

SEC Associated Faculty Leaders (SECAFL)
Meeting Minutes
Lexington, Kentucky
October 1 – 3, 2009

Present:

David Randall (chair), Kentucky
Karen F. Steckol, Alabama
Neil Allison, Arkansas
Ro DiBrezza, Arkansas
Bob Locy, Auburn
Hollie Swanson, Kentucky
Kevin L. Cope, Louisiana State
Robert Best, South Carolina
Toby Boulet, Tennessee
Brian Christman, Vanderbilt
Christian Anderson (ex-officio), South Carolina
Amber Stegelin (ex-officio), South Carolina

Thursday, October 1, 2009

A reception was held at the Marriott Spring Hills Suites. Dr. James Tracy, Vice President for Research at the University of Kentucky, spoke about the challenges of academic governance and leadership based on his experiences at the University of Wisconsin and at Kentucky. A lively discussion about these issues followed.

Friday, October 2, 2009

David Randall opened the meeting at 8:45 a.m. and introduced the agenda for the meeting. The leaders present introduced themselves and mentioned key issues facing their individual senates and higher education in their states. Common issues facing senates was how to deal with curriculum issues, how best to deal with closing programs, the reorganization and political influences on higher education in their respective states, the role of faculty in the budget issues, faculty handbook revision, role of junior and non-tenure track faculty in faculty senates, cooperation with other campuses within the system and state, the effects of accreditation, relationships with presidents and provosts (including new arrivals), athletics, building, the role of faculty leaders as campus leaders,

It was decided that the group needs a web site where a roster, meeting agendas and minutes, presentations from meetings, and other information can be stored. Christian was asked to find a site that would be easily accessible and useable.

SECAFL

SECAFL Constitution

Support SECAFL Executive Secretary

Ro moved that Mike Slive, Commissioner of the SEC, to look into the possibility of providing financial support for the SECAFL, including travel support for the executive secretary.

Afternoon activities included lunch at the University Club and a guided visit at the University of Kentucky Art Museum.

At 2:30 p.m. Neal Hutchens, assistant professor of higher education at the University of Kentucky, gave a presentation on academic freedom: "How Free is Academic Freedom? A Dialogue Considering the Increasingly Precarious Status of First Amendment Protection for Faculty Speech."

President Todd spoke to the group about the role and importance of faculty governance and engaged in a conversation with the faculty leaders about a variety of issues about higher education.

The idea of a spring meeting was discussed and what purpose it might serve. It was suggested that initiatives could be pursued in the spring and business conducted in a fall meeting. The idea of working with provosts on issues was suggested. Others reminded the group that the faculty should be the guardians of the academy and while it is not necessary to be antagonistic with administrative officers, it is important to take a stand in defending the academic mission of the institution. One issue that faculty leaders mentioned they felt they needed to work on is how to re-engage faculty, especially junior faculty. The importance of training for department chairs and other administrators was discussed and whether SECAFL could work with the SECAC provosts group on assessing the quality of training for department chairs. The idea of creating training for department chairs was also suggested.

It was decided to hold a meeting in the spring at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge hosted by Kevin Cope.

It was suggested that holding a spring meeting might help create more continuity. It was moved that the meeting be held via teleconference. Also, a live conference could be broadcast. There was a motion to meet in the fall at LSU with the option of

The fall 2010 will be held at the University of Arkansas.

Professor Cope spoke with fiery inspiration. Some questioned whether it was a human voice or divine!

Saturday, October 3, 2009

The group reconvened at 9 a.m. at the Red Mile Round Barn. Amber Stegelin-Falluca, a Ph.D. student in higher education at the University of South Carolina, presented about her dissertation study on faculty senators and their knowledge and perceptions. She gave an overview of her dissertation proposal and solicited feedback on the questions she would ask in her survey. Amber also asked if the faculty senate leaders what the best way to get the survey to their senators would be. Several mentioned that they would be willing to cooperate. It was moved that the group endorse the survey, which was passed unanimously.

Connie Ray, vice-president for institutional research and effectiveness at the University of Kentucky, spoke on the role of the faculty in accreditation.

[Full name] Swami, provost at the University of Kentucky, spoke with the group about the role of shared governance and about the request to be affiliated with SECAC. He explained that the provosts were skeptical about creating parallel or redundant bureaucracies or usurping the power of the provosts. Each institution contributes \$20,000 to the SECAC. (By contrast, the Big 10's CIC is supported by \$100,000 annual contribution.) He discussed what initiatives that have been started such as increased interlibrary loan among SEC institutions and shared recruiting and job placement. The affiliation of SECAFL as an affiliated group with SECAC was discussed including what would be the most productive relationship. The idea of looking at what the CIC is doing with their senate group.

The constitution was approved unanimously.

Fall meeting will be held at the University of Arkansas. Approved unanimously.

A spring meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held at Louisiana State University. Kevin Cope will contact the group

Election of president and vice-president. Kevin Cope was nominated as president and Karen Steckol was nominated as vice-president. They were elected by acclamation and President Cope's reign as benevolent dictator began at 11:25 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at noon for lunch at the Red Mile racetrack.