

ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION

Full faculty ECCFA meeting, Opening Day, January 15, 2009

Sarah Dye, ECCFA President, presiding.
Meeting called to order by Sarah at: 12:31 pm.

President's Report

Sarah Dye summarized the agenda for the meeting and invited all members to attend future Senate meetings. The next Senate meeting is Wednesday, January 21 at 3:00 p.m. in the Alumni Room. She reminded the membership that the Senate agenda is e-mailed to everyone. Tim Kaar also posts Senate minutes with committee reports on the union website.

Secretary's Report

Bill Demaree moved to approve minutes from the Opening Day meeting on August 14, 2008 and from the all-faculty meeting on September 9, 2008. Marcia Luptak seconded. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Linda Hefferin clarified the budget report. The budget was accepted.

Introduction of new full-time faculty

Sarah Dye introduced the new full-time faculty. They were not introduced in the morning general meeting.

Greetings and Welcome by Dr. Sam

Dr. Sam apologized for the omission of the full-time faculty in the introductions of new staff in the morning meeting. In his efforts for continuous improvement one change he has initiated is for retiring faculty receiving emeritus status. The contract is vague. Now when the professor goes before the board so the board can thank him/her for his/her years of service, he/she will be granted emeritus status, automatically. Past retirees can get this status by simply asking.

Newspaper headlines say that families are bracing for tuition increases. The board will most likely not increase tuition next year. They are still exploring this possibility.

On January 27th, the Board of Trustees will authorize putting a referendum on the April ballot. The road will be tough given the current economy but we need to do this. This will boost the local economy with the jobs kept in the district. The referendum will be for instruction including the library and a health career center. He encouraged us to vote "yes" and to get our friends to vote "yes." The increase would only mean \$23 per capita per year. We want to replace Fountain Square, build a Public Safety Center, fix the Math and Science building, provide bigger faculty offices and more space for part-timer offices.

Further business

Sarah Dye announced that there are clipboards on the tables for all of us to sign up for committees to work for the referendum. We also need a committee to amend our own ECCFA constitution. She congratulated us on all our committee work.

Guest Speaker

Jackie McGrath from College of DuPage, reporting on problems at COD with Board and new President. She is an English professor and is serving on the political action committee as the communication director.

- Dr. Breuder from Harper was hired as President of COD and his first action was to freeze hiring.
- Although all colleges face difficult boards now and then, the current board appears to be particularly problematic.
- 2 women have resigned recently and sued the chair of the board for sexual harassment. These lawsuits are ongoing. Replacements for these two were appointed by the board in closed session.
- The board has been active in some pretty controversial actions. For instance they are no longer governed by building ordinances of the village of Glen Elyn.
- Enrollment is declining in part because of the change to semesters but also because tuition

is going up exponentially

- In November a young man was appointed to the board who then proposed a new board policy manual. For instance, this policy included a VERY strict nepotism policy. No two relatives (even cousins) could work at COD at the same time.
- The board has adopted language from David Horowitz' Academic Bill of Rights. This is designed to safeguard student freedom but has been used to squash the freedom of faculty in the classroom.
- COD would be the first institution in the country to adopt this language so David Horowitz is coming to speak at the college in the spring.
- All of this is affecting teaching and learning. It is very distracting.
- April 7, 2009 is the election of new board members and she encourages anyone who lives in their district to vote. She is also collecting money for their political action committee. They hope to elect four people they endorse into the four open positions.
- Dr. Breuder has told faculty that he will look at the proposed language more closely. However, it is eroding the shared governance of the college and damaging relationships.

Question—Union affiliation?

Answer—IEA and they have gotten a great deal of support from IEA.

They have been very active at the BOT meetings. It is their only avenue for expressing their concerns.

Students protested at a meeting in the fall. Protest was done quite well and gained a great deal of publicity. Students were upset, in particular, about two issues. Part of the proposed new policies would include a statement that students can't protest board actions and the president of the college would have control over the student newspaper.

Question—Is the chair of the board up for re-election?

