University Committee on Faculty Affairs

MINUTES

Tuesday, April 10, 2007

Members Present: Jonathan Bohlmann, Mei-Wei Chang, Philip Cusick, William Davidson, Catherine Ernst, Clark Johnson, Terry Link, Jason Merrill, Hayder Radha, and Vladimir Zelevinsky.

Ex Officio: David Byelich.

Others: John Revitte.

Call to Order: Co-Chairperson Catherine Ernst 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. Davidson made a motion to approve the Minutes of April 3, 2007 seconded by Professor Terry Link. The Minutes were approved.

Announcements:

- Professor John Revitte, Faculty Grievance Official, announced that the Faculty Grievance Office will be moving to W38 Owen Graduate Center later this week. The office telephone and fax numbers will not change because of the office is moving.
- Professor Clark Johnson announced that he is in great concurrence with the recognition of 40 years of service being given for Dr. Banks on Friday, April 20. The program they’ve planned is pretty much what he had in mind, everything including the band. He just wanted it known that he approved that.
- Dr. Ernst reported the faculty liaisons held their breakfast meeting Tuesday, and part of their discussion covered the different Task Force reports. Several of the Task Forces will continue into the fall 2007. Prior to the Board meeting, she will be speaking with the Board of Trustees about the UCFA faculty salary recommendations during their breakfast together. This afternoon, she will be presenting the salary recommendations to Faculty Council.

Subcommittee Reports:

- Budget: Catherine Ernst, Acting Chairperson Dr. Ernst reported that the subcommittee did not meet last week.
- Personnel Policy: Terry Link and David Solomon, Co-Chairpersons Professor Link reported the subcommittee did meet and reviewed the Faculty Grievance Official survey results. Discussion of the FGO report will be on next week’s agenda.

Old Business: No old business was noted.

New Business:

- Dr. Ernst opened up the Task Force II Report for discussion. As always, there were numerous points of view expressed. Some of those were:
  - Page 4 of the Administrative Review Recommendations, it basically lays out four things that it wants to address. Neither the president nor the provost respond or answer 3 out of those 4.
The annual review may be too frequent; 2 or 3 years may be a better schedule.

The provost’s feedback appears to address point #2.

The process probably should not be centralized – a single process.

There are many inconsistencies; some places indicate “two years,” other places list four or five years.

It will keep everyone too busy.

Faculty appointed as chairs do not necessarily have the skills required for conducting these reviews. Many need training.

The process should be modified to be less burdensome.

Everyone will be evaluated by their superior, but faculty have input only every five years.

There could definitely be more written commentary – that would be helpful.

The president and provost will likely have less time to contribute to performing their parts.

Administrators, at times, don’t realize there are as many issues or complaints as there are. This might bring those to the forefront and that would be helpful. This might be done every other year, and that would help.

The five-year appointment for a department chair is typical – they serve at the pleasure of their superiors – they are not elected.

It might be helpful to have a 2-year and a 5-year review.

Many faculty are fearful to speak out if they are not tenured – only the most senior, bold faculty would feel most comfortable to participate in an open dialogue involving critiquing administrators.

Sometimes it is almost impossible to determine the dynamics of the department and analyze where the problem(s) may be.

It is incredibly difficult to find someone to accept the department chairmanships many times.

A histogram really isn’t the perfect answer – the problem(s) should be solved, and not just graphed. The president seems interested in drawing a picture of the problem and posting it somewhere.

This proposal describes fairly serious, but relatively infrequent events – this is the classic universal control problem. It appears that the cure is worse than the disease. How many universal things do you want to change to handle the exception?

It’s valuable to recognize the constant change in leadership due to the changes in the academic environment – the context, the leadership style, and the demands from both faculty and administration are challenging.

Could there be a less formal/more informal approach to the areas of concern?

Positions of power understandably cause people to respond differently as opposed to responding to a colleague.

There just appears that department chairs are delegated more responsibility for working out problems in curriculum, among faculty, department decisions, etc.

What is the problem the report is trying to address? It’s difficult to determine more definitive answers until the actual problem(s) surfaces.

Every 2.5 years/or in the middle of the 3rd year, please survey the faculty on how the chairman is doing….survey the chairmen on how the dean is doing…please survey the deans on how the provost is doing.

Given a polarized situation, are you better off responding to a survey or not? It doesn’t appear that responding to survey would do anything for polarity - it wouldn’t diffuse or enhance it.

The chair being involved in the annual raise process, well that would definitely be taken into account by responding faculty.

Anonymous feedback – it’s not easy to accomplish, but it would make some feel more comfortable to respond.

There are units where the faculty feel that can’t speak with their chair and those units need to be addressed special and encouraged to help with a solution.

Dr. Ernst said we should know if UCFA will be requested to evaluate the Task Force II report by next
week’s meeting.

- David Byelich gave a brief report on state budget activities. Presently we hope the money being deferred will be/should be restored this summer. It’s difficult to be patient and see if/how this works out.

- Dr. Ernst listed several fall semester 2007 projects for UCFA:
  - Proposed Tuition Waiver Policy for Faculty and Librarians (further consider the economic impact)
  - Creation of a Fall Semester Study Break from ECAC for September 2007 response

- Next week, April 17, we will have our dessert coffee to welcome new UCFA members if they are available to attend.

Dr. Merrill made a motion to adjourn to subcommittees seconded by Dr. Zelevinsky.

**Adjournment:** UCFA adjourned to subcommittees at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elva Boyles
Recording Secretary