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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Tuesday, September 6, 2005

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Professional Standards Committee
Approved Minutes from September 6, 2005
12:30 pm Hauk 110

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 20, 12:30 pm, Hauck 110

Introduction/Preliminaries

The meeting was convened at 12:30 pm in Hauk 110 by the chair, Nancy Decker. Faculty members present were: Alexander Boguslawski, David Charles, Gloria Cook, Don Griffin, Steve Phelan, Maria Ruiz, and Paul Stephenson. Associate Dean Hoyt Edge was also present.

Information:

We had the following handouts.

--FYRST grant criteria

--Travel Policy statement.

--Amended Proposal for New Course and Instructor Evaluation Form (CIE).

Agenda Items

I. Election of Secretary.

II. Representation at UCF meeting to discuss Best Practices for Faculty Development, Sep. 20

III. Establishment of date to consider FYRST and Early Round Critchfield applications

IV. Selection committee for Cornell Scholars

V. Procedural wrap-up for course and instructor evaluation (CIE) form

VI. Travel Policy

2. New Business

A. Election of Secretary: Paul Stephenson volunteered.

B. UCF conference for Best Practices in Faculty Development: N. Decker noted that the provost would like a Rollins College representative present at the meeting. N. Decker called for volunteers but all present had schedule conflicts. D. Griffin suggested that Sandra Chadwick-Blossey, who is already planning to attend, be asked to report back to the PSC on her experience at the conference.

C. Establishment of dates to consider FYRST and Critchfield grants: N. Decker stated that unless otherwise noted the following dates for PSC meetings were established.

Sep. 20, 2005

Oct. 18, 2005

Nov. 1, 2005

Nov. 22, 2005

N. Decker stated that Sep. 26, 2005 is the earliest point at which PSC could begin reviewing Critchfield and FYRST grants. For the second round of review the PSC had previously met for dinner to review them. H. Edge noted that it may be possible to fund dinner expenses through the Dean's office. September 28 at 6:00 p.m. was set as the date at which PSC would review second round grants and have dinner. D. Griffin asked how the proposals are distributed. N. Decker replied that the Dean's office photocopied them and distributes them to faculty offices. H. Edge noted

that the grant criteria had been revised and placed online and were now much more specific and detailed. D. Charles suggested that all members review the criteria beforehand so that the PSC could be in agreement about specific points that may be “deal breakers” for proposals. N. Decker stated that the PSC will discuss proposals initially on Sep. 20 and then have a detailed meeting on the evening of Sep. 28.

D. Selection committee for Cornell Scholars: It was proposed that the Dean suggest a slate of faculty reviewers for Cornell Scholars that would be submitted to the PSC for approval. Initially the slate was to be composed of faculty members who hold endowed chairs but, as the pool of previous Cornell Scholar recipients grows the slate will consist of more Cornell Scholar awardees. The slate being presented was as follows:

Ed Cohen
Jennifer Cavanaugh
Gary Williams
Don Griffin
Margaret McLaren
Kenna Taylor (alternate)

M. Ruiz asked what kind of balance was trying to be achieved with this slate. H. Edge replied “all kinds...” – different methodologies, different backgrounds, different divisions, male/female, etc... D. Griffin noted that problems arise when trying to balance for gender because of the uneven distribution of endowed chairs. S. Phelan and D. Griffin both noted that review of Cornell Scholar proposals was a prodigious amount of work and a difficult process. N. Decker asked if there was a need for discussion on the procedure slate approval or if there was consensus. D. Griffin volunteered to excuse himself if needed. N. Decker noted that this raises the concern with the process that there are still so few Cornell Scholars to serve on the review committee. D. Griffin stated that as time goes on the pool will grow and become more diverse. He also noted that serving on the committee is rewarding but that faculty must be willing to put in the time and effort that is required. M. Ruiz asked if the faculty on the slate had volunteered. A. Boguslawski asked if one could serve on the committee even though they may not be familiar with the college faculty. D. Griffin said that it was very useful to have an outside view and that Al Moe in the Education Department had served in this capacity and that his perspective was useful. N. Decker then asked if there was need for a vote or whether we had consensus. The group nodded in agreement that the slate was approved by the PSC.

