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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Executive Committee Meeting, Tuesday, November 20, 2007

Arts & Sciences Executive Committee

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Minutes
Executive Committee Meeting
November 20, 2007

Members Present: Richard Vitray, Paul Harris, Wendy Brandon, Sharon Carnahan, Stephanie Schuldt, Lewis Duncan, Roger Casey, Don Davison, Barry Levis

I. Call to Order – Davison called the meeting of the Executive Committee to order at 12:35 PM.

II. Approval of Executive Committee Minutes from November 8, 2007 – The minutes were approved as distributed.

III. Old Business

A. Strategic Marketing Initiative – Greg Marshall to hold an open forum for the A&S faculty to let the faculty know what is going on with the initiative. Vitray wondered if the best venue would be a faculty meeting. Davison said it would be a colloquium. Duncan reported that a firm has been hired and discovery meetings will be held. Marshall feels the need to let faculty know about these meetings. Davison wanted to know when they would begin with the faculty but Duncan did not know. Davison does not understand the process of how the message will be developed over time. Is it still in process for Greg Marshall as well? Duncan said that we know the outcome but not the path to get there. We must create a consistent message with short bullet points. The faculty and not the firm will develop the message. Davison has a list of faculty who have been recommend to work with Marshall on an advisory committee. How should we get faculty to participate? The list included Rick Foglesong, Ed Cohen, Rachel Simmons, Lisa Tillman, Rachel Newcomb, and Scott Rubarth. Brandon stated that the advisory group needed balance and diversity of experience.

IV. New Business

A. Professional Standards Committee

Faculty Leave Policy -- Brandon announced that Fiona Harper will conduct a meeting to discuss the family leave policy. It has financial implications since it is part of faculty compensation. The meeting will be held on December 7 and therefore there is a need to reserve a space, and she wanted to have F&S representatives at the meeting. She also thought there should be a representative from the Budget and Planning Committee. Vitray has asked Maria Martinez about policies at other institutions. If we are comparing compensation, we should also compare the FLP. The information would then be passed to the administration for comment and then to the faculty in the Spring. Davison urged that all points be covered before passing it to the faculty. Duncan expressed concern about an extension of the leave policy because of the complication with tenure and AAUP policies.

Bylaw changes from FEC – Brandon discussed the need for revisions in the Bylaws for updating departmental requirements for tenure and promotion. Because of multiple year searches, some departments would be required to do updates every year. FEC proposes that new standards must be current within five years. FEC also considered the question of promotion to Associate Professor without tenure so that the Bylaws would change designation from Promotion to Professor to Promotion to Associate and Full Professor. Davison indicated that Marvin Newman will have a long list of changes to Bylaws that are non controversial, minor changes. Davison asked if the Executive Committee wants to have both the PSC changes and the Newman adjustments considered at the same meeting. Casey suggested that the Newman adjustments could be listed on a consent agenda so that they could be removed from the agenda. Brandon felt that promotion without tenure would need to be evaluated by FEC. Casey wondered about removing the term “informal” evaluation from the Bylaws. Brandon said that “informal evaluation” suggest it was not serious and so PSC had substituted the term “annual review.” Casey asked if confusion existed about the terms informal and formal evaluations. He thinks PSC should use just the term evaluation and not make distinctions between formal and informal. He found that formal was used in two different ways in the Bylaws – Casey also suggested that the Bylaws do not say when these evaluations should take place. Some evaluations had been conducted so late that the potential for violation of AAUP regulation has arisen.

PSC responsibilities – Brandon said that the committee had considered the question of adding as one of their responsibilities the evaluation of administrators. The committee likes the language of Bylaws as they now stand, i.e. to advise on these issues.

