NWACC Faculty Business Meeting
Minutes
Friday, September 30, 2011
Burns Hall 2105

56 faculty attended the meeting

Bryan Aguiar, President of the Faculty Senate, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

I. Graduate Survey

Dr. Lisa Anderson shared a few highlights from the annual graduate survey looking at trend data from the last five years. According to Anderson, 89% of graduates rated their overall experience at NWACC as a positive academic experience, and over 90% would recommend NWACC to others. Bryan Aguiar commented that he would send out the information Anderson presented to the faculty.

II. Dr. Paneitz Updates

Dr. Becky Paneitz shared several updates. Paneitz said that the information gathered by the feedback forum about the VP of learning position will be made available, and the search will be nationwide. She commented that any faculty interested in serving on the committee should tell their dean. Paneitz also mentioned the salary scale work group, which is meeting next week to address the twenty year pay scale and revisit criteria for faculty placement on scale. The salary changes should be implemented for part or all of fiscal year 2012. Paneitz highlighted several other groups currently meeting—the Sustainability Task Force, the Strategic Planning Task Force, and a group meeting on international development looking at international program initiatives.

III. Foundation

Meredith Brunen promoted the current campaign to raise money for the Foundation. She encouraged faculty to contribute. Any questions regarding the campaign should be addressed to her.

IV. Veteran Attendance Tracking

Dianna Portillo thanked faculty for the high response she has received concerning attendance checks. Portillo said the attendance checks are necessary to identify students not attending class and adjust benefits if needed. She stated that she is working to find an easier process to track veteran attendance and is hoping to get that new process in place for the spring semester.

V. NWACC Social Media

Dr. Shauna Sterling presented a video and information about a grant-funded study concerning social media effects on students' education. NWACC was one of eight institutions selected to participate in the three year study. Sterling mentioned that NWACC has sent out invitations to students, faculty, and staff to join a specific NWACC Facebook group. The goal of the study is to see if using social media in this way helps with student success and retention. Sterling met with Faculty Senate at their last meeting and said she was now prepared to answer the concerns raised at that meeting.

Sterling commented that participation in the study is optional; when people are contacted about being a part of the NWACC Facebook group, they must opt in. She also stated that the terms of service for the group include the information that it is a part of a study, that the group is a completely separate environment from Facebook, and that students will have given permission if any information is used about them.

Several faculty members raised further concerns about the study, including concerns about lack of guidelines for faculty/student interactions, the possible limiting of free speech through censorship, the integration of student groups already using Facebook into the NWACC Facebook app, the blurring of roles caused by students calling a professor "friend," and others.

According to Sterling, Learner Services will create a list of words to flag, words that deal with crimes like hate speech, libel, and slander. When such a word is flagged, the post will be removed. The marketing department is monitoring the group, and Sterling said that emails concerning the monitoring and list of words should be directed to Mark Scott.

Also according to Sterling, Dr. Panietz requested NWACC's participation in this grant. The question was raised as to whether Sterling's office could post grant proposals before submitting so that faculty could see and possibly provide input. Sterling answered that they probably could post a list of proposals and that there are several they are working on that deal with faculty.

VI. Information Technology

Paige Francis presented some of IT's current projects, saying that she wants to receive feedback in whatever form faculty feel most comfortable. Francis said IT is trying to improve technology on campus and will be contacting faculty about what is needed in classrooms. According to Francis, bandwidth and connectivity should not be an issue anywhere on campus. She also said that the campus will be moving to Exchange 2010 over the winter break, which might cause loss of email access for about an hour. Francis also commented on the possibility of moving email to gmail or Yahoo, saying she is considering having a meeting in November to discuss the possibility; the suggestion was raised to postpone the meeting until early next semester after the upgrade to Exchange 2010. Faculty brought up concerns about the lapsing of the web standards committee, and Francis said she is trying to bring the committee back. Curtis Harrell said the newly formed Committee on Committees should help address this concern. Francis reiterated her request for feedback concerning any technology issues.

VII. Learning Communities

Lenora Sotlar presented some information about the work her office is currently doing with Learning Communities. She requested faculty contact her office to let her know of any current efforts to form learning communities. Sotlar explained what the Title III grant has already brought to campus, encouraged faculty to look at NWACC's Title III webpage and contact her office with any questions regarding the grant or available funds.

VIII. Faculty Evaluation Timeline

Curtis Harrell presented the timeline for the Faculty Evaluation process. Faculty discussed concerns about the completion date for student evaluations. Harrell responded that the date was set so secretaries would have adequate time to prepare the information gathered from student evaluations.

Motion to approve the timeline was made by Melissa Jordan; seconded by Jeff Sprott; approved.

Bryan Aguiar, Faculty Senate President, adjourned the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Looney,
Faculty Senate Secretary 2011-12