

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Oct. 6, 2011

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)

Brad Barry (BB)

Jen Ciaccio (JC)

Rob Cowan (RC)

John Goldhardt (JG)

Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)

Dianne Hirning (DH)

Jie Liu (JL)

Russ Ross (RR)

Matt Smith-Lahrman (MS)

Betty Stokes Crane (BSC)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

PA: I've been in a lot of meetings since our last one, and we're staying informed on the issues and connecting, which is good. JC, do you want to start with workload?

JC: For those of us that were here last year, there was a big to-do about the workload policy having the word "average" for "average" faculty salaries within 90% of equity and how that rel to workload. There's been flak for all our overload with accreditation people, so they want to curb that back but can't afford to because policy stated that if you weren't in 90% equity, you could do as much overload as you wanted. They've decided not to worry about that and they've dropped the word "average," so any faculty within 90% equity can work one overload per semester; the wording is otherwise the same. They've been thinking of putting "average" in elsewhere, such as in number of credits professors teach; some schools (like Business) are working toward particular kinds of accreditation that are different than other schools, so... Basically, nothing has changed.

PC: We'd tabled revising the workload policy to address compensation in tandem, so this eliminates the need to do that.

JC: There's nothing to vote on anymore at the policy level because they've removed the problem words.

MS: So are we going to start determining workload by schools?

PC: Everything will have to go through the workload committee.

JC: Just like English gets compensation for grading, there will be research compensation, etc.

MS: This is school-wide...?

JC: It's not anywhere yet.

DH: It's not been posted yet.

DW: Well, then this is a heads-up that we need to watch this.

JC: If one department gets something, though, it's easier for others to get it, too. Administration has just decided to go other routes to alleviate the problem.

DW: There's a sort of sub-category of wages that we need to be more concerned about and proactive in dealing with, and that's compensation for overload and summer classes. We each have a contractual salary to teach a contractual workload...

DH: Isn't this a different policy?

PA: Yes, but now's not the time to deal with this, even though it is a concern. At some point, we need to address it.

DH: It's still viable to do the legwork and find out what other colleges do, like paying 10% of contract rather than adjunct wages; that way, we'll have it on hand when it's time to revise that policy.

MS: At what point do we expect it to come up?

DH: Good point.

PA: We can initiate that at some point, but there are other policies being revised right now that we need to deal with first.

MS: Is there a hierarchy of policies?

PA: I don't know what their order is in which administration is tackling these or why they're doing things in that order.

DH: I can find out from Martha what's coming up.

MS: We should have some influence on what policies come up...!

PA: I agree. But we have our hands full right now.

DW: But we're not writing policy, just reviewing it.

PA: Yes we are writing policy, so there is option to do that and say "We want this addressed next," and they've been very open to us in that respect.

JC: So should we be choosing which policies we want to go after, or put it to the faculty at large?

PA: Maybe in our department meetings we can ask what our constituents want, and DH can get a list from Martha.

DH: There are some that administration *has* to address for reasons to do with accreditation, which is why workload, post-tenure review, etc. are being dealt with now, but would polling the faculty about their biggest concerns let us find out what policies we should target? That'd be easier than asking them to read all the policies!

MS: It's going to be difficult for us to push something when other issues have to take precedence for reasons to do with accreditation because accreditation is *always* an issue.

PA: I think there's room for that; administration is very open and soliciting our input. So if there are concerns from our constituents, we can make those priorities.

BB: I proposed DW's idea to my department, and while everyone would like the increase in pay for overload and summer classes, there were two concerns: (1) We should let administration get our workloads down to 24 credits first, and (2) if I'm going to be paid more for overload, would a department chair be more likely to give the job to an adjunct than me?

DW: If administration is encouraged to bring in more adjuncts, they risk violating accreditation rules about faculty workload. If administration is hesitant to move to a 24-credit workload and increase compensation—and it's not an increase in compensation; it's an equal compensation for what you already do!

BB: Would it be easier to tackle the issue of compensation after the 24-credit-hour thing?

DW: No, because then they'd hesitate about moving toward a 24-credit system.

