JOINT MEETIING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND

THE RULES AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2013 –3:00 P.M.

DRISCOLL 225

**PRESENT:** Ms. Selma Koury Wunderlich, Rev. John Stack, OSA, Dr. Robert Styer,

Mr. Stephen Fugale, Mr. Ward Williams; Dr. Jay Strieb, Ms. Christine Alizzi,

Mr. Dan Goldowsky; Ms. Allison Venella; Mr. Christopher Marroletti;

Ms. Christine Alizzi

**ABSENT:** Dr. Barbara Wall (NIA), Mr. Ryan Gatti (NIA, Ms. Lizzy Heurich (NIA),

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Father Stack opened the meeting with a short prayer.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE POSSIBLE RESTURCTURE OF THE UNIVERISTY SENTATE

Ms. Selma Koury Wunderlich, Chair, Rules and Review Committee

Ms. Wunderlich presented a brief background on the how the Senate originated so that

we were better able to understand the issue that is to be discussed. Some of the key

points are as follows:

* The idea of restructuring the Senate was first introduced several years ago in the

Middle States Study

* It was then recommended at a Senate meeting in October, 2010 by Dr. John Kelley and Dr. Steven Merritt. They suggested they we conduct a formal evaluation of the Senate
* All the committees have a direct line to their Vice President, therefore, not much comes to the Senate for discussion
* The Rules and Review committee evaluates all of the committees. Their final report includes their observations and recommendations. The report is then sent to the Chair of that committee and asked to report back in one year as to how they followed through on these recommendations
* On the basis of Dr. Langran’s speech and Dr. Lafferty presentation to the Rules and Review Committee that a decision was made to have a joint meeting with the Executive Committee.
* Dr. Lafferty felt as though the two committees should work together to implement a solution
* It was suggested that if the Senate was dissolved for a time, we would still retain the committees. We could then have forums opened to the entire University
* Suspend the Senate for one year in order to come up with a solution

Ms. Wunderlich asked Dr. Jay Strieb to give a brief overview of the Senate evaluation that he

and his team conducted this past semester.

Dr. Strieb presented a few of the inputs that they received from the evaluation. This evaluation sent to all the members, past and present. He stated that they received a response of approximately 50 %. They reviewed the Senate’s minutes for the past four years and they attended a Senate meeting. They then met and discussed the issues involved. Generally speaking they found the Senate to be very efficient. However, did feel as though the Senate might put more effort into communicating its results to the entire University. He noted that the comments made from the Senators were very positive, with very few strongly negative responses.

Dr. Bob Styer offered his suggestions for continued evolution of the Senate

The Senate Structure as created in 1970 had many important safeguards for the University community. These are some of the aspects that deserve to be continued in some form.

1. A formal structure that encourages leaders of each part of the community to meet and discuss

Issues of mutual concern.

2. A formal structure to assure clear communications and coordination between the various University-wide communities.

3. The Senate Constitution, Section X, provides an important deliberative process which allows the community to calmly seek clarification from the President and provides access to the Board of Trustees on Matters of deep concern to some portion of the community.

4. In particular, the yearly formal vote on the budget provides a structure that encourages community response to the budgetary process and assumptions.

5. The representative nature of the membership.

Dr. Styer’s vision for achieving these goals:

* a stronger Executive Committee would include leaders from all campus constituencies and all committee chairs.
* The Executive Committee would coordinate committee appointments, committee agendas, and assign special tasks to committees.
* The full Senate deliberates on the yearly budget vote and can be called anytime as a formal structure to deliberate issues that a portion of the community wishes to formal appeal to the President and Board.
* The full Senate can override any Executive Committee actions, hence protecting the representative nature of the full Senate.
* Ideally, he envisions all cross-functional/cross-college committees to be under the Senate, e.g. the University Benefits Committee, while still maintaining a direct line to the relevant Vice President.