B. Finance and Services

Paul Harris distributed possible guidelines for a Merit-based Compensation Task Force (see addendum I). Davison expressed concern about the time table because of the short amount of time before the January faculty meeting. The process, therefore, needs to be very efficient. Casey wondered if the Executive Committee could move the faculty meeting to earlier in January to provide more time to complete the process. Duncan was concerned about the faculty not reaching a decision before the Trustees budget meeting in early February. He does not foresee that the trustees will approve a budget with increase in compensation without some plan on how it would be distributed. Duncan was also concerned that if the task force does not make a concrete recommendation that it will be impossible for a committee of the whole faculty to make policy. Davison hoped that it would be good enough for the board that we are working on it. Duncan thought the board would agree to that but what would happen in April if faculty had not reached a decision. Davison argued that if the faculty does this recklessly, the result could be disastrous. The faculty needs some sort of reasonable strategy to complete the process. Carnahan argued that we make decisions based on what we want to do and also what the research shows. Therefore the task force needs to be able to tap into the research that has been conducted. Duncan suggested that the faculty will have to propose some contingency if merit cannot be agreed to rather than allowing the trustees

to set a compensation process. Casey thought the task force should investigate institutions with successful programs and send representatives to discuss their respective programs. Levis argued that the task force should also look at institutions that had a merit plan and abandoned it to determine why. Also the task force should look at how institutions without a merit plan operate. Davison said he would add to the product a report about existing alternatives with strong advantages and limited disadvantages that can be applicable to Rollins. Casey argued that the task force also needs to consider market-based hiring practices. Harris stated that the faculty did not pass that consideration in their motion. Duncan said that the trustees see the two issues tied together because we cannot hire into certain disciplines. Davison said that all the faculty were angry because of past neglect. Duncan asked why should the faculty be so angry with the Trustees when at this time the trustees were working to deal with past problems. Harris argued that trustee concern about the faculty has not been communicated to the faculty. He has not seen the faculty so united in its frustration with the process. Duncan stated that there had been a series of factual errors made at the faculty meeting and there had been no time to correct them. Davison said that he would like an addition to the Bylaw that would require the budget to be presented to the faculty each March. Casey wondered if the task force would only consider increasing the base salary or might also discuss a merit bonus. Names were suggested for the task force. Casey said that Jim Eck would provide institutional research assistance. Davison would contact the names recommended by the Executive Committee and let the committee know about the final list.

B. ATO and Strong Hall

Davison reported that the Modern Languages Department has expressed concern about the status of Strong Hall and the language living-learning project that has begun there. They wonder if the ATO fraternity will likely be restored to Strong Hall despite the success of their program. Duncan said that it had been very clear from the beginning that ATO had been given a list of expectations for improvement and if they successfully accomplished those goals that they would be restored to Strong Hall. Davison said that he would make a report at the next faculty meeting because of the amount of faculty interest in the case.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Levis
Secretary

MERIT-BASED COMPENSATION TASK FORCE

Motion

The Executive Committee proposes that it create a task force that studies the pros and cons of merit systems in schools similar to Rollins and suggest possible alternatives, and report its results to the faculty in January.

Task Force Goal

To provide information that will help the faculty make an educated decision about whether or not to pursue a merit-based system of compensation.

Note that the task force is not charged to recommend any particular system – just to provide information about the pros and cons of various systems.

Task Force Process

1. Review literature on merit-based compensation systems in academia, particularly with regard to smaller liberal arts institutions.
2. Investigate compensation systems at comparable peer institutions by: a) utilizing existing sources of information, and; b) gathering new information via interviews with key members at various institutions.
3. Attempt to put aside personal views on compensation systems and maintain objectivity while gathering and reporting information to the faculty.

Task Force Product

Produce a report for faculty that details:

1. The extent to which various systems of compensation, including merit based systems, are in use at peer institutions.
2. The advantages and disadvantages of various compensation systems in terms of performance, attracting new faculty, maintaining community, enhancing morale, promoting excellence, etc.
3. Critical factors that may influence the relative success or failure of these compensation systems (e.g., are certain systems better matches for certain types of institutions?).
4. Report existing alternatives with strong advantages and limited disadvantages that are applicable to Rollins (i.e., how can 'best practices' be applied to Rollins).