E. Procedural wrap-up for course and instructor evaluation (CIE) form: N. Decker reminded the PSC that last year the faculty approved a new evaluation form for academic courses. N. Decker observed that the PSC is tasked with establishing two task forces to evaluate the CIE. One task force is to include individuals with expertise in measurement and statistics to evaluate the reliability and validity of the CIE and the other to determine the most effective means of using the new form in the promotion and tenure process. D. Charles asked if it was appropriate for the PSC to solicit Paul Harris’ assistance with the task force that addresses validity and reliability, since he has been central to the development of the CIE. N. Decker replied that it is appropriate and she would ask Paul Harris to chair that task force. H. Edge stated that the type of quantitative feedback that will be gathered from the CIE needs still to be determined. He remarked that Paul Harris had some suggestions as to what would provide useful information on one hand and also provide a measure of safety and security for faculty on the other. The goal was to seek a balance in the use of these statistical measures. M. Ruiz asked what the concern was with the use of quantitative data. H. Edge replied that there was concern about the misuse of quantitative data in the past with regard to tenure and promotion. H. Edge stated that we want to make sure that it is not misused and that it acts to compliment the qualitative data. He said that one suggestion from P. Harris was that the quantitative data only be used when individuals score well outside of the mean-either at the extreme high end or extreme low end of the scale. D. Griffin remarked that quantitative data was misused in the past and that we want to ensure that it doesn’t happen again. A. Boguslawski reminded the PSC that the CIE is being adopted on a trial basis and that if the trial is not successful it will not be kept. H. Edge observed that we want the form help our teaching (self-evaluation) and also be useful for promotion and tenure..”that’s tough for one form”. N. Decker observed that the form will have to be updated periodically. That it will be an ongoing process-changing the form as needed. A. Boguslawski noted that in the colloquium that was held to discuss the CIE, faculty had brought up the idea of having peer evaluations which would be able to help during tenure and promotion review and avoid the type of inaccuracies that can come from student evaluations that are not objective. D. Griffin said faculty are concerned that the adoption of a quantitative form will result in the loss of qualitative student comments. H. Edge replied that on the first pilot test of

the CIE, qualitative student comments were higher but that on the second pilot the comments seemed to be less. D. Charles remarked that it may be possible for the online version of the CIE to be organized in such a way that qualitative comments can be made for each question. D. Griffin asked if protections were being put in place so that a student could only fill out the CIE one time for each course. S. Phelan asked if there was protection to ensure student anonymity, since that is what they are told to expect. M. Ruiz stated that she was concerned that the response rate will be low for the web based CIE, since using the new form will be voluntary. N. Decker said in order to keep response rates high, discussions in the past on this topic had focused on encouraging students to fill out the CIE rather than adopting punitive measures such as withholding grades of students who had not submitted a CIE. H. Edge said that the college is looking for ways to help keep student response rates high and that the actual situation is that Banner will not allow the college to withhold grades for more than two weeks. N. Decker said that there had been discussion of offering a prize to the first class in which 100% of the students had filled out the CIE. D. Charles said that he'd like to see some flexibility as to when the evaluation will be available to students. He noted that instructors should have control so that the evaluation forms can be offered at an appropriate point during the semester. This could avoid the type of skewed results that might occur if for instance students are asked to fill out the CIE after a particularly difficult period in a course. M. Ruiz suggested that if high numbers of responders are necessary to ensure statistical significance in the evaluation of the CIE, then why not have all students fill out the CIE with paper and pencil during its first year of implementation, rather than online. H. Edge replied that could not be done because the faculty had already approved the online version and that scoring (via scantron) a large numbers of CIE forms was prohibitive. At this point N. Decker proposed that the discussion be continued in context of the two task forces that will be formed to evaluate the CIE. The PSC decided that CIE Task Force One would be headed by M. Ruiz and include Paul Harris and that CIE Task Force Two would be headed by S. Phelan and include H. Edge. N. Decker said that another person could be added to CIE Task Force Two as needed. S. Phelan proposed that the Task Forces be phased (i.e. CIE Task Force One would do much of its work first and provide feedback to PSC before CIE Task Force 2 began its evaluation). This was acceptable to the PSC. N. Decker said that she would contact P. Harris and have him get in touch with M. Ruiz. S. Phelan asked if there were concerns in FEC regarding the new CIE. N. Decker replied that there is a concern in FEC that evaluation of faculty using both the old and new forms be equitable. D. Griffin noted that this will be an issue as early as this fall because FEC will be evaluating faculty who have a mixture of both course evaluation forms in their promotion and tenure materials.

F. Travel Policy: N. Decker noted that there is a concern about the current travel policy. This year the Dean of Faculty has more requests for travel money than can be funded. To help control costs the Dean's office has implementation of points 1 (a mandatory date to submit travel requests) and 2 (airline tickets must be purchased 21 days in advance). PSC is being asked to consider points 3, 4, and 5 from the Dean's office regarding car use, food, and priority of funding. S. Phelan commented that this situation was "backwards" and that the Dean's office should present a plan to PSC for review and approval. H. Edge replied that the Dean wasn't asking the PSC to come up with a completely new policy right away. However, he'd like approval of the first several points (needing an Intent to Travel Form, etc.) right away. N. Decker asked if there was statistical evidence that the faculty development monies provided by the college had helped our national ranking in U.S. News. H. Edge replied that this was certainly true. The PSC seemed to be in agreement with the proposed changes.

3. Adjourn At this point meeting was adjourned (1:30 pm.)

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Stephenson, Recording Secretary