By-Laws Committee Minutes  
September 7, 2012

In attendance: Glenn Lesses, Rick Heldrick, Susan Farrell, Sarah Owens, Lynn Cherry, Deanna Caveny-Noecker, Heather Alexander

1. The committee agreed to a Fall 2012 meeting schedule—11:00 Fridays on Oct. 5, Nov. 2, and Nov. 30 (if necessary).

2. We discussed membership on Senate committees.
   • Glenn Lesses reported that the Nominations Committee has had trouble filling committee memberships. This is partly because the requirements for committee membership may be overdetermined. In addition, there used to be a sentence in the old FAM that said a majority of the members of Senate committees must be Senators. This sentence is still on the Senate website, although it doesn’t appear in the latest version of the FAM.
   • We agreed that Heather Alexander would research previous editions of the FAM and old Senate minutes to try to determine when the sentence last appeared and whether its omission was intentional or accidental.
   • We also discussed some more substantial questions about the membership of Senate committees versus regular faculty committees. The FAM says Senate committees deal with long-range issues and other committees don’t. But this isn’t really true in practice. This is an issue we might want to revisit later in the semester.
   • Lynn Cherry reported a problem with the T&P and post-tenure review committees. Some members on these committees feel there is an unofficial rule that no one coming up for review should serve on either committee. We discussed whether this unofficial rule should be made official. Most of us seemed to think that coming up for post-tenure review shouldn’t preclude serving on the T&P committee and vice-versa.

3. We discussed the problem of some committees conducting all of their business electronically.
   • Lynn Cherry reported that she recently discovered that the Academic Standards Committee had been meeting exclusively via e-mail for the previous 3 years, so no minutes of their deliberations are available. Most of what they’d done was deciding on individual petitions, but some items did have to do with standards. She wondered if any other committees are using similar practices. The college’s by-laws are silent on the issue of electronic versus face-to-face meetings, but they do require the keeping of minutes. She asked how the committee thought we should address this issue.
   • The group’s preference seemed to be not to legislate such issues in the by-laws. We suggested that Lynn, in her role as Speaker, could remind committees of the need for keeping records, especially of votes taken.
4. We discussed the 2012-2013 FAM.
   - Deanna Caveny reported that Heather Alexander and Sandy Hull have gone through the Senate minutes for this year and last year and made changes that need to go in the latest version of the FAM. Heather has edited the most recent FAM, but members of the committee agreed to help proofread the changes. Deanna will make proofing assignments.
   - Deanna also reported that college policies that reside on the policies website (non-discrimination, non-harassment policies, etc.) need to be pulled out of the FAM. The revised version of the 2012-2013 FAM should be posted soon.