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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 4, 2012

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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PSC Minutes: September 4, 2012

Present: Joan Davison, Carlee Hoffmann; Bob Smither; Julian Chambliss; Gay Biery-Hamilton; Julia Foster; Ted Gournelos; Alexander Boguslawski; Kathryn Patterson Sutherland

1. Joan explained the purpose of PSC for new members, and then laid out an agenda for discussion during Fall 2012 Semester. Some items must be dealt with earlier or immediately, and others can be examined later.

2. The first item for discussion was grants. PSC must make decisions about sabbatical grants shortly after these are due from faculty on September 28, 2012. Once that deadline is passed this year, we decided that we need to more carefully examine the criteria about these research grants in order to make the awarding of them fair and more flexible, given some issues that are external to Rollins.

We had a rather lengthy discussion about Student-Faculty Collaborate Grants and how the criteria for awarding these are muddled. The issues that were raised include: 1) Should students who work with visiting faculty have lower priority than others? 2) Should all faculty members who have submitted a credible grant, obtain only one for one student, so that grants can be distributed more widely among more students? 3) Should we put a limit on the number of years a student can receive a grant, even if he or she has a good project? 4) Should we be able to view student transcripts as part of the decision-making process? 5) Should PSC be able to know how much money is in the pool to help us rank the grants? One other issue that was discussed was that we should reduce the 12-page grant, which is long and confusing, to a page or two.

3. FSAR: Although the FSAR was streamlined last year, we'd like to take another look to see if it could be done so further, and also be improved so that it is more helpful for those individuals, including the Dean of A&S, who have to make decisions based on the information it provides. Another issue was whether or not the FSAR could serve as a part of our annual review.

4. Teaching loads, including the 5 + 1 proposal: One of the issues that PSC will discuss this year is teaching loads, and how to count labs, community engagement, service learning and independent studies, more equitably and accurately.

5. Evaluation of visiting faculty. In the bylaws departments at Rollins are assigned the responsibility of evaluating non-tenured faculty, including visiting faculty, every year. This responsibility may be a burden, at times, when departments have numerous non-tenured faculty. Further, visiting faculty might not desire a formal departmental evaluation. We discussed the idea that perhaps the department chair could write a letter for visiting faculty who have a one-year appointment.

6. Finally, we opened a discussion about the manner in which course evaluations might be improved at Rollins now given that the two colleges, A&S and CPS, have profound differences in subject matter and teaching styles.

Our next meeting will be held on September 18, 2012.