

## ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

**DATE:** October 6, 2011

**PRESENT:** Stephen Eliason  
Sandie Rietz  
Lorrie Steerey  
Keith Edgerton  
Mark Hardt  
Patricia Vettel-Becker  
Ryan Shore (student)  
Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)

Don Larsen  
Susan Gilbertz  
David Gurchiek  
Doug Brown  
Bruce Brumley  
ReAnna Kero (student)  
Diane Duin (ex-officio)  
Marsha Riley (ex-officio)

**ABSENT:** Scott Murray\*  
Tim Wilkinson (ex-officio)\*  
Mark Pagano (ex-officio)\*  
Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)

Paul Bauer\*  
Mary Susan Fishbaugh (ex-officio)\*  
Barbara Wheeling (ex-officio)\*  
Stacy Klippenstein (ex-officio)

*\* excused*

**PRESIDING:** Lorrie Steerey, Chair

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Lorrie Steerey called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

After some discussion, Dr. Steerey asked for a motion to accept her resignation as Chair of the Senate and as a Senator.

⇒ Motion by David Gurchiek, seconded by Mark Hardt to **accept Lorrie Steerey's resignation as Chair of the Academic Senate and as a Senator.**

⇒ Motion carried.

Dr. Steerey left the meeting and the control of the meeting passed to Dr. Hardt, Vice Chair. Dr. Hardt distributed his statement regarding these events. It is attached to these minutes.

It was noted that Mr. Brumley will now succeed to Chair and his term will start at the end of this meeting.

**ELECTION OF NEW SENATOR: Fill One At-Large Position on Senate with One-Year Appointment or Election?**

⇒ Motion by Bruce Brumley, seconded by Keith Edgerton **to hold an election to fill the open At-Large spot on the Senate. The nominations will be open for two weeks (until October 20).**

⇒ Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

rjrm

October 6, 2011

To members of the Academic Senate.

As a Vice-Chair of the Academic Senate I am writing to express my vehement disagreement with recent events to remove the Chair of this body. The apparent rationale for this decision is that the Chair was serving a term in violation of the bylaws and that her removal would make the Senate compliant with its bylaws. Selection of the Chair is a Senate matter. "The Senate shall elect from its *voting membership* a Chair, a Chair Elect, three (3) Vice-Chairs . . ." (Article III, Section A, 1, emphasis added). The decision and subsequent actions to remove the Chair were made by two members of the Academic Senate, not the body as a whole. More critical is the fact that a non-member of the Senate was directly involved, having urged at least two members of the Senate to take action. This does **not** make the Academic Senate compliant with its bylaws and is, in fact, an egregious violation of them.

Lorrie Steerey was elected to her current term by unanimous consent of the Academic Senate. There are two issues here. The first is that if there were concerns that her re-election as Chair was a violation of the bylaws it was incumbent to raise them at that time, not now in the middle of the term of office. Moreover there is nothing in the bylaws that permits a minority of members to overturn a vote of unanimous consent. Lorrie never attempted to conceal her interpretation of her term as Chair. There was ample opportunity to express any disagreement. The second issue is that this is not the first time an extended term has been filled. The precedent was established by Keith Edgerton who served a fifth year in office, one year longer than allowed.

There is a broader issue, however, one that goes beyond personalities. Since the Academic Senate has, on two occasions, permitted an extension for the term of Chair, the broader issue is the Senate itself, and its adherence to procedure. We need to establish clear rules regarding when the Chair's term begins and ends, and whether—and if so, under what conditions—that term can be extended. We need to make clear that the election of officers is a matter of the Academic Senate, not of outside interests. Finally we need to ensure that a minority of members cannot circumvent a decision of the Senate.

Respectfully submitted,



Mark D. Hardt, Ph.D.

Vice-Chair, Academic Senate