

**A.U.K Academic Senate  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, December 04, 2015  
10:00 – 11:30  
Room 401, A.U.K**

*Members of A.U.K community (staff, faculty and students) are welcome to attend*

Members attended: President Thompson, Vice President Daniel Cosentino, prof. Mimoza Mustafa, prof. Mimoza Polloshka, prof. Albina Balidemaj, prof. David Eustice, prof. Xhevahir Kolgjini, Anita Selmani- president of the student government. Also, chair of Curriculum Committee, prof. Lorraina Pinnell.

Minutes taken by: Festa Kusariš

### **Call to Order**

Chair of Senate, Mimoza M. calls the meeting to order and reads the rules for guests.  
Invites President Thompson for comments.

### **Comments from A.U.K President Thompson**

- Integrity is very important – to continue emphasizing that and to do everything you can to minimize the opportunities for cheating or inappropriate cooperation in classes.
- Faculty members should ensure students attend classes, unless emergency.
- Existential issue: to improve the enrollment figures within a year or two. We must get the enrollment up, if we want to thrive as an institution.
- Updates on Presidential search: Applications coming in- December 15<sup>th</sup> is the last day to apply. The Search committee has to select 2 or 3 final applicants, and probably by early spring 1 or 2 candidates might visit campus.

### **Comments from Vice-President Cosentino**

- No introductory comments.

### **10:10 Approval of minutes from last meetings**

- Minutes from the special meeting on academic calendar approval.
- Minutes from the last regular meeting.
- Voting for the minutes - all members in favor.
- **Minutes approved.**

## **10:15 Report of Curriculum Committee (up to date work and upcoming work) – Lorraina**

Lorraina:

- Curriculum committee is reviewing a proposal (PCEP) - intense meetings, reviewing the proposal, direct communication by emails and meetings.
- Very involved committee- the proposal has gone through couple of revisions.
- Preparing the final report, and submit to the senate by Wednesday.
- It's been challenging process, interesting, there been obstacles as well.
- As the chair of committee I object to the webpage already is up - it states the proposal is already active.
- This lead to confusion this morning, and it makes us question the function of the Committee, if the program appears up and running, why we are involved?

Daniel:

- This is a pilot project that it doesn't have to do with credit-bearing programs.
- The interest was to start process with similar programs that relate to our degree.
- It's a pilot project to see how we collegially could get along, to strengthen the wording and the language of the program, so others can then review it. Something that can be packaged from the Academic Affairs Office and then Board can review the work we're involved in.
- Start advertising something before the process is finished, is a bad form.
- TDI project - they don't need to have an approval from Academic Affairs to put it in the webpage.

Lorraina- recognizes Daniel's points.

- If I understood correctly this is a TDI proposal with a recruitment component - not an strictly academic program.
- We the Curriculum Committee- recognized the task ourselves and started working on it.
- Not a credit bearing, it's a recruitment strategy – so it was of a crucial importance, to report to Curriculum Committee before it was launched.
- We are advisory body, so I seriously want to think that our advise was considered and taken.
- It is not within academic, since it is not credit bearing, but we the Curriculum Committee have recognized that it does ripple through the academic, through the institution and through AUK.
- It has repercussions with some other full-time faculty.
- Asks on the behalf of the Curriculum Committee, for action to be taken towards this issue.

Daniel:

- The role of the Curriculum Committee will be taken extremely seriously.
- We should understand that everyone is in the same team.
- We are going through the process because it should be strict.

David:

- Someone should talk with Visar regarding the issues, since he is the one that put the report on the website.

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Daniel:

- Should not start picking who is at fault, but rather how to align to fix the process.

Mimoza M:

- I understand both parties, it happened - it went to the webpage, but since the Curriculum Committee was involved then it has to go by procedures.
- If it was something that it can get through without involving the Curriculum Committee then it would have been different. However, The Curriculum Committee is directly involved in this case, so their approval is part of the process.
- We need to make sure both parties are informed properly on the process. Do the steps properly, go through process together on what should be published or not.

David:

- Proposed to close down to the webpage until the report is done - Lorraine seconds it.

Daniel:

- Address the issue calmly.
- I can report to Visar that The Curriculum Committee has asked to seize the advertisement, until the report is completed.
- We still intend from this pilot project to do 2-3 more pilot projects based on degree bearing programs - develop more majors and programs.
- When the process is done- review the Curriculum Committee's report.
- Get people in line and solving issues along the way.

Lorraine:

- The process is crucially important.
- In many ways the Curriculum Committee is setting the template for all future applications. We recognize that part of our mandate, and we following it.
- Proposal itself - difficult to identify what this program wanted and needed.
- A report coming up regarding that - however there are concerns.
- ENDING: Formal objection on behalf of the Curriculum Committee to be preempted before the final report. Also, formal request to have the webpage temporary removed until the process is complete.

Mimoza:

- Daniel to ask Visar if they could "freeze" the advertisement until the report is final.
- Suggestion: Whenever the Curriculum Committee and other parties involved (such as TDI or others), to inform parties on involvement of others, to brief them in respective procedures and processes.
- In this case not launch the advertisement without consent of the Curriculum Committee.

Lorraine- regarding the report:

- A very honest report, the report is that we are reporting on and not the people involved,
- Stop the process until the report is done.

