

Meeting Minutes

Date: May 13, 2015

University Faculty Council – Pepperdine University

Place: West Los Angeles Conference Room 499

Time: 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Attendees:

Mark Scarberry (Chair)
Thomas Vandergon
Andrew Yuengert
Andrew Benton
Rick Marrs
Ted McAllister
Michael Magasin
Nancy Harding
Ann Feyerherm
Caroline Keatinge
Lee Kats
Christine Goodman
Larry Bumgardner (by speakerphone)

Business:

Prof. Mark Scarberry presented an overview of the agenda.

Agenda Items:

1. Discussion of White Paper presented by Provost Marrs, “Pepperdine University and Churches of Christ.
2. Update on Dean searches in GSBM and SPP.
3. Information about the new Ph.D. program approved for GSEP
4. A discussion of sabbatical leave policies requested by GSEP
5. Further discussion of how to understand Pepperdine’s mission, and of what it might mean for us to move toward excellence (or further excellence) as Pepperdine.

Following opening remarks, Prof. Linda Purrington provided an overview of the Ed.D. program and of the new Ph.D. program on Global Leadership (agenda item 3). The committee heard and discussed information on timing of the beginning of the new degree program; the need to identify faculty mentors, who could be from any of Pepperdine’s schools; marketing of the new degree; and other considerations.

The council next discussed the White Paper that had been prepared for the Religious Standards Committee of the Board of Regents (agenda item 1). Provost Marrs gave an overview of the thought processes and questions that led up to the creation of the document. The paper addresses how we may have a “healthy understanding of our heritage and mission as a Christian institution.” The discussion concluded with an expectation that the UFC would give further consideration to the issues raised in the paper, particularly with regard to how these issues could be considered by the faculty as a whole.

Information was provided to the committee on the status of the current Dean searches. There was also a brief discussion of the policies and procedures being used (or to be used) in the dean searches for GSBM and SPP.

At the request of the members from GSEP, there was a discussion of sabbatical leave policies. Representatives from each school provided information about their school’s general sabbatical leave policy. There was a sense that schools that do not have regular sabbatical policies in place should work with their administrations to get policies in place that would provide for regular sabbaticals, and that perhaps the Provost could participate in that process.

The remaining time in the meeting was spent on agenda item 5, in particular with regard to a particular goal that has been suggested: that Pepperdine should become the preeminent Protestant university in the U.S., while staying true to its religious mission and its identity as Pepperdine. There was a suggestion that a group of faculty might be formed over the summer (or in the fall) that could formulate a small (3-4) set of defining and guiding questions to help frame the discussion. It was suggested that the Provost could take the lead in convening such a group, with the possibility that the questions developed by that group might provide the subject matter for the 2016 University Faculty Conference.

The ideas raised in an article entitled “What is the point of a professor?” by Mark Bauerlein (N.Y. Times, May 9, 2015) were commended to the council members for consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Submitted by:

Tom Vandergon and Mark Scarberry

September 25, 2015