Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2013
10:00am, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

1) Meeting with Provost George Hynd to discuss our faculty morale recommendations, as reported to Faculty Senate in Dec. 2012
   a. Online course evaluations
      i. A mobile app will be implemented this semester, which they hope will increase participation. It was trialed last semester and they’re currently working out glitches.
      ii. They will work on extending the period for students to complete evaluations through the last day of finals.
      iii. Provost Hynd did not embrace our recommendation for an “opt-out” system, but will look into it. He emphasized that they’re shifting attention to metrics of evaluation of teaching other than student evaluations and noted that these other sources are often more valued in T&P deliberations.
      iv. It was agreed that faculty-based incentives to encourage student participation would be discontinued.
      v. Academic affairs will follow up to include reporting of standard deviations or standard errors along with means and medians and to make these metrics available for previous semesters.
   b. Timing of FAM revisions
      i. Provost Hynd noted that the FAM includes both Faculty By-Laws and other procedures and policies that are the purview of Academic Affairs and, in some cases, other offices on campus.
      ii. He will consider our recommendation to state in each faculty member’s contract the T&P expectations under which they will be evaluated.
      iii. Academic Affairs will continue to think about timing of FAM revisions.
   c. Annual evaluation of deans and chairs
      i. There is currently a formal process to evaluate chairs at 2 and 4 years, but this is internal.
      ii. Provost Hynd proposed an academic climate survey, with questions agreed upon by Academic Affairs and Faculty Welfare.

2) Committee meeting
   a. Faculty morale issues – After Provost Hynd departed, the committee agreed to seek a follow up meeting and then to report back to Faculty Senate in April.
   b. Concern about meeting for T&P candidates – The content and tenor of the meeting was discussed. Celeste Lacroix agreed to attend this semester’s meeting and take detailed notes.
c. **Faculty Senate** – The perception that the Faculty Senate is weaker than it used to be was discussed. A suggestion was made to discuss with the Speaker of the Faculty ways to increase mentorship for Senators, particularly regarding their responsibilities to the faculty.

d. **Grievance process**
   i. The committee discussed working with the Speaker of the Faculty as well as current and former chairs of the Grievance and Hearing Committees.
   ii. We were unable to ascertain whether there is currently a faculty ombudsperson. The listed phone number directs to a different person, and the message that was left was never answered.

e. **Adjunct subcommittee**
   i. The subcommittee is working with Lynn Cherry and the Staff Advisory committee on a recommendation to add adjunct faculty representation. Options for the structure of such representation were discussed.
   ii. The subcommittee also has a recommendation for adjunct pay raises that will be put forth this semester.

f. **VAP issues** – The committee agreed to recommend that any faculty member with a renewable contract be eligible for modification of duties after one year of service. The recommendation should be sent to Academic Affairs as well as reported publicly.

g. **Departing faculty issues** – It was noted that both the issue of how departing faculty are treated and some of the issues with FMLA/modification of duties have to do with the issue that faculty are on 9-month contracts but health benefits are spread over 12-months.

h. **Listservs** – In response to inappropriate posting to the Faculty/Staff listserv and the frustrations expressed by many faculty that more appropriate listservs are no longer available, we will recommend to FETC that the Faculty and Faculty/Staff listservs be mandatory and that opt-in listservs be reinstated (Events, OpenDiscussion, Classified).

*Submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/3/2013*