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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Thursday, November 12, 2009

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Professional Standard Committee
Minutes—November 12, 2009
4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Bush 105

Next meeting: Thursday, November 19 in Bush 105.

The meeting was convened at 4 p.m. by Thomas Moore. Faculty members present were Josh Almond, Erich Blossy, Emily Russell, Claire Strom and Anca Voicu. Associate Dean Don Davison was also present.

1) Old Business

- a. Response from AAC on blended learning—AAC recommended that PSC begin reviewing the Blended Learning Initiative grant proposals and direct questions and concerns to AAC when and if they arise. E. Russell asked where this initiative originated and what interests, e.g. financial, pedagogical, were driving the program. C. Strom suggested stepping back and asking two key questions: first, do we as a committee and as a faculty support blending learning and second, has anyone at the institution addressed copyright concerns regarding who owns course content, especially when a faculty member leaves? She also asked, how much of this initiative is being driven by adjunct faculty? T. Moore responded that he believes 65% of Holt instruction is by adjunct faculty, acknowledging for differences in that figure across departments and programs. J. Almond noted that there is a faculty forum scheduled for Tuesday, November 17 on the direction of Holt, and suggested perhaps these questions should be addressed there. C. Strom and J. Almond shared the sense that PSC grant selection represents tacit approval from the committee on a blended learning initiative without clear faculty approval. A. Voicu asked, if it's already been approved by the administration, can we reject our role in the process? We argue that despite the support of the administration, we believe the process requires discussion by the faculty. C. Strom argues that the essential questions for this discussion are: what are the curricular implications of this initiative, what are the legal implications, and what does it suggest about the structural relationship between Holt and A&S more broadly? J. Almond moved and E. Blossy seconded the following unanimously approved statement: "The blended-learning grant review process should be suspended pending a larger conversation with the faculty."
- b. Feedback to administrators—T. Moore provided a final draft of the Guiding Principles for Faculty Feedback to Administrators (attached), which reflects the changes discussed at the meeting. T. Moore eliminated the final paragraph of an earlier draft, which laid out a possible process for feedback to other administrative positions. We decided that we weren't ready to address the structural complications for positions below the senior administrative level. E. Russell asked about the phrase, "questions will be open ended" and wondered, do we want to include a numerical scale? She noted the problem that numbers without averages to compare them to would be ineffective. E. Blossy suggested that the faculty might be disappointed to see a questionnaire without numbers. J. Almond asked whether numbers would communicate something comments aren't

communicating already. We decided not to suggest a quantitative scale on the form. C. Strom suggested the addition: "PSC will review the policy in Fall 2011 and present a report to the faculty." E. Russell suggested the need for a limited and specific period for completion of evaluation. We decided that two weeks would be appropriate. J. Almond asked, regarding moving forward, who approves this document, the Exec Committee or the faculty as a whole, and recommended the faculty as a whole, noting that there may be faculty who feel the process does not have enough teeth and they need chance to air those concerns.

- c. A. Voicu recommends that the faculty should be informed of our policy regarding past-due grant reports. T. Moore will send an announcement to be read at the November 19 faculty meeting.
- d. CIE Tutorial- P. Harris would like to make changes to the tutorial over winter break and would like to hold colloquia in January, especially for junior faculty. Given the thorough and clear nature of the tutorial, we suggest that an announcement at a faculty meeting with a follow-up opportunity for Q&A if necessary would be more appropriate. D. Davison suggested setting aside 30 minutes at a department chairs meeting, given their investment in the issue as a group both responsible for convening CECs and mentoring junior faculty. We will recommend to L. Joyner that Harris be granted time at a chairs meeting to highlight a few key insights from the tutorial and to direct chairs to the web tutorial.
- e. Evaluation of teaching (Blossey)—E. Blossey distributed an action plan for discussion (attached) and argued that more than a bylaw change, we need to enforce current bylaws with clarity on more explicit standards. He noted that there is some perception among administrators that some faculty members are not doing their jobs and, furthermore, that some candidate evaluation committees are also not doing their jobs. T. Moore noted that we don't have annual evaluations for all faculty and asked, who should be the evaluation committee for tenured faculty? E. Blossey responded that we do have annual evaluations now through the merit pay system, which is heavily weighted toward CIEs. D. Davison argued that while the Faculty Salary Committee did not respond to peer review data, they did take into consideration a series of self-reflections on teaching criteria through the FSAR. T. Moore noted that while the flagging system in the FSC was tied to CIEs, the process lacked peer review. C. Strom asked, is it possible as a faculty body to review everyone every year? E. Russell expressed a jurisdictional concern over whether we would be working in parallel with the current FSC as they engage similar questions of clarifying standards for merit pay assessments. C. Strom suggested that we invite that committee to a meeting in order to avoid duplication of labor.
- f. Open Access Journals (Strom)—C. Strom distributed a draft of the Open Access Policy. E. Russell expressed concern that the term "work" might be overly general given that the policy would crucially only apply to a small amount of what might be considered scholarly "work" more colloquially. C. Strom will continue conversations with J. Miller about the policy and will return it to the committee.

