

Fall 10-2-2014

Council of Chairs Meeting, October 2, 2014

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COUNCIL OF CHAIRS, 2014-15
Minutes of the Meeting on October 2, 2014
Drinko 402; GC 226; SOP Conference Room

1. Attendance:

20 Chairs/Division Heads: Mike Castellani (CHM), Harlan Smith (FIN/ECN/IB), Dan Holbrook (HST), Marty Laubach (SOC/ANT), Jane Hill (ENG), Jeff Archambault (ACC/LE), Paula Lucas (COEPD), Mike Cunningham (LS), Richard Garnett (SOC/ANT), Burnis Morris (JMC), Liz Casey (HS), Aley El-Shazly (GLY), Del Chrol (CL), Penny Kroll (PT), Allyson Goodman (JMC), Karen McNealy (CD), Rex McClure (MGT/MKT/MIS), Alfred Akinsete (MTH), Kim Broedel-Zaugg (SOP), Janet Dozier (COEPD)

2. Mike Castellani called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. At our September meeting the members present agreed to create a teaching award for “contingent (i.e., non-tenurable) faculty.” Jane Hill agreed to put together an ad hoc committee to develop a proposal to present to the Council. Jane’s committee, which includes Dan Holbrook, Alfred Akinsete, and Evelyn Pupplo-Cody, was ready to present today. She began by summarizing the idea of such an award as the “Council of Chairs Bump” for good contingent faculty, in their applications for TT jobs here or elsewhere. She then distributed a one-page handout that laid out the proposed guidelines for the award. A copy of this document is attached to the email containing these Minutes.

At first discussion focused, at first, on the issue of eligibility. The members present agreed with the committee that only full-time non-tenurable instructors would be eligible. Members also agreed to restrict eligibility further to only those for whom no other university-wide awards are available. This led to a discussion of whether “Clinical Faculty” are eligible for the Pickens-Queen and other university teaching awards. If they are not, then they would not be eligible for ours. Those present requested that the committee, or Mike Castellani, check into this matter.

Several members raised the issue of graduate vs undergraduate teaching. We agreed that contingent faculty who teach graduate students will be eligible for this award – as long as their teaching activities focus primarily on undergrad instruction.

Members present also agreed with the committee that multiple awards can be given, and that in any given year the winners can be from the same department or unit.

Talk then turned to funding. We agreed that each winner should receive \$1,000. Mike Castellani reported that in a recent conversation with Sherri Smith, she indicated that the Provost likes the idea of such an award and may be able to help with funding. Dan Holbrook reported that the President is receptive to this idea. The possibility of setting up an endowed fund at the Foundation was also discussed. If the annual payout is 4%, then the fund would need \$50,000 to pay out two \$1,000 awards per year. Might outside donors be interested in funding this? We don’t know: this is just a thought for now.

Jane and her committee will meet to finalize the language of the Award Proposal. Mike Castellani will then put it up, electronically, for a full Council vote.

3. Since Bruce Felder (new HR Director) wasn’t able to meet with us today, Mike Castellani asked if those present had any particular questions for Bruce that he could forward on our behalf. Some members brought up concerns with PeopleAdmin; we agreed that talking with Bruce about PeopleAdmin would be a good idea.

Mike closed this short section of the meeting by asking members to email him with specific questions for Bruce and he will pass them along.

4. The next topic brought up for discussion was the new P&T guidelines, and the fact that certain groups of faculty need to choose, soon, whether to proceed under the old guidelines or switch over to the new framework. How are the new guidelines being developed? What is the implementation status of the new guidelines? What about University Citizenship? How to define this? Who should define it? What kinds of proposals have already been developed to define University Citizenship, along with “exceptional” performance (applicable for those who will undergo pre-tenure review, halfway through their pre-tenure-decision years, under the new policy)?

The pre-tenure review under the new policy offers the possibility of a 5% salary bump for those candidates deemed “exceptional” – a salary increase that is above and beyond, i.e., independent of, the salary adjustment that comes with promotion. Should “exceptional” performance be defined, for this purpose, to be at a level above that required for tenure alone? In other words, should the criteria for “exceptional” performance in the pre-tenure review be stricter than the criteria for tenure? It appears that they can be. For example, the College of Science has developed its own complete proposal for implementing the new P&T framework, and its definition of “exceptional” means “exemplary” performance in all three principal aspects of the faculty job description: teaching, research, and service. For those who are interested, Mike Castellani will forward a copy of the COS’s proposal to the entire Council membership.

Another aspect of the new P&T policy received quite a bit of attention today: What about eligibility for promotion from Associate to Full Professor? Under the old policy 4 years in rank were required – and a person could apply for promotion to Full at the start of his/her 4th year in rank. The new policy states that 5 years in rank are required for promotion to Full. But the university-wide discussion has not yet settled the issue of who must follow the new policy in seeking promotion to Full. Is this new policy binding on all current Assistant Professors, and/or Associate Professors? Is it binding on some but not all current Associate Professors? Is it possible, under the new policy, to apply for promotion to Full at the start of one’s 5th year in rank as Associate? These questions are being hashed out in Deans’ meetings with the Provost, and in college-level meetings. At this point, different colleges appear to have different interpretations of what the new policy says about these issues. The university has therefore decided to push back the date at which current faculty affected by the new policy must choose whether to proceed under the old, or new, policy. At the Deans’ Meeting on December 7, the decision was made to push this decision point back to December 1, 2014. By then all colleges and departments must have their new P&T guidelines spelled out and approved – so that the faculty who must choose between old and new can make an informed decision.

Several members asked which policy candidates for P&T are currently leaning towards. Most members present think the old policy.

5. Mike Castellani then turned the discussion to the new Academic Portfolio Review website. He noted that three types of documents are posted for each college: (1) the degree-program level Niche Statements, (2) the college-level Niche Statements, and (3) college-level “Program Planning & Development Priorities” documents – Step 3 in the Academic Portfolio Review process. (Step 3 was done during the summer, and was due last August 15).

At our next meeting, President Kopp, Provost Ormiston, John Maher, and Mary Ellen Heuton will talk with us about the status of the Academic & Service Portfolio Reviews, and the implementation of the New Budget Model.

Our current understanding is that the transition to the new model will take 3 years. Over this transition period, each college's budget will be determined by three elements. The first is the "Historic" element – which will drop out of the budget by the end of the transition period. Second is the "Institutional" element – which takes into account actual costs to operate units. Third is the "SCH" element – designed to reward high SCH-generation ... relative to costs. The New Budget Model thus has an incentive built into it for colleges to maximize SCH production. But what shape will this last element take? Right now it's not clear. Mary Ellen took the deans through a first run-through of the model recently, and during that run-through all SCH's were deemed equal. But this was just preliminary exercise, designed to give the colleges some sense of how the new model will work. It remains to be seen, therefore, how SCH-production will factor into the new model.

Marty Laubach asked if the Council as a whole has any input into the development of the new model? It was noted that the 20/20 Group meets next on October 17, and that some chairs are already members of this group. Can other chairs attend? Dan Holbrook suggested that anyone who would like to become part of this group should simply ask. It's very likely, as far as Dan can tell, that anyone who asks to be part of this group will be welcome.

The meeting adjourned at roughly 4:20 p.m.