

8-29-2006

Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 29, 2006

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Professional Standards Committee
Unapproved Minutes from August 29, 2006
12:30 pm CSS 249

Next Meeting: 12:30-1:30 p.m., Sep. 12, 2006 (CSS 249).

Introduction/Preliminaries

The meeting was convened at 12:30 pm in CSS 249 by the chair, Wendy Brandon. Faculty members present were: Gloria Cook, Don Griffin, Steve Phelan, Alicia Homrich, and Paul Stephenson. Associate Dean Deb Wellman was also present.

1. Agenda Items

- A. Volunteer to take minutes
- B. Approval of minutes from April 25, 2006
- C. Meeting times for Fall Term 2006
- D. Members
- E. Procedure and meeting dates for approving early proposals for Critchfield/Ashforth/Individual/Course Dev. and Cornell Grants
- F. Participants for Grants Information Meeting in Bieberbach, Sep. 5 at 5:30 p.m.
- G. Handouts
- H. Goals for Fall Term

2. New Business

I. Volunteer to take minutes: Paul Stephenson volunteered to continue as secretary.

II. Approval of minutes (4/25/06): The minutes were approved as written.

III. Meeting times for Fall term: The following meeting dates were confirmed.....

Sep. 12, 2006

Sep. 26, 2006

Oct. 17, 2006

Nov. 14, 2006

IV. Members: Some discussion was held regarding who were returning members to the committee and who were the new members. It was noted that the new representative from Humanities was Mario D'Amato. The possibility that two student representatives might be present in the future was also noted.

V. Participants for Grants Information Meeting in Bieberbach, Sep. 5 at 5:30 p.m.

W. Brandon opened the discussion asking what should be told to applicants.

D. Griffin commented that a problem in the past for reviewing these proposals was a lack of documentation regarding what had been accomplished by faculty who had received awards.

W. Brandon observed that there was currently no format for faculty to follow when submitting progress reports for their awards. She asked the committee if a draft of such a form could be put together. The form should include such items as:

Publications

Conference Presentations

Artistic performances

New Course Development

...which could be used to document the success of applicants who have received awards.

D. Wellman noted that somewhere in the website there are conflicting guidelines for documenting what you've accomplished. On the Dean of Faculty website there is a checklist for applications that should be linked to the official form.

D. Griffin added that we need as PSC, a short account of what applicants have accomplished with past awards. Also, we need a checklist from Karla Knight notifying the committee that a progress report is on file. Another issue is who gets funded and how often do they receive funding? Do we fund the most accomplished people (with a proven track record) or do we help faculty who are just getting started?

A. Homrich commented that the current form does ask applicants to list previous Rollins funding for the past two years.

W. Brandon and D. Griffin proposed that the "Rollins Funding" question be re-written to give the PSC a better idea of how often the college has funded each individual (i.e. how many grants in the past 10 years?).

D. Griffin added that the form also needs a question regarding outside funding. Have applicants actively sought outside sources of funding?

D. Wellman commented that these changes need to be made fast so that Karla can get them out.

W. Brandon replied that we can make a draft for new applicants this fall.

W. Brandon asked, how do we know how much money is in the budget for upcoming grants?

D. Griffin replied that the Dean's office has that information.

W. Brandon asked, about the informational meeting coming up on Sep. 5.; Does everyone on PSC attend? Discussion ensued and D. Wellman volunteered to go to the meeting with W. Brandon.

A. Homrich volunteered to draft a report form and distribute it to the committee.

D. Wellman proposed that the date for early Research Proposals from faculty planning a 2007-08 sabbatical. (i.e. Proposals for Critchfield, Ashforth, Individual Development, Course Development, and Cornell Research Grants) be pushed moved back to Sep. 28, 2006

W. Brandon asked if that would be too late? The committee members agreed that it was an acceptable date.

S. Phelan suggested that the informational meeting for grant applicants be scheduled on Sep. 12 at the normal PSC meeting time (in CSS 222) and that the first 20 minutes be designated for questions regarding research proposals.

D. Griffin added that we should ask applicants to give PSC information of Rollins funding during the past 5 years, efforts to acquire outside funding, and to list outcomes of their funding (publications, presentations, etc.)

VI. Goals for Fall Term

The PSC discussed possible goals for the upcoming academic year.

D. Wellman noted that the acting Dean of faculty (H. Edge) had requested that the committee spend more time on the administration of the faculty travel budget and continue its work with the C.I.E.

Discussion was held regarding the quality of the narrative portion of the C.I.E. and perceived limitations with the current form as compared to the previous evaluation form.

P. Stephenson noted that P. Harris and M. Ruiz were requested by PSC last year (2005-2006) to prepare a report on the C.I.E. specifically regarding the statistical accuracy of the procedure and its implications for FEC.

W. Brandon stated that she thought D. Davidson was supposed to be giving a report on the numbers generated from last year's C.I.E. and that according to what she had heard, it was difficult to discern significant differences among the average values that were generated for faculty from the quantitative portion of the C.I.E.

