Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2013
11:00am, Jewish Studies Center 2nd floor sofas

Present: Simon Lewis, Hector Qirko, Todd McNerney, Allison Welch, Michael Gomez, Emily Skinner, Sandy Slater, Andrew Clark

1) Introductions

2) Committee overview – Simon Lewis discussed the charge of the committee and recapped the work of this year’s committee.

3) Agenda – Items that will carry forward to the 2013-14 academic year were discussed.
   
   a. Grievance process
   b. Adjunct issues
   c. Continue working with Academic Affairs on:
      i. Online evaluations
      ii. Timing of FAM changes
      iii. Chair and dean evaluations
   d. Other issues/possible agenda items
      i. Modified duties policy
      ii. Departing faculty issues
      iii. Merger
      iv. Tuition and/or priority enrollment benefits

4) Elections – Simon Lewis agreed to serve as chair of the 2013-14 committee. Hector Qirko agreed to serve as secretary.

5) Old business
   
   a. Proposal on calendar deadlines for changes to FAM has been drafted and will be sent to Academic Affairs.
   b. Proposal to amend the modification of duties policy to include visiting faculty has been drafted and will be sent to Academic Affairs.

Submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/13/2013
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2013
10:00am, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

1) Updates and follow up from last week
   a. Policy on FAM changes – Todd McNerney and Margaret Hagood to complete a draft to be
       presented to Academic Affairs by May 15.
   b. Dean evaluations
      i. Committee discussed the revised set of questions that were received from Bev
         Diamond. One additional change was recommended.
      ii. FWC also requests that data be shared back with the faculty, or at least with Faculty
          Senate and FWC, and that the introduction to the survey should inform respondents
          that a summary of the quantitative results will be shared in this way.
      iii. Next year’s committee will need to work to stabilize the content of the evaluation
           instrument and to formalize procedures for biennial evaluation of deans, including
           how results are used.
   c. Chair evaluations – FWC continues to endorse annual, anonymous evaluations, including at
      least one free-response question. This issue will be part of next year’s agenda.

2) Old business
   a. Departing faculty issues – Celeste Lacroix and Todd McNerney will work on this.
   b. VAP leave issues – Allison Welch and Hector Qirko will work on this.
   c. Grievance process
      i. Next year’s committee will need to schedule a meeting with Legal Counsel for the
         beginning of the Fall semester.
      ii. Next year’s committee should also work to ensure that the faculty ombudsperson is
          identifiable and reachable and is a faculty member.
      iii. Related to the grievance process, the committee discussed whether all faculty
           committees might be more effective with two-year terms, with faculty serving up to
           four consecutive years.
      iv. An additional problem with the grievance process is that the FAM constrains what
          the committee can do.
   d. Online evaluations
      i. Although FWC and Academic Affairs agreed on the value of extending the period for
         students to complete evaluations, this proposed change met with debate at the
April 2 Faculty Senate meeting. Consequently, FWC and Academic Affairs agreed not to implement this change this semester. In this way, the effectiveness of the mobile app can be assessed independent of any other changes.

ii. Response rate still appears to be low.
   1. We will request data for the 2012-13 academic year.
   2. Addressing the persistence of low return rates will be part of next year’s agenda. Possibilities include extending the period to complete evaluations and/or the opt-out system that FWC has recommended.

iii. Faculty members have not been specifically discouraged from providing incentives. This should be made explicit in the future.

iv. There are reports that some faculty are not leaving the room when administering evaluations via mobile app. Better instructions need to be provided about how evaluations are to be administered, including that faculty must leave the room.

e. **Childcare/Memminger – report from Margaret Hagood**
   i. Margaret has been serving as a representative of the College, along with Ashleigh Parr, on a committee working on upcoming change to Memminger Elementary, to be implemented when the school returns to its downtown location in July.
   ii. The re-opening provides a window of opportunity to change the perception of the school. Research suggests that school culture can change with an infusion of new students.
      1. The new Memminger will have many slots available for students outside of the downtown district, but will not provide transportation.
      2. The planning committee hopes to fill many of these slots with children from College of Charleston families.
   iii. Memminger has received federal money for “personalized learning.” In addition, currently considering adopting the International Baccalaureate elementary program.
   iv. An open meeting will be held on May 7 to roll out the move downtown and announce curricular changes. College of Charleston faculty and staff will be encouraged to attend.
   v. As a separate endeavor, discussion continues about the possibility of collaboration between Memminger’s early childhood program and ECDC.

*Submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/3/2013*
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
April 17, 2013
10:00am, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

1) Meeting with Deanna Caveny-Noecker to discuss FAM deadlines

   a. Deanna clarified several points.
      i. Updates to the FAM were historically made by the chair of By-Laws (including Deanna, when was in that role). At some point, that practice was discontinued. Currently, Deanna makes the updates by virtue of her interest and previous service as a faculty member as chair of By-Laws.
      ii. This year’s revisions included extensive cleaning-up of policy changes that were already in place but not reflected in the FAM.
      iii. The FAM includes both Faculty By-Laws, which are controlled by the faculty, and Institutional Policies, which are controlled by various offices on campus (including Academic Affairs, HR, Legal). Changes to the By-Laws must be ratified via faculty elections in the spring.

   b. FWC made several suggestions to help ensure that changes are done by August 15:
      i. Proposed substantive changes would need to be presented to Faculty Senate no later than the April meeting.
      ii. By-Laws Committee could make changes serially, as they are approved by Faculty Senate, in coordination with Faculty Secretariat, with May 15 deadline to complete edits.
      iii. By-Laws Committee could consider delegating other FAM updates (i.e., non-substantive changes) to the Provost’s designee on the committee (currently Deanna) for completion during the summer.

   c. FWC also stressed that there should be an absolute deadline which must be met for changes to take effect for the year; any changes not made and posted by that deadline should not take effect until the following year.
      i. There was a verbal agreement that all changes for the upcoming academic year will be posted no later than August 16, 2013.

   d. FWC will work with By-Laws to propose changes that will formalize the August 15 deadline and the appropriate timing of changes in order to meet this deadline.
      i. FWC will draft proposed changes by May 15 to pass to next year’s FWC and By-Laws committees. Todd McNerney and Margaret Hagood will work on this.
2) Meeting with Bev Diamond to discuss dean and chair evaluations

a. Dean evaluations
   i. Bev proposed a revised set of questions, which are taken largely from a survey in use at another institution and selected after reviewing several such surveys in use at other institutions. The proposed survey also includes parts of the original instrument proposed by FWC. Also included were demographic questions intended to ensure that faculty responses would not be individually identifiable.
   ii. Academic Affairs will send the invitation year to the faculty for each school separately, and will try to identify faculty whom should be invited to evaluate more than one dean. They will do a 360-degree evaluation for deans who are coming up on their sixth year by inviting comments from others on campus and in the community.
   iii. Bev will send us an electronic version for review. The evaluations should go out by May 1.
   iv. Academic Affairs agrees that we need a more specific policy on dean evaluations moving forward so that these evaluations are not done reactively.

b. Chair evaluations
   i. Bev stated that Academic Affairs feels that faculty input should be gathered in second year (formative evaluation) and fifth year (summative evaluation). They believe that faculty will take this more seriously than annual evaluations. FWC noted that this would be a deviation from the FAM. This issue was deferred for a later conversation.

Submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/3/2013
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2013
12:15pm, Marino conference room, Cato Center for the Arts

Follow-up meeting with Provost George Hynd to discuss faculty morale recommendations

1) Online course evaluations
   a. Mobile app will be available this semester.
   b. Agreed to extend student time to complete evaluations into finals week this semester.
   c. Academic Affairs declined to implement an “opt-out” system at this time, despite FWC’s strong recommendation.
   d. Academic Affairs/Institutional Research/IT will report standard deviations or standard errors along with means and medians in reports, but due to other priorities won’t get this done this semester.

2) Timing of FAM changes
   a. It was noted that the Faculty By-Laws committee doesn’t meet during the summer, and that August 15 is always the goal. FWC recommended considering ways to accelerate or streamline the process to ensure that an August 15 deadline can be met.
   b. FWC will follow up with Deanna Caveny-Noecker about the process and timeline for changes to the FAM.