PA: But having the 24-credit system is part of becoming a university; that's what's motivating it.

JG: The big factor is quality, too. Each summer, enrollment is up; if the majority of our teachers are adjuncts, what does that do to the quality of education we provide?

JC: Not all adjuncts can teach all classes, especially upper division. If no one's teaching in the summer, and adjuncts are available, and you say "I'll do it for pay-and-a-half," they'll eventually have to go for that.

DW: Or 10% of your contractual rate. This shouldn't be a problem for administration because there's a make-or-break figure for each class.

PA: For reasons of time, could we put this forward to the Oct. 20 agenda, and deal with today's issues today?

RC: An off-topic question: do we have, as a Faculty Senate, have a suggestion box?

PA: We *are* that suggestion box.

DH: Munir could set up an anonymous suggestion space on the web site...?

MS: One other question: if this isn't the time for us to deal with this, then *when* will we be prepared to initiate this? A month?

PA: Well, I do have an agenda for today; we could possibly start something at our next meeting, once we've dealt with the policies currently up for review. DH, please talk to Martha for the meeting on the 20th, and I'll talk to Munir about a venue for a suggestion box. OK, next on the agenda: a couple of informational items. Student evaluations: we talked about those last time, and it was decided that, for this semester, the evaluations will remain the same and on the same timeline; as for having additional evaluations mid-semester—that was intended to be *in addition to*, not a replacement for, the end-semester ones. They're now thinking of posting something online that students can use about 3 weeks into the semester that faculty can use to tweak their classes for the rest of the semester. It's still the end-of-semester one that will go into the permanent files.

MS: Is there a way to ensure that administration won't keep or use the 3rd-week ones?

DW: It's an optional evaluation; the instructor has control over its development, use, and return, and no one else sees it. It's meant to help faculty identify and address problems early so that those problems *don't* show up on the end-of-semester evaluations.

PA: Next, reading days: in Spring, 2013, they're looking at adding one reading day and take one day off of finals. They're also looking to see if there's a way to tweak the finals schedule. As for moving graduation to Saturday, they're hesitant because they're afraid that attendance and participation will go down.

RC: But it should go *up*...!

DW: Given the physical plant restrictions, they ought to like decreased attendance!

PA: That's what they're going to try, at any rate. They did learn that UVU counts the week of finals as days of instruction, which is interesting—those days count as contact hours. The Board of Regents is addressing and revising some of its

own policies, and that is also prioritizing what's being revised here. One is the textbooks policy. One last item: the administration receives letters, and in one meeting it was brought up that some faculty are bringing up material not relevant to the courses they're teaching, so we need to give a reminder to our respective departments to ensure that faculty stay within the confines of their course materials. The example used was, for example, religious beliefs being brought up in math or English. Just be sensitive to the topics and not take advantage of the class as a platform.

MS: Who are these letters from...?

PA: Students' parents. It's hard to address a lot of them...

JC: This doesn't apply to Biology classes that talk about evolution...?

PA: No.

JL: Should I bring that up in the Math Department?

PA: The letter they showed had no information about particular departments or people on it, so it was a general thing, not targeted at Math.

BB: While I agree with the sentiment, *this* isn't the body that such reminders should come through—it's not our job to remind our teachers of this.

PA: I just wanted to make us aware that there is already a chain where this can be addressed: through the deans.

DW: I think this is a ripple-effect from growth and change on the campus; some people outside the campus haven't been well-equipped to deal with controversy. On the other hand, teachers can't proselytize, either, so it goes both ways.

BB: But if it *is* happening in your department, it's *not* your job to point it out—that's what the chairs and deans are for.

DH: If there are going to be notices or reminders about this, they should come directly from Donna or President Nadauld.

PA: OK, I brought up in September the issue of recognitions for retiring faculty, and I wanted to know of additional thoughts...? Would that fall under hospitality? How should we identify that?

BSC: How are they presently recognized? Usually, it's within departments, isn't it?

DW: Usually, but when they happen, anyone's invited, though.

BSC: So what are we thinking of doing?

PA: That's what I'm asking.

JC: They get recognized at graduation...