D. Griffin stated that caution was needed when using these types of numbers because in the past quantitative data that was not statistically significant had been misused to set faculty salaries.

W. Brandon brought to the committee a concern from D. Boniface about the question(s) on the C.I.E. that pertain to professional ethics and bias, noting that some students may not understand the significance of that question. For example, could the presentation of controversial information on a topic, be misinterpreted by a student as faculty support for biased viewpoints?

D. Wellman added that the new C.I.E. showed an elevated level of narrative responses with a negative tone. This seems due to the new narrative questions #6 "What, if anything, could have been changed about this course to improve your learning experience?" and #7 "What were the major strengths and weaknesses of the instructor?" which prompt students to critique the course and instructor.

W. Brandon continued that there was also concern among junior faculty because FEC will be making decisions on tenure and promotion on the basis of several different student evaluations forms.

A. Homrich recommended that professors take their class into a computer lab so that they have enough time to do the evaluation in class.

G. Cook noted that at finals time students could be rushing through their C.I.Es, trying to get them all done at once.

W. Brandon asked the committee to give her background on why the C.I.E. was adopted, as she was on sabbatical during that academic year.

P. Stephenson answered that the C.I.E. was adopted in an attempt to get better feedback for professors regarding their pedagogy. To help them obtain useful information about specific aspects of their teaching that would allow them to improve.

S. Phelan commented that in the past, evaluations were based on several class visits and that sometimes a single class visit (especially at the beginning of a semester) does not give you a good appreciation for the course. It's possible for lectures to be generally dull but the overall course may not be bad. Class visits at the end of the semester are more valuable because you see how the class progressed. Pre-tenure faculty need to be careful and make sure that students are giving detailed comments. They may also want to keep examples of student work.

W. Brandon added that pre-tenure faculty should be trained in terms of presenting the C.I.E., so that it is not negatively introduced and student response is not skewed in that direction.

D. Griffin added that the problem with tenure class visits is that they tend to be "one-shot" deals at tenure time and any faculty member can have an "off-day".

D. Wellman noted that some faculty resent classroom visits and supervision, viewing it as an infringement of academic freedom.

D. Griffin replied that a mentoring system would be more appropriate with one department member being assigned to each new faculty member. They could visit back and forth between classes and help critique each other.

A. Homrich suggested that the narrative portion of the C.I.E. be done in class rather than online.

W. Brandon remarked that there has not been enough time yet to analyze the C.I.E. and that PSC needs to be upfront about what problems are being raised regarding it. The PSC should let the faculty know that it views narrative comments as a useful tool for evaluation and the committee is concerned about the apparent decline in student comments. Another major problem with the C.I.E. is that it boils down a faculty member's teaching into a single

number. It would be more useful to have several numbers on different aspects of teaching. One suggestion for the C.I.E. might be to provide for a college wide average for each item so you can compare across the college. D. Griffin added that college wide evaluation committees (e.g. F.E.C.) should be discouraged from using the numbers capriciously.

G. Cook wondered how class size might effect the C.I.E. does having a small class make a difference?

W. Brandon stated that we need to allow Jr. Faculty to express their concerns.

D. Griffin replied that Jr. Faculty often seem to be more concerned about people in their department than people in the administration. The F.E.C. seems to change focus depending on who's on it. At some points he had been told that the F.E.C.'s job was to uphold the standards of a Department whereas on other occasions he had been told that the F.E.C. was supposed to uphold a uniform code of conduct for the college. We need a clear statement of what the primary purpose of the F.E.C. is.

W. Brandon introduced another item of discussion as a possible Goal for the PSC this year: Development of Diversity Issues. The idea would be to promote growth and development of diversity issues. That faculty should be able to show how they have made progress in this area.

D. Griffin commented that this would have to be presented very carefully.

W. Brandon added that she was thinking about service to the college. Faculty should be able to show something they've done to expand diversity. For example, as part of the AFAR.

D. Griffin asked if this would be a requirement.

W. Brandon replied, yes. For example Disney employees must include an evaluation of personal growth: diversity.

S. Phelan remarked that this becomes an issue with retaining diverse faculty and students.

D. Griffin replied that if you impose this it becomes an issue. It's easier for some disciplines to integrate diversity issues more readily than others. For example, Physics.

W. Brandon noted that the college requires professional development and scholarship; we could require diversity training as part of this.

D. Griffin replied that you could make it a requirement for any department that is approved for a new faculty position...they could be required to participate in diversity training prior to commencing a faculty search.

S. Phelan added you could have a question on the AFAR that asks "what did you do for professional development in this area? (diversity).

W. Brandon added what about people on F.E.C. shouldn't they need to go through diversity training prior to sitting on that committee?

D. Griffin stated that people going on international trips could be required to go through diversity training.

At this point discussion ended and D. Wellman introduced the slate of the CDFA selection committee for the approval of the PSC. The slate included....

- E. Blossey
- J. Cavanaugh
- E. Cohen
- K. Norsworthy
- K. Taylor

The slate was unanimously approved.

3. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

4. Adjourn The meeting was adjourned (2:00 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Stephenson, Recording Secretary