Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting minutes for February 11, 2014, Jewish Studies Center, 3rd floor conference room

Present: Todd McNerney, John Crotts, Michael Gomez, Andrew Clark, Emily Skinner, Sandy Slater

Guest Speaker: Deanna Caveny

Language in New Hire Letter

Todd McNerney recapped ad-hoc meeting from Thursday, January 30th, regarding language on the new hire letter from Academic Affairs that notes that faculty may be “assigned” to teach on North Campus. The committee outlined the following concerns about the language in the letter:

1) It could be used in many ways beyond just to support BPS/North campus;
2) It Could create two tiers of classes of faculty- previous hire letter faculty and new hire faculty; and,
3) The word “Assigned” is a word that isn’t usually employed with faculty-designation of courses to faculty is more a negotiation with department chairs

Deanna Caveny made the following comments regarding the language in the letter:

• The college including faculty approved and put into place BPS program which relies on having faculty teach at North Campus.
• The college is trying to expand capacity at North campus.
• The college has an obligation to serving Lowcountry.
• In spite of BPS being approved, there has been resistance to offering courses out there by whole departments. As such, the provost needs to send the message that the North Campus is part of the college and faculty can’t say, “I’m never teaching at the North Campus.”
• In addition to the North campus, Grace Marine Lab, Fountain Walk, and faculty labs at research facility would be possible teaching placements. There is a need to formally recognize that the College of Charleston is more than this six blocks downtown.
• The intent of the letter was not intended to bind people to teaching abroad or online, but was mostly intended to send an informational message to faculty when they are hired that the college of Charleston is more than downtown campus.
• This is not just a new expectation for new faculty, but for all faculty.
• The compensation practice that is in place for faculty teaching at North Campus as part of BPS will phase out over time as it was put in place to get BPS launched.
The college doesn’t pay overload for moving from 9 to 12 credits. When someone goes to 12 hours the college views that as giving up time for research, but the faculty member should get it back another semester. Visitors carry a 12-hour load and are compensated if they carry 15 credits.

The intention of the letter is not to be unreasonable and that she will ask the provost about using terminology such as “Lowcountry” or “Tri-county area.”

Appointment letter is not the only thing to which faculty are accountable.

Committee reiterated their concerns:

- A particular faculty member could be marginalized and always be assigned to teach there.
- The tone of the letter is very authoritative. The committee recommended changes using the word “faculty” instead of “you” and a using a different word than “assign.”
- Recommended using “Lowcountry” instead of numerous campuses to alleviate concern about teaching abroad.
- The committee suggested developing a friendly appointment letter that would be followed by a separate procedural/contractual thing

Mandate Sexual Harassment Training

Deanna: Adjuncts won’t be compensated financially. They can watch the video online as an alternative. College has federal obligation to train everyone. HR and legal affairs decided it must be complaint by including chairs. Not a good solution. Temps are required, too. Temps paid by the hour, may be compensated.

Todd: Concern came from faculty member who alerted Todd and Lynn Ford.

Todd: Adjunct pay includes other responsibilities and obligations beyond teaching. Will make better teachers if they’re prepared for this issue and dealing with these problems on campus.

Deanna: Not widespread complaints about having to attend. People recognize the importance of knowledge in this area.

Deanna: Everyone has the option to opt out of in person training and watch the 2 hour video.

Deanna: Adjunct faculty not eligible for staff development. Eligible for other fund lines to take courses.

Todd: Visiting Associate Professors in some cases are not teaching the 12 hour course load. Inequity exists and chairs are making exceptions without notifying or obtaining permission from the Provost Office.
**Deanna/Todd:** Brief discussion of insurance and lack of coverage during summer months for VAPS and faculty leaving. Email automatically turned off, too.

Next meeting invite Deanna back for a discussion about dual career and hiring practices. Also a discussion of the grievance survey and the results at the next meeting (Todd, Mike, and John meet before to discuss and then present info). Katherine Bender invited to meeting to discuss the results of the survey.

Next Meeting  March 11th at 11:00am in LCWA

*Submitted by Emily Skinner & Sandy Slater, 2/13/14*