Father Stack observed that in the 60’s when the Senate was formed. At that time, the Senate was an exciting place in that it involved leaders of the faculty who wanted to be on the Senate. There was a shortage of candidate with the student leaders. The Villanovan newspaper covered all of the meetings this continued on throughout the 80’s. He felt that this was the only time that there was real communication. About that time, once the Faculty Congress and the Committee on Faculty became established. This weakened the Senate because the faculty would not be bringing any serious issue to the Senate anymore because they had their own group which would then take it to the VPAA or the President. These direct lines became very important. He noted that the community forums draw many people. The Senate allowed communication, but did not legislate. Father recommended that we suspend the Senate for about two years, but keep the committees. We could then take a look at what other schools are doing and has there been evolution in these schools. He commented that the communication and decision-making has evolved for the most part. He stated that the Senate came along at the right time when it was needed and served a great function, but perhaps is not needed anymore.

Bob Styer asked how Father envisions formal structures such as the USC, the SGA and Faculty Congress keeping an open line of communication. Father felt as though the will still have the direct line to the President.

Steve Fugale he would compare this with the positive benefits of the USC which would be further evidence of another governing unit and communication forum that over time things have evolve and gotten better.

Bob feels as though we need some type of structure that still keeps the leadership of the SGA, USC and the Faculty Congress so they may do things in coordination. Tom DeMarco suggested they incorporate that into the group’s by-laws. The groups could agree that as part of their procedure that they meet a number of times per year. Father Stack agreed that each of those committees would get new blood. As people move off the committees, new students move on.

Dan Goldowsky, speaking as the Science senator, feels as though the meetings he has attended once a month for the Senate that there is much talking without a lot of concrete information.

Christine Alizzi noted that she meets with Dean Gabriel quite often, but she does not feel as though the students play an important role in the Senate. She noted that very few students in the College of Engineering know that the Senate exists.

Chris Marroletti, SGA President, stated that he can see the Senate moving towards an informational body. He does not feel as though the Robert’s Rules of Order are necessary. He believes that the committees themselves are very valuable, but in terms of the Senate full body meetings he does not think they are relevant.

Bob Styer asked he could see the value of the SGA, the USC and the Faculty Congress getting together on some type of basis. Chris totally agreed with that idea and asked if that were to happen would the leaders of those committees form a small Executive Committee to determine two days each semester to have these meetings? Bob feels as though that could not happen without some sort of structure. He suggested not to abolish the Senate for the next year, but to keep the first and last meetings and the Budget meeting. He thinks that the public forums are much more beneficial. He feels that structure develops a “forced community”. Chris noted that working with Dean Maggitti in VSB was very valuable. Father Stack commented that when the Senate began the students did not have that opportunity to meet with the Deans.

Father Stack quoted from the Constitution, Article *3,* and “The University Senate shall have authority to legislate in all major areas of faculty concern, significantly affecting the University as a whole”. When these new committees came into being these responsibilities were abreacted.

Chris asked Father Stack, if the Senate takes a year suspension, what does he envision for the student senators? He responded by asking how do we preserve the best part of this situation. He explained that we would be taking a break so that we may learn more about what might work, what is working in other schools, but during that time that we are not meeting, do we have a sense of what is missing? He does think we should keep the committees going. Tom DeMarco

suggested calling them student government representatives.

Steve Fugale feels as though this is an opportunity for the university to be not so steep in history in keeping the status quo alive and maybe a radical change is necessary to accomplish whatever is necessary. He thinks the status quo, even in partial form, continue it does not have the positive impact on the university. He sees a need to be proactive right now. Selma agreed that if we don’t make a drastic change now such as what Father Stack suggested to suspend it for one or two years so that we may study what needs to be done.

Father also suggested that if a small committee were to be formed that we get people that are not on the Senate. This way we can have people looking at it differently.

Tom DeMarco remarked that we don’t need a body for people to talk. He thinks that if each group states their rules there is no need for someone to oversee these committees.

Bob made a formal motion stating that we establish an ad hoc committee to re-evaluate the entire Senate. The existence and setting the future direction of the body previously known as the Senate.

Selma added that on the flow chart in the Constitution there is a box for an ad hoc committee for a finite time. They felt at the time there might be something that would come up that might not fit into these other committees.

A decision was made to have the Executive Committee make a motion on what has been discussed and proceed from there.

Bob Styer will write a motion and schedule the next Executive Committee meeting. He called for a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Heron