

Faculty Meeting
USC-Lancaster
Monday, April 15, 2013

Minutes from April 5th meeting approved.

Chair calls special order - discussion of “Curriculum Motion” (from April 5th meeting)
***Motion to Conduct Vote by Secret Ballot (Gardner, 2nd – several vocal)**
***Motion to vote by Secret Ballot fails: 17-16**

Discussion:

- (Catalano) – “a failure to plan on your part, does not constitute an emergency on our part.” Would like more time for deliberation in the normal way. By-laws declare faculty powers over curriculum. We need due consideration of issue, plans to vote “No”.
- (N. Guittar) – learning outcomes are virtually non-existent on AA/AS degrees. We are voting in something that has more questions than answers. Moving into Palmetto College will require uniformity, but this is not the time or place. This new curriculum is more vague than what we currently have.
- (Cox answers several general questions about Baccalaureate Prep degree from faculty)
- (Cox) – pleads with faculty to support the new curriculum, **** see Appendix #1 ****
Adopting curriculum should not alter graduation rates, most students will be directed into Baccalaureate Prep. This is a chance for a good first impression, all sister campuses have voted in favor. Asks that USCL faculty supports the motion.
- (Nims) – supports measure, believes in faculty governance, views as opportunity for RCFS to become Faculty Senate for Palmetto College. Fair for USCL faculty to call administration to account, but sees pressure of timing as advantage. Once RCFS has enabling legislation, the administration will recognize RCFS as Palmetto College Faculty Senate which will take ownership of this issue. Promises to discuss role of Faculty Senate “in detail” with Chancellor Elkins. Everyone agrees this is a flawed product and has serious concerns, but can establish precedent for future modification. Urges “Yes” vote for measure.
- (Hammond) – respectfully disagrees, curriculum is a flawed product. USCL faculty organization “had no say” in this product. Common degree programs need to be developed and adopted together. Not opposed to RCFS taking control and not opposed if handled in the right way. Will vote “No”.
- (Gardner) – how does today’s vote effect accreditation?
- (Cox) – SACS concerned about different curriculum, assured remedy by next accreditation cycle. Limited understanding but worried about possible loss of accreditation.

(Hammond) – another criteria for accreditation is that Faculty Governance be respected.

(N. Lawrence) – favorable arguments based on faith in RCFS seem unfounded. Too much responsibility for RCFS. Might be the first of other issues passed under pressure. Other than changes to Faculty Manual, has not seen much progress at RCFS on any issue except transition to Palmetto College. Will vote “No”.

(Nims) – over 20 years of service on RCFS, some have been weak and others strong. RCFS is only as good as members and their commitment. Responsibility for oversight of Curriculum means senators will be need to be held to account. This is an opportunity for RCFS.

(N. Guittar) – we are engaging in impression management. Offers opportunity to show faculty are “team players”.

(Kingkade) – review of SACS accreditation?

(Cox) – 3 years of data required.

(Davaut) – did not find 3 year requirement in SACS policies.

(Cox) – what happens if SACS does not re-affirm?

VOTE ** Standing Vote (counted twice)

No -19

Yes – 17

**** Common Curriculum does not Pass ****

Attending:

Alhaddad, Biggs, Bonner, Bundrick, Bundy, Burke, Castiglia, Catalano, Catledge, Covington, Cox, Criswell, Davaut, Freeman, Gardner, Golonka, Guittar, Hammond, Harris, Hassell, Holloway, Holt, Jenkins, Obi-Johnson, Judge, Kingkade, D. Lawrence, N. Lawrence, Martek, Nims, Pangburn, Penuel, Richardson, Roberts, Rutledge, Sellhorst, Van Hall, Wolochwianski, Worthy, Yingst.

Submitted by Mike Bonner

Outgoing Faculty Secretary

Appendix # 1:

This marks perhaps one of the most important votes that we, as a Faculty Organization, will make, and I stand here today to ask – plead – for your support of the motion.

I do not make this request lightly, and I know that none of you is approaching this vote without the most serious of intentions. And I certainly can't say that I make this request without my own concerns and reservations.

Most of these concerns have been raised and discussed at length, not only here in this Faculty Organization but within smaller groups of faculty over the last several weeks. So I am not going to delve into those again.