Daniel:

- I will address the issue on request on the Curriculum Committee.
  - **Withdraw**
  - **Or wait until the report is done.**

### **10:30 Faculty Development Center (possible assistance from the Senate) – Mimoza P.**

Mimoza P:

- Activities of the FDC – already mentioned in the earlier meeting today.
- The senate is already assisting, by working in ‘Faculty Rank and Promotion’ which will directly influence faculty participating in FDC activities.
- In order for the faculty to be more involved in activities- how to be released for the teaching load, so to use the time for preparation of activities in the Center. Any thoughts?
- It takes a lot of time to prepare for these activities.

Mimoza M:

- We have to think about these issues, together with Daniel – Academic Director.
- If we want The Faculty Development Center to develop and be successful we have to work on it, but difficult due to the full load of teaching and working hours.

Daniel:

- We need to have some kind of faculty file, to check for faculty involvement and participations. This should be part of annual review, which relates to faculty promotions. We should use FDC umbrella to do this, starting next term.
  - For next term to launch Self-Assessment rubric, and to accomplish it by the end of the term.
  - One-way forward, accomplishing the idea for faculty assessment.
  - One of the four points we can accomplish next term.
- **Mimoza P. and Daniel to arrange the activities of The Faculty Development Center.**

### **10:45 Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism (how to track students) – Mimoza M.**

Mimoza M. hands out papers to the Senate members for the academic dishonesty/Suspension part from the Faculty Handbook.

- What I want to point out more - all the time we catch students plagiarizing papers, cheating and there is not much being done regarding this issue.
- How are we tracking them and how they are getting penalized for that – only by asking the advisors to stop the student from withdrawing the class?
- Maybe having a system, a database- if students plagiarize and/or cheat for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time they would get a warning, and for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time they would get suspended?
- The Academic Bulletin doesn’t state that academic dishonesty will be penalized, it is not stated that you might get suspended as a result of cheating/plagiarizing.
- We have to make it clear to the students that they will get penalized for academic dishonesty.

Daniel:

- It goes into the students file; we don’t want the community to know- privacy.
- However each year students that perform academic dishonesty are expelled.
- Three students will be suspended this semester because of academic dishonesty.

Mimoza M:

- Record the process, and we as a faculty have to become more aware of the process.
- Reports aren’t done properly, and at the same time students to be aware of penalties.

Albina:

- Database of the advisors- key thing they should be reported.
- Only a few faculty members constantly turn in reports- because faculty members want to punish students themselves thus they don't submit the reports.
- However faculty needs to submit a report for academic dishonesty in order for a student to be suspended.

Mimoza M:

- We should remind the faculty, also the new faculty.
- Send forms to the faculty members at the beginning of the semester, at least it once a year to remind them about the report.
- The faculty should not only punish students for academic dishonesty by giving them an F, but also filling out the report and submitting it.
- Most of the faculty members are not aware that they should fill in a report.
- It is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Mimoza P:

- Its good to educate the students that punishment will happen, and then they won't repeat it.

Daniel:

- Conduct Committee- the proceedings are private.
- Students have the right to dignity and to have a faculty advocate.
- We want students that cheat to come back and learn their lesson and not repeat it again.
- We're also in the process of designing a website – a one-stop for all different forms.
  - **Send the report once a year.**
  - **Add to the academic bulletin that students that cheat and plagiarize will get suspended.**
  - **To make it clear to the students - directed to Albina to change it in Academic Bulletin, under Suspension Part.**
  - **Since Albina is in charge of the Academic Bulletin; she agrees to change it.**

### 11:00 Proposal for Faculty Handbook amendment – David E.

- Chapter 3 of Faculty Handbook – Instruction Related Policies from the AUK Faculty Policy Handbook, amendment copies are handed to the members from David and Mimoza M.

David E:

- Section 1.2- completely bypassed, it was not done in a professional way.
- Considers the sentence is ambiguous and it should be amended or completely deleted.

Daniel explains that any amendment of the Faculty Handbook should be approved by Board of Directors.

After discussions among members, Mimoza M asks David if he still wants the Senate to pursue with the possible change of that section in the Faculty Handbook.

David E:

- **Chooses not to pursue the case any further. Issue closed.**

## **11:15 AOB**

Daniel:

- Nepotism.
- There are full time faculty members that are couples, brothers and sisters.
- Each individual should know that we follow the procedures of HR Team.
- VPPA makes final decision.
- We want the world to know we follow procedures regarding “*Nepotism*” at AUK.
- **Faculty should make it aware that we are following procedures regarding this issue.**

Mimoza M:

- Class size of Mathematics courses
- Poor students that struggle with math, and again we end up having classes with 30 or more students in class.
- It is very difficult to follow students’ performance in such large classes, especially if we need to work closely with them, and help them through their struggles.
- Having the cap of maximum 25 students in math courses, the classes would have been more manageable – to discuss it with academic director.

Anita (SG):

- Beside Mathematics, we also have problems with Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting, Econometrics classes. All of them involve sort of mathematics.
- We are 35 students in a class, it is impossible to hear the professor.

Daniel:

- There are possible creative solutions to looking at class sizes.
  1. Raising the tuition or
  2. Looking for specific ways of compensation on low enrolled class.

**Look for what the creative solutions can be, and work together and provide more information on trying to regard the issue.**

Albina:

- This existing grid will roll over, not changed.
- We are expecting to lower the cap on math, unless there is a big number of freshmen enrolled.

**11:30 Meeting adjourned**