Answer—Yes, members serve 6-year terms. She feels that constituency groups within the college have really come together to work to replace troublesome board members.

Question—Did the board release salary information of faculty?

Answer—Yes, one of the board members worked with a blogger to release this information. The college plans on publishing this information on the school's homepage. They spent \$30,000 to put the information into a searchable database. Although salary information is public, it is rarely published with names.

Question—Has the nepotism policy been approved?

Answer—The student protest garnered the college a great deal of negative press but the BOT has been reluctant to back off. The President, however, has said that he would re-draft the policies. However, the faculty haven't seen his version and have not been consulted. The nepotism policy and other policies have not actually been approved, yet.

Question—What events precipitated these most recent problems?

Answer—This started when the current chairman of the board was elected. The former chair was a very good advocate for COD. This is a direct result of the current make-up of the BOT.

Question—What is the overall agenda? If you step back and look at it, this doesn't make sense.

Answer—Faculty at COD are asking the same question. A couple board members are relying on political activist groups, aligning with national and statewide organizations. In addition, the women who resigned from the board are accusing them of other wrong-doing including misuse of funds. It appears that these initiatives are individually driven but they are aligned in the voting. Many votes are 6-1 with the only hold-out being the one remaining woman on the board. However, there doesn't seem to be one lone "smoking gun."

Question—Could it happen here?

Answer—We are learning about how to get board members elected and methods for developing relationships with the board members after they are elected.

Question—Do you believe the new president is friend or foe?

Answer—We have three presidents currently still employed at the college. The old president was "reassigned" and has an office and has been seen on campus. A former president was then hired as interim and is now a "consultant" and then Breuder is the actual president.

Question—Can you discuss how this impacts instruction in the classroom?

Answer—Nothing has been passed yet, so the major concern at the moment is just the negative impact on the atmosphere at the college. If it is passed, it includes language specifying that the board has the ability to approve/not approve actual curriculum and syllabi. The board could hire outside consultants to develop curriculum that faculty would then be

required to teach. They have already asserted their right to approve/disapprove speakers we have asked to campus and students are suffering because services are being cut.

Question—Where is the money coming from for all the building on campus.

Answer—A referendum five years ago and a bond.

Question—Do you, as a faculty, have regrets about your past action or inaction

Answer—We just finished negotiating our contract. The process was lengthy but not contentious.

Linda Hefferin suggested there are several things ECCFA can do to help: money, drafting a resolution of support like ICCFA did (this resolution will be read at the next BOT meeting). We need to formulate a response.

Linda Hefferin moved to adjourn to COPE, John Slawson seconded. Approved, adjourn to COPE

COPE—

The faculty political action committee at COD is Friends for Education and their website is FriendsForEducation502.org.

Tim Malone asked if the faculty know of good candidates that are electable.

Jackie McGrath said that they have been working to get some good people to apply. IEA has been helping them to develop a good process. They believe they have an electable field of 4 and they know how to get the word out and get the voters out.

Marc Healy asked if the local press coverage has been sympathetic to faculty.

Jackie McGrath said that the Herald is a regular presence on campus and wrote a very positive editorial after the student protest in the fall. Reporters are now anxious to come and report on the board meetings.

Roger Ramey asked for a motion.

Linda Hefferin reminded us that we need money to mount our own campaign for board members. We currently have just under \$29,000 in our COPE budget.

Elizabeth Becker asked if we can use COPE funds for the referendum.

Roger Ramey said no.

Howard Russo moved that we donate \$3000 to Friends for Education. Bill Demaree seconded.

Bill Pelz asked if this is a reasonable amount of money.

Jackie McGrath said it was beyond their dreams.

Elizabeth Becker asked if they have a political action committee.

Jackie McGrath said that Friends for Education was their political action committee.

Dan Kocher called the question. Motion approved unanimously.

Elizabeth Becker moved to adjourn from COPE, John Slawson seconded. Adjourned from COPE.

Arturo moved to adjourn the ECCFA meeting, Sue Ford seconded. Meeting adjourned at 1:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lucinda Hutman
ECCFA Secretary