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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 21, 2010

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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PSC Meeting

Minutes: September 21, 2010

Attendance:

- Members: Claire Strom, Dorothy Mays, Steven St. John, David Charles, Richard James, Emily Russell, Joshua Almond, Carlee Hoffman, and Marc Fetscherin
- Dean of Faculty Representative: Dean Deb Wellman

Meeting Convened: 7:27

Announcements:

- Approval of last week's minutes. Steven motioned; Josh seconded. Minutes approved.
- Dick – Updated PSC on his meeting with the EC. At the meeting, they discussed the issue of ownership of online material and the changing of the dates of the grant applications. Provost Joyner would like the issue of librarians as tenured faculty to be reconsidered. The EC did not want to discuss any further the FEC request for additional members. They did agree to establish the proposed subcommittee on teaching.
- Deb – An issue that needs to be addressed is adjunct pay. Some adjuncts have not had a salary increase in nearly 14+ years of service.
 - Marc – Why is that not an FSC issue?
 - Deb – Because the process originates with PSC. We recommend whether or not they should get a bump in pay. We also establish the review process. Those recommendations would then get forwarded to the Dean of Faculty for review.

Old Business:

- Sub-Committee on Teaching
 - Claire – Concerning the subcommittee on teaching, Zimmerman and Harris have agreed to serve. Lee Lines is still considering and will give an answer later today. Claire has asked Lee to chair the committee. Now we need to figure out who we should ask to serve from the FSC/FEC alum pools. How many members do we want? If we get one from each, we'd have a committee of 5, which is a good working size for a committee, but then we wouldn't have divisional representation. One thing I did notice is that we've asked three guys.
 - Dick – Didn't we suggest possible candidates last week?
 - Dorothy – I'll serve if needed.
 - Steven – The status of librarians who are on tenure track can't be changed (or it would be really difficult to do that), so I don't think Dorothy should feel the need to recuse herself. I think the need is still present and her representation on such a committee would be beneficial.
 - Dick – [Concerning the suggestion of Don Griffin] We already have male science division representation.
 - David – With course load caps and the course matrix, I think the Arts really need to be represented. What about Susan Libby?

- Josh – Susan is certainly a good choice, but I know she's super busy this year and may not be able to serve.
- Dorothy – How about Twila Papay?
- Deb – If emeriti are consider, what about Barbara Carson?
- Claire – I will approach Susan, Twila and Barbara and from that hope to get two candidates. I think we should ask the sub-committee to meet with the PSC for an update at the end of the semester, and then give them a deadline in Feb to submit suggestions and/or a plan.
- Dick – I thought the first objective of that committee was research. They could present to us how other places do it. We could figure out what we're already doing, what we would like to do, and then sort of pick and choose those things we might want to try out.
- Marc – We've already identified many of those things. To some degree we already have the pieces of the puzzle. For example one of the things we are missing is a good peer evaluation process. The sub-committee should focus on how to structure a package for teaching evaluations to present to the faculty.
- Emily – Reading over the information and minutes from last year, we came a long way. Two thorny issues remain: 1). What do the individual CEC's look like and what is their role? 2). What is the timing. Are we creating a sub committee that won't have the power to address those issues?
- Claire – No, not necessarily. They can identify problem areas and offer suggestions as to how to resolve them.
- Dick – One thing we learned on the Merit Pay Committee was the confusing and often poor departmental structure in the process. I hope that the evaluation of teaching is going to be able to avoid those issues.
- Emily- We also operated on the assumption that if the peer review of teaching were to be bumped up, it would result in an unrealistic workload for everyone.
- Claire- As Marc pointed out, we've actually done a great deal of research. It is not assessment but the actual implementation that remains unresolved.
- FEC Request for Additional Members
 - Claire – Given the situation do we want to revisit the FEC issue?
 - Dick – I'd be happy to review past EC minutes to familiarize myself with the nature of their discussions and try to understand their thinking.
 - Steven – I'm not sure I understand their rationale for rejecting the request.
 - Claire – One of their concerns is that, if we were FEC and we got two alternates, then the committee could be designed to be strong or weak and would (potentially) vary greatly from review to review.
 - Marc – Did you [to Steven St. John] look at the specific wording of the bylaws? What if we went from a base membership of five to six?
 - Deb – As I read it, the bylaws state that we have five members each serving for 3 years and then one additional "floating" member.
 - Claire – Why can't we just ignore the EC's concerns and suggest that we rewrite the bylaws to say there are six members instead of five?
 - Deb – I did like the way Steven wrote it. I think two "floaters" instead of one would solve the problem.

- David – The FEC can then use the “floating” members however they need to.
- Claire – We could vote, now, to add one member to the FEC for this year. If we approve it, we can then take that to the EC and ask them to address it.
- Emily – I’m curious as to what happened to the other recommendations concerning the FEC that we made last year. What happened to those? As I understand it, they never made it to the EC? Is that right?
- Claire – I think that relates to our April 22 meeting of last year. We need to re-circulate those minutes [from our April 22 meeting], re-read and then approve them.
- Dick – I will research at which EC meetings they discussed our proposed FEC changes and figure out their rationale.
- Steven – Maybe our advice should be to build in more flexibility for the FEC chair to be allowed to administer the committee as they need to.
- Claire – Can I take Steven’s draft to the EC as a proposal? Should we run this by Thomas [Ouelte – Current chair of FEC]?
- Steven – He was copied on my email but I never heard back from him.
- David – I think he should review it, just to make sure that he is okay with the changes.
- Claire – I will contact Thomas and run this by him.

New Business:

- Protocol for Bringing Issues in front of PSC
 - Josh – I think it would be a good idea to ask for things [requests for PSC] in writing – either by email or document – or individuals can come in person to discuss the problem. It seems we get a lot of issues brought to us by word of mouth and I think a more formal process would be beneficial. It would help us to identify the specific problem that needs to be addressed and how better to resolve it
 - Dick – I think it should be in writing. That tends to encourage people to formulate their thoughts and really think about what it is they are asking for.
 - Marc – We should have a form that asks for the name [of the requesting person], the question/issue at hand, and a description of the problem.
 - David – I think we should allow for it to be anonymous. Having recently been a junior faculty member, I’m thinking of untenured faculty that may not feel comfortable raising concerns about their department or the college in general for fear of reprisal.
 - Steven – Statements could be written such that they effectively address issues without revealing identity? For transparency, statements or a synopsis of the issue could also be put up on the website, so people better understand the work we are doing.
 - Josh – This will help us so that we don’t end up spending undue amounts of committee time trying to figure out what the issue is. It will also help dispel the perception that we are a committee with an agenda of our own.
- Guidelines/Dates for Tenure and Promotion
 - Claire – [Referring to handout] Here are the issues about promotion/tenure dates and guidelines as I see them. We won’t have time to address these today. Look them over and we’ll discuss them next week.

- Marc – Can we put the dates for midcourse, tenure, and promotion next to each other and see how they line up?
- Claire- Mid course is the problem.
- Steven – Do we want to sync these dates with the yearly evaluations?
- Deb – I'd like for tenure and promotion to be synchronized, at least.

Adjourn Meeting: 8:28am