student to come because the freshman would rather hear Senator Blair's experience than listen to himself.

Dr. Beattie said when he taught he had students who studied abroad based on presentations they received as freshman.

Dr. Mensing asked about a texting software that can send a message to all students.

Dr. Beattie confirmed that there is a University Text service but the feedback from the text software is not very good. But ASUN can look into purchasing a few messages.

David Miller asked if there is a university radio station.

Senator Kohler said yes. We have Wolf Pack radio.

David Miller asked if it is AM/FM or online.

Dr. Beattie said it is AM and online. He also said Wolf Pack radio will be combining with the Reno Bike Project on a radio station coming soon.

Senator Blair said a video clip about the program that is shown to touring students could be an added appeal for the university.

Senator Kohler agreed and said the freshman are the most important group to reach out to.

Dr. Mensing said there was a representative at the orientations all summer. He said there were several hundred students that heard the presentation about undergraduate research and study abroad programs.

He said presenting at classes is good but going to a science 110 class results in only science majors hearing the presentation.

Senator Blair said that every major has classes that every student in the major must take so those would be the best classes to present to.

Dr. Mensing said he is focusing on the one credit course overview courses.

Dr. Beattie suggested that Mensing come to a senate meeting and ask all the senator to email their deans and ask about the one credit freshman courses.

Dr. Mensing said he had sent out emails through the associate deans in the past. The associate deans were better because they work with faculty more and can spread the word better.

Senator Blair asked if she should mention the program when she talks to the CABNR dean.

Dr. Mensing said yes.

Dr. Mensing said there are a couple changes on how many credits students can earn for their research. There is also going to be a requirement that in the first session while abroad, student will have to take a language course to help with their time in a foreign country.

Senator Blair said she wasn't able to take an Italian class while she was abroad because their classes didn't align with her schedule.

Dr. Mensing said the feedback has been great ad the mentors involved in other countries are interested in having more students.

He said they are working on developing a new undergrad research program. It would be based on community based research. It would involve a new category of funding. He has been working with the sustainability manager of the city of Reno.

He is working on trying to generate research problems and questions that come out of the community. It would be mostly from the agencies, and local businesses. Would do it similar to the research experiences.

A task and problem that needs to be solved and propose a research question that students would apply to do the research. They would have a faculty and community mentor and their research would be guided by a practical issue in the community.

Dr. Mensing is going to try the program in the spring with money from his offices. They will probably determine the projects and research then look for students that would best fit for the first year. The idea would be that the program is advertised in the fall and students are chosen to work on the projects in the spring. It would be ideal for senior students that could be hired after. He said the funding would be half from ASUN and half from his offices. Would be about \$7,500 in funds from ASUN.

Dr. Beattie clarified whether the student would actually fix the problem or not.

Dr. Mensing said no. the student would collect the data, and do the analysis to help towards solving the problem.

Dr. Beattie asked how students would prevent their findings to solve the problem.

Dr. Mensing said student would show the results of their data, and demonstrate ways the problem could be solved.

Senator Blair asked if there would be an event for the students to present their findings to a larger audience.

Dr. Mensing said that so far, there is an undergrad research symposium that everyone is welcome to. He suggested the students possibly presented at the city meetings.

Senator Kohler brought up a separate symposium for just those students.

Senator Blair asked if it would be a poster presentation or reporting session because it is community based. Would it be more prudent to put their finding in a presentation that could easily be shared with members of the city/state.

Dr. Mensing said that would be a great idea. He said one of the issues the sustainability manager is working on is measuring where trees are, how they reduce heat and improve air quality, and how are the trees spread across the city based on economy and equity. To determine where trees should be planted and how it effects the communities.

Senator Blair said she noticed more students working on safety and sustainability projects. She thinks it would be good for the program to be marketed as sustainability projects because it would look good for the university as well as competitions with other universities for sustainable initiatives.

Dr. Beattie mentioned a snif initiative that included \$10,000 that is to give out to students who write a proposal for sustainability projects. He said he will research if the money is only available to projects on campus. It is called the sustainable initiative fund.

Senator Blair said the snif initiative questions can be taken up with Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Upton.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Senator Kohler adjourned the meeting at 4:49pm.