Academic Senate Report Notes

Board Meeting February 5, 2013

The Senate will be reporting on our February 1 meeting only as I trust the Board received the results of our special closed session January 18, meeting the Academic Senate Tenure Recommendations. The Academic Senate approved revisions to our bylaws regarding the Multi-Cultural Diversity Committee to reflect the current administrative structure and to include more student(s), a student development representative, and a residential life representative.

The Academic Senate having received many concerns affecting instruction, regarding the outsourcing of the bookstore, asked Senators to compile information for the stated purpose of advocating for improvements in our relations with Follett on behalf of our students. What we hoped to garner from our discussion was a deeper understanding of the issues and some possible solutions so that we collaborate with administration on improvements.

After receiving about 15 pages of concerns through email, we decided to seek professional help developing it into a report. IR Director Angelina Hill was very helpful with the report.

I will share with you at this time a summary of the report:

**Feedback Concerning Follett**

**Issues Raised** (number of times the issue was raised)

**Printing of packets took longer than expected.** (9)
   *Sometimes causing instructors to have to Xerox a large number of pages*

**Packet was not made as specified.** (6)
   *Not bound, not one sided, articles removed with no notification*

**Poor communication with Instructors.** (4)
   *Difficult to figure out how to order properly, not made aware of changes to orders, delays*

Bookstore staff were not courteous/lacked professionalism. (4)
   *Staff were rude to faculty and students, emailed unprofessional unmarked texts*

**Incorrect book and/or number of books ordered.** (4)

**Increase in price of packets.** (4)

**Increase in price of books.** (3)

**The online bookstore is difficult to use and has unresolved bugs/errors.** (3)
   *Books prices listed incorrectly, required text and other info missing.*
Copyright and associated costs led to sometimes dramatic increases in cost of course packets; one documented incident went from $15 to $185 which led to a significant number of students unable or unwilling to purchase the packets. This results in an unusually high number of students who are not prepared for class and it runs counter to our stated mission of putting student success first.

Possible solution:

We need to better understand copyright laws, and how to obtain reasonably priced permission to reproduce articles that are considered by many to be “fair use” in that they have appeared in newspapers and electronic media frequently. Faculty would like to see a neutral party presentation on copyright law prior to ordering of packets for subsequent semesters. Copyright concerns ranged from those associated with printing costs to concerns with Follett printing stern warnings against reproducing materials in packets, subject to lawsuit, when the materials were meant to be reproduced for use in labs; materials developed and improved on for many years by faculty that now appear to be copyrighted by Follett which could be an infringement on intellectual copyrights of individual faculty that may in some cases be shared RCCD rights.

Textbook prices appear to have increased about 30% on average and faculty would like to know if those prices can be negotiated or if there are other ways we can help keep the costs down for our students.

Printing of packets is now done in Michigan, which results in about 2-3 weeks to get corrections when they come in wrong or not as intended when ordered. Faculty would like to see improved relations with regard to ordering standards and faster resolution when something comes in
wrong. We need to work with Follett to better understand the forms to insure packets are being made as ordered and delivered on time.

The Senate hopes to open dialogue with administration very soon to work towards mitigating these concerns.

IR Director Angelina Hill presented the IPEDs report to the Senate which compares CR to similar size regional colleges. I would recommend Board members review this report if they haven’t already as it contains some very interesting insight. The report compares CR to similar size colleges in other rural locations in the southwest region of the United States.

The Senate in accordance with AP 7217, Faculty Prioritization Process, will be working collaboratively with Administration to prioritize hiring of tenure track faculty requests that came through the program review process. The Senate-appointed faculty representatives for Program Review are: Hillary Reed, Dental Assisting and Barbara Jaffari, Business CIS, the faculty at large representatives are: Michael Butler, Math and Pam Kessler, Humanities; and Senate Co-presidents Bob Brown and Michael Richards. The Faculty Prioritization Meeting will take place in the Board Room Saturday February 9, from 9 am to noon.