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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Executive Committee Meeting, Thursday, February 22, 2007

Arts & Sciences Executive Committee

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2/22/07 Executive Committee meeting

Members in Attendance: Pedro Bernal, Roger Casey, Cat McConnell, Larry Eng-Wilmot, Tom Cook, Lisa Tillmann, Sharon Carnahan, Hoyt Edge

Guest: John Houston

1/25/7 Minutes: amended/approved

IRB:

J. Houston: modeled after FDA guidelines (e.g., informed consent, voluntary participation, avoidance of deception when possible). Because research usually exposes subjects to little risk, most proposals will be expedited. Rollins' committee to have members serving staggered 3-year terms. Broad, inclusive membership to include: tenured faculty member as chair, 1 member from outside Rollins, 1 member of Student Affairs staff, graduate student, undergraduate student, representative from Crummer, A & S representative, member who conducts research from scientific approach, member who conducts research from another approach. Members will undergo training and be nominated by EC. Proposal: to make IRB an all-college standing committee.

H. Edge: what about service learning/community engagement? J. Houston: if it involves research/data collection on human subjects, it needs to be vetted by IRB. If data collected will be used for internal purposes only, review will be expedited; if results will be presented publicly, full IRB review needed.

L. Tillmann: are autobiographical research and creative non-fiction exempt? J. Houston: If solely autobiographical, yes. If research is to be conducted on other subjects, the projects must be vetted by IRB.

S. Carnahan: recommends that decision tree be distributed to faculty well in advance of meeting and that current IRB members consult with faculty who may have concerns.

T. Cook: will bring to March 29 faculty meeting.

Honors Program Revisions:

R. Casey: compromise position: candidates for dean's scholarships will not be informed that interview data also will be used to facilitate decision about admission to HP; result: nearly every member of HP will have been interviewed

H. Edge: questions sustainability of proposed 3-semester interdisciplinary, team-taught model. Caps would have to rise by 2-3 per class. Has approved team-taught courses in fall but not next spring. We need broader model of interdisciplinarity than team-taught courses.

C. McConnell: need to solicit HP *student* feedback.

L. Eng-Wilmot: HP review should be part of curriculum review process.

T. Cook: expects acceptance of friendly amendment to allow HP numbers to rise above original proposal of 30.

Equity for domestic partner health benefits:

R. Casey: George Herbst and HR are now in communication with ICUBA lawyers seeking clarification about federal tax law.

L. Eng-Wilmot: HR says that this has arisen from a redefinition of dependency and that refusing to follow that could jeopardize everyone's pre-tax health benefits.

R. Casey: If that turns out to be the case, we may be able to adopt a post-tax remedy. While we must follow federal law, that doesn't preclude us from doing something institutionally to assist those who are disenfranchised by federal law. We're trying to move quickly on this.

L. Tillmann: This situation originally arose when Rollins negotiated insurance plans that included Health Reimbursement Accounts. Domestic partners cannot access pre-tax health benefits. Until this coming year, partners could elect the 90/10 plan, which did not include an HRA. Now that plan is being dropped.

HR says this is a federal tax law issue. In this case, federal tax law is discriminatory. But Rollins has agency here. For example, we don't have to choose a plan in which every option includes an HRA. Also, because of our non-discrimination policy, because it's the right thing to do, Rollins can off-set federal tax penalties. In the past, we have absorbed premium hikes for our lowest-paid staff.

L. Eng-Wilmot: HR says that HRA contributions can be made for both the staff member and domestic partner, but only the staff member would have access to it.

L. Tillmann: That HRA is useless if it's the partner who has major medical expenses. Partners also are taxed on all health benefits and cannot set up flexible spending accounts.

curriculum review:

H. Edge: survey has been distributed. Working on website. Now on 4-year timeline: planning next year, pilot projects in 3rd year, review/revision in 4th year. May be summer stipends for research on reform.

committee openings:

T. Cook: by-laws call for elections in March; need nominations for at-large committee members, a slate for FEC, for president

Finance and Services:

L. Eng-Wilmot: looking at financial aid. Recommending to administration to join tuition exchange program.