Senate Steering Committee
2004-2005 Annual Report

Members

Graeme Boone, Robert Brueggemeier, Susan Fisher (non-voting), David Horn (chair), Ashok Krishnamurthy (alternate), Stanley Laughlin, Dennis McKay (alternate), Matt Monta, Anthony Mughan, Barbara Pletz, Aftab Pureval, Christopher Ries, William Shkurti, Allan Silverman, Barbara Snyder, and Sharon West

Regular guests: Philip T.K. Daniel, Jack Rall, Tina Love

Responsibilities

The Steering Committee meets approximately twice a month during the academic year. Its primary responsibilities by rule are: 1) to review the structure, operation and effectiveness of the University Senate and its committees and 2) to serve as a channel of communication between the Senate and the President and the Board of Trustees.

Reports and Rule Revisions

Steering discussed the annual reports of each senate committee, usually with the chair of the committee:

- Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility (Graeme Boone, chair)
- Council on Enrollments and Student Progress (Hal Arkes, chair)
- Fiscal Committee (Karla Zadnik, chair)
- Council on Libraries and Information Technology (Lewis Ulman)
- Committee on Academic Misconduct (Pete Pappas, COAM coordinator)
- Committee on Honorary Degrees (Rolf Barth, chair)
- Council on the Physical Environment (Jackie Gargus, chair)
- Hearing Committee (Philip T. K. Daniel, chair)
- Athletic Council (Joseph Barr, chair)
- Government Affairs Committee (Dean Lacy, chair)
- Council on Student Affairs (Kerry Hodak, chair)
- Council on Academic Affairs (Jane Hathaway)
- Rules Committee (Charles Massey, chair)
- Research Committee (Terry Conlisk, chair)
- Faculty Benefits and Compensation Committee (George Billman, chair)
- Diversity Committee (Christine Ballengee-Morris, chair)
- Program Committee (Allan Silverman, chair)
Steering also reviewed and discussed the following reports and proposals:

- Report of the Ohio Committee on Higher Education and the Economy (CHEE)
- Draft report of the ad hoc Committee on Curricular Quality Control
- Interim reports of the Committee on Faculty Career Enhancement
- Interim reports of the ad hoc committee to review the position of Secretary of the Faculty
- Interim report of the Freeman Committee on Funding of Graduate Education
- Report of the Tuition Commission
- Proposal to create Faculty Rule 3335-5-48.18, “Graduate Associate Compensation and Benefits Committee”
- Proposal to amend Faculty Rule 3335-5-48.4, “Council on Student Affairs”
- Proposal to amend Faculty Rules 3335-17-01, “Administration Members” and 3335-5-37, “Membership”
- Proposal to amend Faculty Rule 3335-5-04, “Hearing Procedures for Complaints against Regular, Regular Clinical and Auxiliary Faculty Members”
- Proposal to create a new major in Biomedical Sciences in the School of Allied Medicine
- Proposal to establish the Department of Radiation Medicine in the College of Medicine and Public Health
- Proposal to establish a University Center for Honors and Scholars
- Proposal to establish regular clinical-track faculty in the College of Business
- Proposal to establish regular clinical-track faculty in the College of Engineering
- Proposal for the addition of College Patterns of Administration to Faculty Rule 3335-3-29(B)5
- Proposal to establish a Conflict of Commitment Policy

Ongoing projects

Review of undergraduate education

Steering began its work in Summer 2004 when it met with the Provost to discuss the composition and charge of a committee to review undergraduate education at Ohio State. Faculty members on Steering submitted to the Provost names of faculty who might serve effectively on such a committee, and the Provost charged the committee with reporting regularly to both her office and Steering. Brian McHale, chair of the committee, met twice with Steering to report on the progress of the committee’s work, and will meet again with Steering when the committee prepares to issue its first report.

Discussion of data on the size and composition of the university faculty
Steering began a conversation in the fall about the past, present, and future size of the tenure-track faculty at the university. Steering met with Associate Vice President Larry Lewellen and Laura Gast from the Office of Human Resources and with Julia Carpenter-Hubin from the Office of Academic Affairs to review historical data collected by those offices on the overall size of the faculty and staff at the university; the proportions of the faculty that are tenure-track, clinical-track, research-track, and auxiliary; and the proportions of faculty and staff paid from general and other funds. Steering expects to continue to explore in the coming year the relation between increasing the size of the tenure-track faculty and the goals of the Academic Plan.

Discussion of the structure and functioning of the Senate and its committees

As part of the task assigned by Faculty Rule, Steering devoted regular attention to the structure and functioning of Senate committees and of shared governance generally. In addition to hearing reports of the several committees, Steering discussed in some detail the procedures for reviewing curricular and structural proposals, particularly when these are complex, controversial, or break new ground organizationally. In the past year, these included proposals to create departments with fewer than ten faculty, proposals to create clinical faculty, and proposals to merge and change the reporting lines of academic units. Steering is concerned to insure that proposals are adequately vetted before they come to the Senate for a vote, and is committed to working with the Senate office, the Council on Academic Affairs and other senate committees, Faculty Council, and student government and to ensure that there is adequate notice and time for discussion when new proposals enter the system.

Recommendation

Steering should consider forming ad hoc committees to review proposals and policies that do not neatly fall within the purview of existing committees, or that would overburden those committees. The group of faculty leaders served this purpose in the case of rules governing financial fraud, and similar structures should be considered next year. Ad hoc committees would also create additional opportunities to involve faculty who do not currently serve on the Senate in the governance of the university.

Respectfully Submitted,

David G. Horn, Chair