

Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting
19 February 2008; 2:00 pm, 1270 FAB

Present: M. Amjad, K. Browne, S. Calkins (Administration Liaison), W. Crossland, D. DeGracia (Policy Committee Liaison), P. Kernsmith, R. Parnell, A. Popadic, E. Puscheck, M. Sengstock.

Absent with notice: M. Hamre, L. Keashly, G. Kuhn, B. Markman.

Absent: G. DeBlase, R. McIntyre (AAUP/AFT Liaison).

Agenda

[Meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.]

1. *Approval of Minutes of 25 January 2008 meeting of the Faculty Affairs Committee.*

Approved.

2. *SET survey results (Dr. Kernsmith)*

Prof. Kernsmith reported on the Zoomerang survey of faculty regarding their opinion on the expansion of electronic format of collecting Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) data. Over 500 responses were received. Approximately 20% had no preference, less than 10% would use the electronic format for some classes and the paper format for others, 38% preferred the electronic method, 34% preferred the paper method. Many of the free response comments expressed concern that there would be more responses biased against the course because higher response rates by dissatisfied students. Those favoring electronic SET methods thought that the method would be convenient, free-up instructor time, reduce cost and paper usage. Some also wrote about more general concerns with SET.

Committee members commented people who focused on the quality of the responses were mainly against electronic SET. This may be a special concern in large introductory classes where there is low attendance: by administering the paper version of SET, the more engaged students' opinions could be sampled, producing a more useful, higher quality result. Furthermore, if the University deemed that financial savings were the main reason to use electronic SET, that might overshadow pedagogical concerns. It was the consensus of the committee that the University should go slowly with electronic SET. It could be publicized more widely among the faculty and made available on a voluntary basis. Faculty experience with electronic SET should be followed closely with respect to the rate of compliance by students and the perceived quality of the responses by the faculty.

3. *Problems with current electronic SET: Separating the medium from the instructor.*

The FAC needs to settle this issue shortly. We will consult with the Student Affairs Committee, also charged with examining electronic SET, to see what they have found out or concluded so far.

4. *Forum on Retirement*

- a. *Assemble at 1:00 pm in law school auditorium*

- b. *Person to handout programs and questionnaires*

- c. *Two people to carry portable microphones to audience members asking questions*

All arrangements have been made for microphones, A/V recording, refreshments. Over 100

positive RSVPs so far. Attendees will park in the lot adjacent to auditorium.

5. *March meeting: Tuesday, March 18 or 25, 2008, 2:00 pm in 1270 FAB.*
March 25, 2:00 pm, in 1270 FAB.

6. *Other business*

Prof. Puscheck suggested that the FAC consider faculty role in retention of students (a survey on student retention is online). What training do faculty need to help retain students?

Prof. Calkins pointed out that there would be budget needs for this training. If we have suggestions as to how to increase student retention, that would be very valuable.

Prof. DeGracia reported from the Policy Committee that there was an announcement from the Provost and Office of the Vice President for Research regarding the hiring of faculty with the permanent money in the budget resulting from last fiscal year's budgetary restrictions.

Prof. Sengstock raised the concern about how to deal with faculty that have unhelpful attitudes toward students. A general discussion of teaching performance and ways of encouraging good teaching ensued. While it was generally agreed that salary money is a useful reward tool, there is also a need for increasing the status of good teachers. Another avenue to promote good teaching could be to make promotion possible through teaching considerations.

Prof. DeGracia noted that low admissions standards also contribute to low retention because at-risk students do not have the skill needed to perform effectively at WSU.

Discussion of the issues brought up under *New Business* were tabled for a future meeting.

7. *Adjourn*

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.