

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Faculty Affairs Committee met at 11 am on September 26, 2011, in 1270 FAB.

The following members were present: B. Asmar, A. Biswas, P. Beavers, N. Datta, J. Fry-McComish, R. Hoogland, J. Potoff, M. Sengstock, J. Sondheimer. Others: L. Beale, S. Calkins, M. Fakherddine, K. Skillin. Absent with Notice: E. Puscheck.

The meeting was called to order at 11 am. Those present introduced themselves.

The Chair presented a review of activities from the previous year.

Mentoring Survey: The Committee saw the completion of a Mentoring Survey which had been under discussion by the committee for at least 2 years. The survey was completed largely through support from the Provost's Office. Kelley Skillin from the Provost's Office worked on this and had served as a volunteer member of this committee. Liz Puscheck from the Medical School had also worked very hard on this issue. The survey is now completed, but the results have not yet been completed. Kelley indicated she had a graduate student working on this issue at present, and hoped to have the results soon. She will bring them to the committee to review when they are available. Kelley indicated that Liz Puscheck will also continue to work on this issue.

Nutrition and Food Sciences – Student Concern: The Chair reported on a student ethics issue which FAC had reviewed in the past year. Research, C&I, and SAC had also reviewed the issue. To summarize briefly, the Department of Nutrition & Food Sciences had a student who had published her MA thesis. Her research had been carried out as part of a larger study, which was based on an idea by a faculty member. Data collection and analysis was also carried out under a grant this faculty member had obtained. Other students were also involved, including one who also had contributed research funds. However, the student did not credit the department or research group in her publication. The Department and faculty member were concerned that her actions had jeopardized the publication prospects of other members of the group. The University administration, however, had strongly supported the student's right to publish her thesis, and had ordered the Department to continue supporting her studies. The Chair reported that Senate committees the previous year had been divided over the seriousness of the behavior and the actions which should have been taken. FAC had been generally supportive of the Department. The Chair also indicated she had spoken with Cathy Jen, Chair of the Department, which remains quite concerned about the issue. Former Graduate Dean Mark Wardell developed a mentoring policy which he submitted to the Graduate Council. He believed that better faculty advising would make students more aware of these issues and prevent such problems in the future. FAC had reviewed the proposal and was concerned that there remained a problem, in that lack of sanctions exist in the event a student chooses not to follow the suggested guidelines. Several committee members spoke concerning the issue. As was the case last year, members were divided over whether the lack of sanctions was an issue or not. FAC will resume its review of the policy presented to the Graduate Council. The Chair indicated that Senate President Lou

Romano also expressed concern about this issue, and planned to speak to the Graduate Council about it. The Chair asked for a member to take responsibility for this issue. Jeffrey Potoff indicated a willingness to handle this issue.

The Chair reported that several other items had been discussed last year, most of which had been completed. They were: transfer of Computer Science from CLAS to College of Engineering; review of Retention Implementation Task Force Final Report; concerns regarding the departmental review committee process; concerns raised about the loss of reserve books from the library; and the issue of appropriate tenure standards for clinical faculty: It was her opinion that these issues had been satisfactorily resolved and were no longer on the committee's agenda. Members of last year's committee agreed.

The Chair also indicated that Senate President Lou Romano had presented some additional items which the Policy Committee thought should be considered by Senate Committees. Several were referred to FAC. These were:

On-Line Courses: The Chair indicated that the Provost planned to consult with the faculty regarding on-line courses and recommendations concerning the nature of these courses, as well as issues which should be considered in their development and management. Further information will be forthcoming.

Existing Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) Format: Several Committees, including C&I, FAC, and SAC, have been asked to review the SET format and consider whether changes are needed. Senate President Romano had indicated that the 3 committees should submit a joint report. FAC could consider the new form, review how the data are analyzed and reported, as well as how the SET affects faculty. FAC could also consider whether other approaches to evaluating faculty might be considered. Renee Hoogland and Paul Beavers agreed to take the lead on this issue.

Distribution of Teaching Assistants (TAs) to Departments: The Chair indicated that there had been discussion concerning the fact that distribution of Teaching Assistantships across departments does not seem to bear much relation to the size of the faculty or graduate student population of departments. There has been discussion that this issue should be reviewed. This will be on the committee's agenda.

Uniform Policy Regarding Grade Changes: A concern has been raised by a faculty member that a student's grade had been changed by the department chair without consultation with the faculty member. The Senate is investigating this issue. FAC may be involved. Information on the status of this issue will be forthcoming.

Uniform Code of Student Conduct across Colleges and Departments: Concerns have been raised that different colleges and departments may have variations in their respective codes of student conduct. This issue will also be investigated by FAC, SAC, and C&I.

Future Meetings: The Chair stated that responses from committee members concerning appropriate meeting times indicated that no time was appropriate for more than 4 to 5 members at any given time. Given these data, she was pleased at the turnout for today's meeting. It was decided that this would be a good time to meet, and the Chair stated she would announce a schedule of meetings for the fall, 2011, term in the next few weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15.

Mary Cay Sengstock, Chair