3) Chair/dean evaluations
   a. Academic Affairs wants to partner with FWC to put together neutrally-worded questions for faculty evaluation of deans.
   b. FWC pushed to do dean evaluations this semester, since they haven’t been done since ~2007.
   c. FWC will meet with Bev Diamond to discuss how to jointly implement dean evaluations this spring.

Meeting notes taken by: Celeste Lacroix and Margaret Hagood, 3/28/2013
Minutes compiled and submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/3/2013
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2013

10:00am, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

1) Updates

   a. Chair evaluations – Simon has collected information from each School on procedures/questions for chair evaluations. Different sets of questions are used by each school, most of which seem appropriate. It was noted that LCWA’s includes too few questions and no opportunity for open-ended response. In addition, SSM’s specifies evaluations in the 2nd and 5th year and LCWA’s does not specify timing. FWC would like each School’s chair evaluation to include at least one free response question and to be administered annually.

   b. Grievance
      i. FWC is concerned that a phone call to the number listed for the faculty ombudsperson was not returned and that email to ombuds goes to HR. The transparency of the ombuds process needs to be improved.
      ii. FWC is also concerned about whether the current grievance committee structure is effective, particularly since faculty may serve for as little as one year with no background or training in mediation, etc. An item will be added to next year’s agenda to invite the College’ legal counsel to discuss ways to improve the process, with the goal of not only improving faculty outcomes but also minimizing the number of cases that ultimately proceed to legal action

   c. Instruction in BPS at North Campus – Have any faculty committees been consulted about the use of incentives for faculty to teach in this program?

   d. Adjunct subcommittee
      i. Lynn Cherry has informally communicated our recommendations for pay increases and for adjunct representation to President Benson. We will send formal recommendation for pay increases to the President and Provost. The subcommittee will continue to work on proposals/motions to Faculty Senate on adjunct representation.
      ii. FWC wants to be sure to have a voice in discussions about how the Affordable Care Act will affect adjunct work opportunities and what course load is considered to constitute 30 hours/week (and therefore require health benefits). We also want to be included on discussion of any changes to compensation plan, as mentioned by Deanna Caveny-Noecker at a meeting with our subcommittee on Tue, Oct. 30, 2012.
2) Old business

   a. **VAP/Modified duties** – Allison Welch and Hector Qirko will work on a proposal to extend the modified duties policy to any faculty on a renewable contract with at least one year of service.

   b. **Departing faculty issues** – Celeste Lacroix will come up with a few questions that can be posed to people who are leaving after this semester, with help from Todd McNerney.

3) New business/constituent concerns

   a. **T&P evidence proposal** – The committee endorsed Joe Kelly’s proposal to include diversity training as possible evidence of professional development for third-year review and for promotion to senior instructor. We were concerned that the phrase “pedagogical diversity training” was imprecise, so opted to endorse the original wording (with the phrase “diversity training”).

   b. **Tuition and/or priority enrollment benefits** – Faculty have expressed interest in some form of tuition or enrollment benefit for dependents; this type of benefit is enjoyed by faculty at many institutions. It was discussed that previous FWC committees had been unsuccessful in pursuing tuition remission for dependents. We’d like to find out what the specific limitation is on the College providing tuition remission or at least a tuition discount.

   c. **Civility of parking services staff and other campus offices** – Concern has been expressed to the committee about lack of civility when dealing with campus offices, particularly parking services and public safety. We will ask HR and the Staff Advisory Committee to consider this concern.

   d. **Temporary handicap parking** – Concern has been expressed that faculty and staff are not granted access to handicap parking spaces unless they qualify for handicap permit from the state, which does not accommodate a short-term disability like recovery from surgery. The committee will ask HR and the Staff Advisory Committee to consider this concern.

