Faculty Senate Chair Stanley Johnson called the meeting to order at 2:20, Recording G. McConnell in attendance.

The chair introduced Vice-chancellor Perry Massey, who explained that the chancellor was at a Board of Governors meeting. Dr. Massey said that precise budget information is not yet available and will not be until sometime well after April 15. On the subject of the Handbook, he said that the tenure and promotion policies remain to be clarified. He also asked the Senate for the new document to be used for student evaluations.

Dr. Twum asked for clarification on just what part of the Handbook the Senate would be voting on. Dr. Massey reassured the Senate that it would be able to vote on the section on tenure and promotion. Dr. Dowdle said that the Senate has had only a few days to examine the latest version on-line. The chair added that the Senate wants to see the document after the university attorney. Dr. Massey again reminded the Senate that it was the Senate’s job to review the working version of the Handbook after the summer revisions. The question was raised on how final a version the on-line document represents. Several senators said there still seems to be a need for editing. Dr. Massey agreed that, yes, changes, even substantive, can be made. Dr. Massey suggested that senators submit whatever substantive changes they want.

Dr. Hennessey suggested that a vote on the Handbook be postponed until new senators are seated, since this might amount to two votes by two different groups on the same document. Dr. Dowdle and Dr. Twum agreed that present senators do in fact represent their constituents. The chair reminded senators that the Senate may amend the document at any time.

Dr. Massey outlined these key changes in tenure and promotion policy:
1) recognition of artistic scholarly activity;
2) a recognition of scholarship beyond narrow definitions;
3) the change of the appointment of assistant professors from a one-, one-, two-, four-year sequence to a two-, two-, four-year sequence.
Dr. Huang cited faculty overloads in Criminal Justice and asked for an administrative recognition of this dilemma in hiring new job applicants. He cited a recent history of recommended candidates that have not been hired. Dr. Massey promised his continued cooperation.

Faculty Assembly Delegate Thomas Van Cantfort reminded the Senate of the web page available on Faculty Assembly Affairs. Van Cantfort said faculty need not look for raises but can expect medical insurance costs to rise.

Dr. Van Cantfort distributed a survey on the number of administrators on state-system campuses (a copy of which is on file with the archived copy of these minutes). He also said faculty sick leave policy needs to be and probably will be standardized. Dr. Massey said a provision of sick leave up to 60 days is being examined. He also said faculty shared governance will be addressed and an attempt will be made to standardize it, however broad the framework.

The minutes of the previous meeting, January and February, were approved, with one no vote on the approval of January’s minutes.

Old Business

The Ad Hoc Calendar Committee presented a suggested academic calendar revision. Dr. Chen, chair of this committee, explained the definition of a semester, according to the Board of Governors. With some corrections on the scheduling of Saturday classes yet to be made, the revision was otherwise found acceptable. It was moved and seconded to accept the calendar for submission to the office of the vice-chancellor. The motion passed.

Dr. Dowdle moved to discuss the Handbook in reference to the section on tenure and promotion. Dr. Twum seconded. The motion passed. Dr. Dowdle endorsed the changes, suggesting that past procedure was demeaning to the tenure process and cited the revision as a “good first step.” Dr. Twum asked if new guidelines on publication will obtain in all departments. Dr. Massey said yes.

Dr. Dowdle moved that the Senate recommend that the tenure and promotion section of the Handbook be approved and forwarded to the Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded, and it passed.

The chair introduced the issue of the student component of faculty evaluations. Dr. Massey said the chancellor will issue his response very soon. One senator asked for a much more timely process of distribution of the evaluation and also questioned some of the criteria and suggested that the instrument is really the issue. Dr. Twum said that a new instrument is in the process of development. Dr. House cited a revision of the instrument
once upon a time, a process that never bore fruit. Dr. Twum cited a systemic problem that allows recommendations to languish.

New Business

The chair reminded the Senate of the necessity of electing or re-electing senators. He asked for the names of new senators before the next senate meeting. Dr. Hennessey reminded senators to adjust their departmental representation, if necessary, to make sure departments are adequately represented. The chair said he will act on appointing a new chair of the Academic Affairs Committee.

Dr. Hennessey raised the question of whether evening and eight-week college students get adequate attention, especially during registration, and he urged better collaboration between the eight- and sixteen-week calendars.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55.

Recorded by,

G. McConnell