University Committee on Faculty Affairs

MINUTES

Tuesday, March 20, 2007

Members Present: Jonathan Bohlmann, Philip Cusick, William Davidson, Clark Johnson, Terry Link, Jason Merrill, John W. Powell, Hayder Radha, Patricia Schenck, and Vladimir Zelevinsky.

Ex Officio: Robert Banks, David Byelich.

Others: John Revitte, Donna Zischke.

Call to Order: Co-Chairperson John Powell called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda: The boilerplate agenda used for the 2006-07 meetings was approved at the August 29, 2006 meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Dr. Zelevinsky asked that the Minutes be corrected under the New Business section, the third discussion point (correction in italics and underlined).

- MSU's Religious Observance Policy – Professor Link made a motion, supported by Dr. Zelevinsky, to endorse the policy recommendation made by the University Committee on Academic Policy (UCAP), seconded by Dr. Zelevinsky.

A motion was made by Professor Link to approve the Minutes of March 13, 2007 as corrected. Dr. Schenck seconded. The Minutes were approved.

Announcements:

- Dr. Powell reported on the March 13th Faculty Council. The recommendations are in on the different Task Forces:
  - Task Force III, Program Review – this was sent to President’s Office late last fall for her response and structure; her report was accepted and the recommendations made, and forwarded on to the appropriate places for implementation, and her suggestions were accepted fully by the Faculty Council and there should soon be documentation of that action.
  - Task Force V, Fixed-Term Faculty, and Task Force III, Program Review have both been implemented.
  - Task Force II, Administrator Review, there is still some dialoguing to be done by Faculty Council, and the President made recommendations from administrations relevant to that – still more discussing to be done, and Faculty Council will need to resolve the differences and move forward.
  - Task Force IV, Communication and Transparency, is preparing a survey via IPPSER to try to get an idea on how the transparency and intermittent administrative systems would work in terms of providing faculty greater access to operations, functions, and reports of academic governance. That will probably run through next year.
  - Task Force I, Structure of Academic Governance, the controversy continues and the primary focus will be an open discussion of the Task Force I report as it was submitted at a special meeting of Faculty Council next Tuesday, March 27.
Dr. Powell introduced Dr. Beth Alexander, the University Physician, and Dr. Kevin Eisenbeis, Director of the (campus) Environmental Health Program. Dr. Alexander distributed a paper titled Topic: Compliance with University, State, and Federal Regulations on Occupational Safety Training and Health Screening and Service. They made a comprehensive report of the problems they face and have faced with their work in keeping MSU employees safe and complying with all regulations for their safety. Not all departments have to comply with these regulations since their work has nothing to do with this area of concern. The departments involved in research are of the greatest concern for the University Physician. The main problem is the communication of this policy and its requirements, and it seemed reasonable to have this policy entered into the Faculty Handbook. After a good discussion, it was recommended that Dr. Alexander review and update the policy wording based on today’s UCFA discussion, and return the policy to UCFA for another review.

David Byelich reported briefly on the “Close of the First Act” and how the governor’s second attempt at an Executive Order to handle the state budget concerns was going. He ended his report saying he hoped this would turn out to be an “uplifting musical” and not a Greek tragedy or “Comedy of Errors.”

Subcommittee Reports:

Budget: Catherine Ernst, Acting Chairperson In the absence of Dr. Ernst, Dr. Powell reported the subcommittee would begin entering figures in the UCFA Salary Recommendations – “a work in progress.”

Personnel Policy: Terry Link and David Solomon, Co-Chairpersons Professor Link reported that last week they began discussion prioritizing review of the faculty and academic staff policy procedures, which will continue today. They’re also discussing a Code of Teaching Responsibility today, and looking at the FGO survey results today.

Old Business: Dr. Powell asked for any input on the Outside Work for Pay Policy Guidance document. There were no comments. Dr. Davidson made a motion, seconded by Professor Link, that Dr. Powell will tell Academic Council during their meeting that the document is completed and reviewed, and it will now be inserted into the Faculty Handbook. The motion carried.

New Business: No new business was noted.

Professor Link made a motion to adjourn to subcommittees. Dr. Zelevinsky seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Adjournment: UCFA adjourned to subcommittees at 1:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elva Boyles
Recording Secretary