*Submitted by: Allison Welch, 5/3/2013*
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
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2012
2:00 pm, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

Present: Simon Lewis, John Crotts, Margaret Hagood, Todd McNerney, Hector Qirko, Michelle VanParys, Allison Welch

1. Visit from John Inman, Amy Orr and Ashley Parr from the Staff Advisory Committee
   a. Child care – They have received comments from staff about the need for additional childcare convenient to campus, especially for children under 2 years of age. From the staff perspective, year-round daycare would be more appealing than a schedule, like ECDC’s, which is tied to the academic calendar. Current FWC members recalled that in 2007-8, the Faculty Welfare Committee conducted a childcare survey, and that the school of Education has been involved in discussions on this topic in the past. Margaret Hagood and John Inman made plans to meet with Fran Welch, Dean of the School of Ed, to learn about the status of this issue from the School’s perspective. Another suggestion was to form a working group of faculty, staff and students to investigate what other universities have done to address faculty/staff childcare and to work with the administration to pursue additional childcare options here, if the administration is open to such pursuit.
   b. Adjunct issues – Another area of mutual concern is adjunct issues. Some staff members also serve as adjuncts (and those staff adjuncts are also concerned about the treatment of fellow adjuncts generally). Our adjunct subcommittee will follow up to identify members of their committee to coordinate future efforts.
   c. Other issues – The Staff Advisory Committee has also discussed a desire for student health services to be expanded to provide simple medical services for staff; as the facility is currently funded entirely from student fees, this would require a different financial model. They are also interested in making sure that faculty and staff will have access to the new fitness facility that is being put into the new dorm.

2. Campus sexual assault case – The campus sexual assault case that was recently brought to light by the Post and Courier was discussed. While issues of student safety and student conduct are outside the purview of our committee, we are deeply concerned as faculty both about the well-being of our students and about potential damage to the College’s reputation. In particular, we note the perception of a conflict of interest with the College leading the investigation of a criminal sexual assault on campus.

3. Letter of concern – A draft version of a letter to Academic Affairs/President’s Office was discussed. Committee members are asked to read and comment on the draft by December 5th so that it can be signed at our next meeting on December 10th. Communicating the letter as a report to the Faculty Senate was also discussed, in order to circulate the issues more widely.

Submitted by: Allison Welch, 12/3/2012
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2012
2:00 pm, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

Present: Simon Lewis, John Crotts, Margaret Hagood, Celeste Lacroix, Todd McNerney, Hector Qirko, Allison Welch

1. Welcome, news and updates

   a. **Staff Advisory Committee** – Simon extended an invitation to the Staff Advisory Committee to join us our November 20 meeting, in order to discuss issues of mutual concern.

   b. **Workplace survey** – A motion will be presented at Faculty Senate proposing that the College participate in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*’s “Great Colleges to Work For” workplace satisfaction survey.

2. **Survey subcommittee**

   a. Members of the subcommittee presented a draft workplace environment survey, focusing on job satisfaction, commitment to the institution, and relationship with superiors. A wide-ranging discussion followed.

      i. The subcommittee prioritized using a pre-existing survey instrument so that data can be used comparatively, and to have confidence that the survey has been validated externally. The subcommittee also expressed a desire to proceed with a survey sooner rather than later, such that the committee can act on results during this academic year.

      ii. Concerns were raised about the wording, possible redundancy and possible subjectivity of some questions, as well as the content of some of the questions on satisfaction.

      iii. There appeared to be general agreement on the value of assessing faculty morale in relation to the opportunity to provide feedback about chairs and deans, as well as the ultimate interest in recommending that faculty be given an opportunity to evaluate chairs and deans annually.

   b. Ultimately no consensus was reached. The committee voted not to proceed with the survey in its current form. The survey will be posted to a Google doc to allow the committee to comment and then consider a potentially revised version.

3. **Courtesies for departing faculty**

   a. Information was shared from three faculty members who had recently left the college, describing some of the difficulties they experienced.

      i. Common themes included lack of communication about the process and loss of access to office and email immediately after the semester, resulting in former students or colleagues having no way to contact them with questions about grades, etc.

   b. David Cohen and Kay Smith have let us know that they are working on issues for retiring faculty. We will try to identify points of overlap and coordinate our efforts.
4. **Online teaching evaluations**  
a. Margaret Hagood followed up with Deanna Caveny-Noecker about the work of the ad hoc committee on online evaluations. Unfortunately the response does not address many of our concerns, including use of incentives and using data from small samples without consideration of statistical validity (e.g., means without standard deviations).  
i. Margaret will collect input from the committee in order to request further clarifications from Deanna and ultimately to develop a motion to present to Faculty Senate.