Instead, I want to take a moment to explain why I am going to vote in favor of this motion.

The Regional Campuses are evolving – the Palmetto College is emerging. For fifty years of our existence, we have focused our attention on the students we serve on this campus – students who attended USCL with the intention of completing an associate's degree, or of changing campuses and completing their baccalaureate degrees elsewhere. Our associate's degrees were designed with these students in mind, to meet their specific needs.

In 2009, this Faculty undertook a major review of our Associate's degree requirements and made fundamental changes that, in our opinion, better served the needs of students on this campus.

What we are being asked to do today is to begin thinking of ourselves as a part of a larger entity – as the Faculty of Palmetto College – and this means we have to examine and think about these degree curricula not in terms of students at Lancaster, but in terms of students throughout the system – at Salkehatchie, Sumter, Union, and the program at Fort Jackson.

The two-track proposal represents a compromise – and by definition, compromises are imperfect. There are elements of this proposal with which we do not agree. I am sure the same could be said on each of the other campuses.

We can sit here and debate from now until the Rapture the pros and cons of having x number of hours of science required for the general AS, or of including (or excluding) foreign language from the curricula.

These are certainly important issues – issues which need to be discussed and thoroughly fleshed out. But as we move toward becoming the Palmetto

College, the appropriate forum for these discussion is (I think) the Regional Campuses Faculty Senate.

This is why I believe it is imperative that the Senate move pro-actively to claim ownership of these degrees, not only the associate's degrees in questions, but the BLS and BOL degrees as well – the two baccalaureate degrees that will continue to be awarded by Palmetto College. I sincerely hope that our Faculty will urge our Senators to push for such action.

I've been doing some thinking about this proposal, especially in light of the question I was asked at the last meeting to “look at this with my faculty hat on.”

Here's are my thoughts:

- I do not believe that adopting these curricula will negatively affect our graduation rates. In fact, we may even see some increase (particularly in the number of AA degrees conferred). But most of our students are going to be directed into the baccalaureate prep track, because we have always taken the position that our job is to prepare students for a bachelor's program.
- And the fact of the matter is that very few of our students now plan to stop with an associate's degree – with the exception of A.D.N., almost all of our students plan to pursue a bachelor's degree.

- Adoption of these curricula need not change a single thing that we, as faculty and as advisors, do. We will continue to look at the courses our students need, and we will continue to direct them to take those courses, regardless of whether or not they are “required” for a particular associate’s degree.
- Adoption of these curricula does absolutely nothing to change our curricula for the Business, Criminal Justice, or Nursing degrees.
- So if we adopt this measure, students will have six different paths to an associate’s degree – AA, AS, Bacc Prep, Business, CRJU and Nursing.
 - Three of them still require foreign language.
 - Five of them still allow MATH 111 to count toward the Analytical Requirement

- This gives our students MORE flexibility in choice toward a degree that meets their particular needs. Provides degrees that clearly lead into baccalaureate programs, while establishing “safety net” degrees for those who – for whatever reason – can’t complete a bachelor’s.
- Some have opined that they thought it was “hard to believe” that the University’s accreditation could be jeopardized over its associate degrees. Perhaps so – but my fear is that some office in Columbia might become just worried enough to say, “You know what, maybe it’s not worth it for USC to award associate’s degrees. Let’s leave those to the technical colleges.” Plenty of people on the Columbia campus feel this way – might just give them an excuse to take action.

- Or – worst case scenario – we cost the University its accreditation – then it doesn't matter what our degree curricula are. Nobody is going to want an associate's degree from an unaccredited institution.

You all have heard the saying that “you never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

This vote today is really going to be the first true impression that the new Palmetto College Chancellor gets of the USC Lancaster campus and its faculty.

When we leave this meeting today, it's going to be my responsibility to go back and send an e-mail to Dr. Elkins (and others) announcing the results of the vote.

All of our sister campuses have voted to approve these common curricula, and so now the decision rests with us.

A vote in favor of this proposal sends a clear signal that we intend to be a partner – a vocal, involved, and thoroughly invested partner, and not an obstacle, to the establishment of Palmetto College.

I ask you to support the measure.

