

SEC Associated Faculty Leaders (SECAFL)

Meeting Minutes

Birmingham, Alabama

September 26-27, 2008

Present:

Karen F. Steckol (Alabama), Katrina Ramonelle (Alabama), Inza Fort (Arkansas), Neil Allison (Arkansas), Bob Locy (Auburn), David Randall (Kentucky), Kevin L. Cope (Louisiana State), John Williamson (Mississippi), David Nagel (Mississippi State), Robert Best (South Carolina), Christian Anderson (South Carolina), J.A.M. "Toby" Boulet (Tennessee), Virginia Shepherd (Vanderbilt)

Friday, September 27, 2008

John Williamson, chair of the 2008 meeting, opened the session at noon. The group began with informal discussions over lunch.

The group discussed the future of the group, whether to write a charter, whether to affiliate with SECAC, how often (and where to meet), and how to sustain membership in the group (given the rotating nature of senate chairs). Christian presented a draft of a proposal for membership with SECAC (which uses SECAC's guidelines) that could be used as a starting point for writing an affiliation application and charter. Three subcommittees were created to discuss the future direction of the group.

The Subcommittee on Future Meetings includes Neil Allison, Kevin Cope, Inza Fort and David Randall. The Subcommittee on Future Topics includes Bob Best, David Nagel, and Virginia Shepherd. The Subcommittee on Writing a Charter and SECAC Applications includes Toby Boulet, Karen Steckol, and John Williamson with Christian Anderson as an ex-officio member.

John Williamson suggested the group think about how to create consistency within the group by having more than one member representing each institution, one of whom could be the senate chair and another who would serve a longer term. Other suggestions were explored including having an advisory council of former chairs (the immediate past chair, the current chair, and the next chair to host the meeting).

It was decided that the group would consist of a steering committee of five individuals who will serve 5-year terms (one rotating off each year) plus the institutional representatives. It was later suggested that the steering committee serve three-year terms as a more reasonable period of time.

It was decided that key elements of a charter include that the group should meet at least once per year and that there be a steering committee with a chair. It was decided to draft

a charter using the draft Christian had created as a starting point. The possibility of affiliating with SECAC was seen as being positive for the group by providing an administrative home and possibly funds.

It was decided that a title for the position Christian would occupy the position of “executive secretary.” It was suggested that he talk with his department chair about the position to ensure that this position serve in a complementary way to his research program.

The group decided that the main principles for the charter would include that there be one vote per school, that there would be a steering committee (each member serving for five years, the first five to be staggered so that only one rotates off each year), meeting locations will be determined by the steering committee, and that membership

Saturday, September 28, 2008

The meeting opened at 9 a.m. with a general discussion about the role of faculty senates at the universities represented in curriculum changes, including the creation of entire programs. Some

David Randall was selected as chair and Robert Best as co-chair for the upcoming year.

The steering committee was selected and includes:

Robert Best
David Randall
Virginia Shepherd
Karen Steckol
John Williamson

They will decide where the meetings should be held and steer the agenda of the group.

The group broke into subcommittees. Each subcommittee reported back to the group as a whole:

Virginia Shepard, for the Future Topics Subcommittee, reported that the following topics had been suggested for future meetings:

- Accreditation: how should faculty be involved in accreditation process
- Relationships and Communication with provosts, presidents, and trustees
- Growing population of non-tenure track faculty
- Tenure: future of tenure and what it means, including post-tenure review
- Role of faculty in the university budgeting and planning process
- How to define shared governance

David Randall, for the Subcommittee on Future Meetings, suggested that the group meet again in Birmingham in April with the SEC (or in Fayetteville at the SECAC). The main business would be to finalize the charter. The subcommittee suggested that after the meeting in April that SECAFL meet annually in the fall, in 2009 at the University of Kentucky, and in the fall of 2010 at Louisiana State University.

Toby Boulet, for the Subcommittee on Writing a Charter, reported that the application for affiliation with SECAC would be due in April. The Subcommittee recommended the following structure:

- That there be 12 members (one per institution), with one vote each. The official representative for each institution would be the senate chair/president. (Others could attend from an institution but would not have an additional vote.)
- That there be a Steering Committee of 5 members, each with a 3 year-term [modified to 2 years in the discussion?], with staggered memberships (2 for 2-years; 2 for 3-year; 1 with a 1-year term) to begin so that the entire membership would not rotate off the Steering Committee at once. The Steering Committee chair and co-chair to come from the longer terms to allow for continuity.
- The Steering Committee would handle logistics of the meeting, set the agenda with the host school for the group.
- The group would rely on the assets of the host institution in putting together the annual meeting.

Members discussed whether the universities' faculty senates needed to vote on membership in the group. It was decided that such a vote would generally not be necessary, however, that senate leaders should inform their senates that the group exists and that they are participating.

Bob Best, David Randall, and Christian Anderson will work with SECAC to submit the final application to SECAC after getting final input from the group.