5. **New business**  
a. A concern was raised about the tendency for faculty professional development opportunities to be presented with very little lead time.  
i. For example, the new Faculty Administrative Fellows program was announced with less than one week until the application deadline. Other examples were brought up in which policies, opportunities or requests for information have been made with no or little lead time.  
ii. Regarding the Faculty Administrative Fellows program, those members present were happy to see opportunities being offered to faculty, but were concerned that the short lead time may prevent qualified and interested faculty from applying. In addition, we hope that administration will consider implementing a Faculty Teaching Fellows program, as exists at a variety of other institutions, to promote and support exceptional teaching as well as exceptional service among our faculty.  
iii. Both the issue of lead time and a Faculty Teaching Fellowship will be taken up at a future meeting.

*Submitted by: Allison Welch, 10/9/2012*
Faculty Welfare Committee

Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2012
2:00 pm, Jewish Studies Center 3rd floor conference room

Present: Simon Lewis, John Crotts, Margaret Hagood, Celeste Lacroix, Todd McNerney, Hector Qirko, Michelle VanParys, Allison Welch

Also in attendance: Devon Hanahan, on behalf of the Faculty Compensation Committee

1. Welcome, news and updates

a. Staff Advisory Committee – Simon has received an email from the Staff Advisory Committee. They would like to meet with us about issues of mutual concern, for example childcare. Simon is expecting to be contacted by the SAC. One way or the other, we’ll try to invite them for our November 20 meeting.

b. Communication among committee chairs – A wiki has been established to allow committee chairs to share ideas across committees. Simon will be posting our meeting minutes to the wiki, in order to keep other committees informed about the issues we are working on.

c. Sabbaticals – Bev Diamond responded to Simon’s query about the status of the sabbatical inquiry sent by last year’s FWC. According to Bev’s email, Academic Affairs has revised the sabbatical policy to suggest that the criteria be specified a little more clearly, but has not revised it specifically in response to our inquiry. They still intend to provide us with the requested historical data on sabbatical denials, and also expect to discuss with us the other issues we raised, including the alignment of sabbatical criteria with scholarly work rather than professional development.

2. Visit from Devon Hanahan, on behalf of the Faculty Compensation Committee

a. Devon provided an update on the survey that is being conducted by the Faculty Compensation Committee, in cooperation with Academic Affairs. The survey seeks information about adjunct compensation practices from 13 other public institutions in South Carolina. The rationale for surveying only other SC institutions is the perception that many adjuncts would not be willing to relocate out of state for better compensation. Devon shared a copy of the survey with us.

b. They are currently trying to generate more responses before sharing the data with us. However, Devon did indicate that the responses received to date paint a rather grim picture. It was noted by the committee that the institutions that have responded to date are not among those we would consider peers or aspirational.

c. The possibility of sending a similar survey to our aspirational peers was raised. The compensation committee would like first to complete the current survey, but did express interest in surveying aspirational peers as a possible future step.
3. **Faculty survey subcommittee**  
   a. Members of the subcommittee had reviewed a workplace satisfaction survey used by the Chronicle of Higher Education. Responses were positive, especially because, as a national survey, it would result in comparative data.  
   b. Participation is free to the College. It was later clarified that this participation would include a sample of roster faculty. If desired, the college could pay to have everyone surveyed.  
   c. John Crotts will draft a motion, to be presented to the faculty senate, that the College participate in this survey.

4. **Adjunct subcommittee** – The subcommittee will have its first meeting next week.