2) New Business—tabled

- a. CIE for Holt and graduate classes
- b. Guidance on materials for tenure and promotion
- c. Course load equation
- d. Grade inflation
- e. Criteria for sabbatical
- f. FEC bylaw changes

Attachments (2)

Guiding Principles for Faculty Feedback to Senior Administrators

Purpose

To develop a system that provides for a regular and candid flow of information between the faculty and senior administrators concerning each administrator's performance in the aspects of the position that affect the faculty. This system is primarily intended to provide constructive feedback that the administrators can reflect upon and respond to, with the ultimate goal of improving the effectiveness of the administration and their relationship with the faculty.

Goals

The goal of the system is to provide a method for administrators to receive feedback directly from the faculty at large and for the faculty to have some method to inform administrators of their opinions on administrative performance on matters directly relating to their interaction with the faculty. These matters may include such things as the educational process and program; student life issues; issues pertaining to salaries, promotion and tenure; and issues concerning the interaction between the administration and the faculty. This mechanism will also provide an opportunity for the faculty to hold administrators accountable for their decisions as well as for administrators to identify concerns relating to their performance and to reflect on and respond to these concerns.

Guiding Assumptions

- 1) The process will be undertaken in a spirit of collegiality, with the intention of assisting in the professional development of the administrator and improving communication between the faculty and administration.
- 2) The mechanism will include feedback from the entire faculty.
- 3) A questionnaire format will be used and the questions will be developed in a spirit of cooperation between the faculty and administrators. However, the faculty will have the final responsibility for deciding what questions will be asked.
- 4) The Executive Committee of the Arts and Sciences will have access to all of the information provided by the faculty at large and will meet with the administrator to discuss what was learned.
- 5) The administrator will respond to the feedback in writing. This response will be available to all members of the faculty.
- 6) The feedback mechanism will be a biennial event that will not necessarily be linked to the period of evaluation.

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Process

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The process will eventually include all senior administrators; however, the initial effort will be to implement a program that includes the President, Provost, Dean of the Faculty, and Dean of Student Affairs. The feedback process will occur on a continuing two-year cycle beginning with the Provost and Dean of Student Affairs during the 2009-10 academic year.

The method for feedback will be a survey conducted on-line anonymously and all faculty will be asked to participate. The questions will be open ended and allow for both specific and general comments. There will be a two-week window in which faculty will be able to respond.

Once all faculty have been provided an opportunity to respond, the collected responses will be provided to the administrator and the chair of the PSC. The chair of the PSC will summarize the results in a report to the Executive Committee that will form the basis of a discussion between the administrator and the Executive Committee; however, all of the responses from the faculty will be available to members of the Executive Committee should they wish to review them. The Executive Committee will meet with the administrator to discuss the results, and the administrator will write a response to the feedback that will be available to the entire faculty.

The Professional Standards Committee will review this policy during the fall of 2011 and report to the faculty on the effectiveness of the process and any proposed changes.

Professional Standards Committee

Peer Review of Faculty

Immediate Action: Use the current bylaws as to the procedures of faculty evaluation. The problem is the lack of enforcement of peer review.

Suggested Solution: Each member of a DEC will do a minimum of three (or some number) class visits and must sign the departmental DEC letter attesting to that fact. Additionally, each DEC member will evaluate the candidate's portfolio: syllabuses, statement of educational philosophy, course assessment materials, and FSAR statement.

WHO: Department members of the DEC. Apparently this issue is variable across the departments and not following the Faculty Bylaws. While not directly connected to peer review, the issue needs clarification.

USE: The peer review is currently part of the faculty evaluation process. Enforcement is lacking. The merit pay/ FSC must subscribe to the same standards of evaluation as that stipulated by our bylaws. If merit pay evaluations are used ON an annual basis, then the procedures must be followed in each case.

CIE: Student evaluations cannot constitute more than 25% of the faculty evaluation process with the remainder accomplished by peer review.

REQUIRED ACTIONS:

- (1) Enforce Faculty Bylaws, including rejection of DEC documents by FEC that fail to include proper evaluation.
- (2) Insure that merit pay process uses the same criteria as that of the bylaws.

FUTURE ACTIONS:

- (1) Develop explicit criteria of faculty performance.
- (2) Bring outside experts and educational leaders of peer review to campus for colloquia:
 - a. Peter Seldin
 - b. Raoul A. Arreola
 - c. Nancy Van Note Chism and Grady W. Chism III.
- (3) Workshops on faculty development and evaluation
- (4) Institute a new evaluation system with the new criteria.