Faculty Affairs Committee Final Report 2007-2008
23 April 2008

The Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) met monthly from October through April focused on four main issues: Revision of the Faculty Tab in Pipeline, organizing a forum on retirement, possible expansion of online SET submission and the Respect Campaign of the Dean of Students Office. The Committee is pleased to share its progress with the Senate President, the Policy Committee and the members of the Academic Senate.

Our committee�s work on revision of the Faculty Tab in Pipeline, begun in 2006-2007, was finalized in December 2007. The Committee gratefully acknowledges the patience and help of Genetha Smith, Lead Systems Integrator, Administrative Information Systems (C& IT). C&IT delayed launching the revisions until the beginning of February 2008 in order to avoid any possible confusion at the beginning of the Winter Term in January 2008. The FAC incorporated suggestions from the library system into the final organization. Although the FAC wanted to list all the webmail servers on campus, there is no listing available. The Chair talked with WSU Chief Information Officer (CIO) Joseph Sawasky about this and learned that a Technology Council, now being organized by the CIO and Dean Sandra Yee, would be best equipped to determine this listing. Hopefully the list will be added next year. So far the revised Faculty Tab is running well.

The FAC organized a campus-wide forum, entitled, �Reports from the Front: A Forum on Retirement,� held 20 February 2008. The forum included speakers from Total Compensation and Wellness, the AAUP/AFT, and three Wayne State faculty retirees. The Academic Senate and the Office of the Provost sponsored the forum. Over 80 people attended on a bitterly cold afternoon. The forum focused on three faculty retirees whose stories stimulated questions directed to the panelists from the audience. Suggestions for improving services for retired faculty/staff made by the retirees (and from attendees) were passed on to the Senate Policy Committee and, ultimately, to the Office of the Provost. Questionnaires distributed at the forum provided feedback on the event (mostly positive). Comments returned with the questionnaires suggested interest in future retirement forums focused on financial issues.

In a related issue, the FAC learned that retirees do not have access to all the electronic resources of the library system available to working faculty. The Chair contacted Dean Sandra Yee of the Library Systems, who has been working since then with the CIO to solve the problem. The Committee continues to keep in contact with Dean Yee and the CIO regarding a solution to this problem.

The Policy Committee of the Academic Senate asked the FAC (and Student Affairs Committee) to consider if Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) data could be submitted in an electronic format appropriate for the format in which the course was taught (e.g., distance learning/online courses) and also consider if the use of electronic SET data submission should be expanded on campus to more onsite courses. To learn more about online SET, the FAC interviewed Thomas Wilhelm, Director of Testing, Evaluation and Research Services in the Division of Academic Affairs. Mr. Wilhelm informed the FAC that formats for SET instruments used online can be and have been modified to reflect the nature of the course presented and the technology used to deliver it. Changes in the format of the SET instrument need to be approved by a joint committee on Student Evaluation of Teaching and it is not clear if all changes thus far have been approved. Mr. Wilhelm also informed the FAC that the return rates of electronic SET questionnaires was 50% of the rate of return using paper questionnaires. The FAC conducted a poll to determine faculty sentiment for electronic SET methods. The response of over 500 faculty was that 37.5% would use the electronic SET, 33.9% prefer to use paper, 8.2% would use one or the other method depending on their course and 18.8% had no preference. On the basis of the poll, information from Thomas Wilhelm and the FAC discussions, the FAC recommended that the university should:

- Submit changes to the SET instrument for approval by the appropriate SET committee
- Go slowly with expanding electronic SET to onsite courses (e.g., give instructors the option of using electronic SET in the Spring/Summer Term).
- Make sure it has the electronic infrastructure to handle large amounts of data submitted over short time periods
- Allow instructors flexibility in opening the window for SET submission
- Keep data archives on campus
- Advertise the availability to electronic SET to all faculty on campus
- Modify <u>all</u> SET instruments to separate problems with electronic medium from the rating of teaching
- Consider using a lottery as an incentive for students to complete SET electronically (electronic SET submission rates are approximately 50% of paper SET submission rates)
- Encourage faculty to motivate student compliance by showing how SET data produces improvements in courses and is used for promotion/tenure/salary considerations

The FAC invited Dean of Students David Strauss to its 15 April 2008 meeting to discuss his office's Respect Campaign, central to which is a pledge taken by students to promote civility on campus. Dean Strauss told the committee that the Respect Campaign grew out of observations that students did not always treat faculty, each other or the campus with consideration. Lack of respect for others is often the basis of judicial processes on campus. The Dean of Students Office has worked with student groups on campus to heighten awareness of the campaign. Dean Strauss thinks that the campaign is off to a good start but foresees continued work with student groups and would like to see more faculty involvement. He pointed out that student behavior problems need to be treated in a stepwise fashion and not ignored until they get out of hand. It was suggested at our meeting that Dean Strauss might address the Academic Senate on the issue of dealing with student behavioral problems in the classroom and its relationship to the Respect Campaign. Another suggestion was that Dean Strauss should make presentations on his campaign to faculty meetings in departments which teach large introductory courses.

The 2007-2008 FAC suggests the FAC for 2008-2009 consider:
- Following up on the Faculty Tab revision to monitor its usage one year after its implementation in February 2008 (Contact: Genetha Smith in C&IT)
- Following up on the lack of availability of library electronic resources for retirees (Contact: Dean Sandra Yee)
- Follow up on compiling a list of web mail servers for the Faculty Tab in Pipeline (Contact: Chief Information Officer Joseph Sawasky)
- Exploring guidelines for handling student behavioral problems in the classroom
- Should there be a faculty club?

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Crossland, Chair,
Faculty Affairs Committee