5. **Courtesies for departing faculty**  
   a. Various cases were discussed of faculty that had left the college, on good terms, from roster positions or upon completion of a visiting appointment.  
   b. One issue is the immediate termination of email accounts and other courtesies typically extended to faculty members (e.g., library privileges).  
      i. As these courtesies come at little cost to the College and promote continued good relations with departing faculty, there appears to be a strong case for requesting a change in policy to automatically delay terminating these courtesies until some reasonable amount of time (e.g., 6 months) after the end of the departing faculty member’s contract.  
      ii. Committee members, particularly Todd McNerney, will seek a more complete list of other low-cost courtesies that should be included in such a policy.  
      iii. With a more complete list, we will draft a letter to HR and Academic Affairs proposing this change.  
   c. A second issue is the immediate termination of benefits, particularly health insurance, at the end of the contract period (i.e., May 15).  
      ii. Departing faculty members are unlikely to be immediately starting a new benefits-eligible position, as most academic positions wouldn’t begin until the end of summer. Thus, departing faculty members may need to purchase COBRA coverage, which can be expensive, for the summer. Alternately, a faculty member who does not have another job lined up runs the risk of running out of COBRA eligibility sooner than s/he would if benefits had been extended.  
      iii. As a result, some faculty members may be inclined to delay tendering a resignation until August 15, in order to preserve access to these benefits over the summer. This pattern creates substantial problems for departments left to fill vacant teaching assignments on very short notice.  
      iv. By contrast, returning faculty members receive benefits through the summer. These benefits are part of the compensation that the faculty member receives for performing their job duties, which are completed over a 9-month period.  
      v. Unlike staff positions, faculty cannot take their unused sick leave or vacation time at the end of their employment with the College. Consequently, faculty members lack a potential mechanism that can be used in other types of positions to extend the period of benefits (as well as pay).  
      vi. We would like to see a policy that extends the period of benefits for departing faculty members who have successfully fulfilled their 9-month and therefore earned this portion of their compensation. We would like to see such a policy officially communicated (e.g., added to the FAM).  
      vii. This issue can also be included in a letter to HR and Academic Affairs.
6. **New business**
   a. **Online teaching evaluations** – Margaret Hagood raised concerns with the online teaching evaluations. These concerns were echoed by other committee members.
      i. Of primary concern is the decision not to require students to complete the evaluations (or to strongly guide students to do so, for example by requiring students to at least visit the site to opt out of completing each requested evaluation).
         a) Return rates have not been acceptable under this system, and it is the impression of the committee and those colleagues with whom we have discussed the issue that return rates do not appear to be rebounding to acceptable levels.
         b) The poor return rates and optional nature of the survey have led to pressure on faculty to incentivize student participation. Faculty have previously expressed philosophical opposition to a system in which faculty are called on to offer incentives for student participation.
      ii. The low return rate for evaluations calls into question their statistical validity and makes their use in evaluating faculty – particularly those without tenure – very concerning.
         a) Many faculty members share the perception that because student participants are self-selected, the sample is likely to be biased toward students with strong opinions, especially when return rates are low.
         b) In addition, the practice of reporting mean values but not standard deviations or another measure of variability suggests that these metrics are being used without proper consideration for their statistical validity or lack thereof.
         c) Further, because biased samples are more likely with low return rates, those faculty members who receive higher return rates (for example, by incentivizing student participation) cannot be validly compared with faculty who receive lower return rates.
         d) Evaluations without sufficient return rates should not be requested for T&P packets. Even if this safeguard were in place, the system would remain flawed as long as individual faculty members can influence return rates.
      iii. Some concerns also related to the format of the survey.
         a) Students cannot easily navigate from a reminder email to the evaluations. Rather than being able to follow a link directly to a page where they can sign in to complete evaluations, students are directed through a virtual maze of links and logins before having the opportunity to complete an evaluation. This inefficiency makes it less likely that students will ultimately complete their evaluations.
         b) From an environmental standpoint, the output produced for faculty seems to use as much paper as the old paper evaluations. In addition, because the output is so diffuse, it is much more difficult to wade through the information, making the results that much less useful.
      iv. The committee agreed that this is a very important Faculty Welfare issue, because of the implications for decisions about tenure, promotion, retention and merit pay.
         a) Margaret will follow up with Beth Goodier to request the recommendations made by last year’s ad hoc committee charged with revising the online evaluation instrument.
         b) The survey subcommittee will develop a survey to elicit faculty feedback on the online evaluation system as it is currently implemented.

*Submitted by: Allison Welch, 9/3/2012*