RC: And the service awards at the beginning of the semester.

JC: Are you thinking of a luncheon...?

PA: I'm not thinking anything in particular.

DH: Do they get a plaque at graduation?

BSC: There must not be much done because none of us know!

DH: Can we find out what is already done so we don't duplicate efforts? If we feel there isn't enough recognition, we can supplement what's done.

PA: It seems like there's something in the Gardner Center that lists faculty awards.

RR: It's still there.

PA: I was thinking something along those lines.

DW: There is an issue here: what about someone that retires after two years vs. someone after 50? Do we treat them the same?

MS: You'd have to.

BB: I think there's a system in place, so it's a good idea to check on it.

MS: We could do it at the end-of-year Faculty Senate meeting!

PA: A couple of other things to think about for next meeting: Donna has asked for input on how to make the DSC web site more user-friendly. For me, I know that some of the information on it is inaccurate under credentials.

DW: It might be possible, if Munir would do this, to get him release time to deal with these issue...?

MS: But it's a full-time job...!

RR: It's possible to gather data from Google to see what people are actually finding on our front page, which may be different than what we faculty want to see.

MS: There are professionals out there that do this, and administration should get one of those people.

DW: From the college's perspective, it's a marriage of marketing and utility, so there has to be someone competent enough to create that marriage, and that's not our job.

RC: Physical Science and Biology have a student redoing ours.

RR: A lot of other universities have problems in people finding specific pieces of information on their sites.

PA: Donna feels that the page has so much information on it that it's overload.

DH: Is she seeking input from many different areas? Like Student Government?

PA: Yes. This isn't an assignment; just if you have any suggestions. I want to end with discussion of the post-tenure review policy, which is on the board. The Student Senate is proposing that their members (Student Senators) be voting members of department meetings.

DW: What's their rationale?

BB: Ours attends our department meetings, but don't vote.

PA: They vote in some places, apparently. I talked it over in our department, and the consensus was that it would be good for them to *be* at the meetings, but not vote.

JG: My problem with that is that the senators are appointed, not elected. Everywhere else, it's a legislative process, not appointment by friends, so it's not true representation.

MS: I wonder where this idea came from...?

PA: I asked if there's precedent from other colleges nationwide; I think they're just looking for increased participation.

DW: In the first place, it was established for students to have a voice in the various departments, but I don't think they should vote in faculty matters. I'd be sensitive to student input, but not voting.

DH: I think we all value their voices and takes on issues!

RR: And there are some times when we discuss individual students, so it'd be inappropriate to have them there.

BSC: In our meetings, when that happens, we ask them to leave.

DW: I think it comes from a need for empowerment, and by having a vote it'd be a validation for that, and I understand that basis, but it could cause dissention in the department meeting. I'd just recommend to be sensitive and respectful of their input when actually voting.

JG: Our official student government person...I don't even know who ours is this year...!

PA: OK, I'll pass that around. Now to post-tenure review: it was posted. Some text in the document that I sent a link to (Paragraph E) says something different than section at end that makes it look like we'd have to create a whole second portfolio. Also, things like the position description, CV, etc., evaluations, evidence of teaching competence, service to institution, outside organizations, etc., all under one heading—this is not a mandate, but this is what it *could* include. I'm just concerned about having to prepare a whole portfolio every 4 years.

DW: The wording really reflects "You're going up for tenure again" and assessment by administration when many are already tenured. What happens *post*-tenure should be addressed by *colleagues*, not by administration. That can still involve teaching evaluations, research, community work, etc., but what this policy says is that a faculty member has to behave as if s/he were undergoing another tenure review. The AAUP post-tenure policy document is really good in speaking to this. DH and I met with Martha and discussed this, and the proper name for this is "continuing review."

PA: In the document it says "Continuing Status Review."

MS: The key in what DW is saying is: who's looking at these? Are these to be used only among faculty to look at each other? Are there punishments?

DW: I'm working on that language now, and it does get to a point where it becomes pressure-laden to adopt policies that push the problem to administration at some point.

PA: The draft says that the reason for dismissal is still "just cause."

DH: It was explained to us that some of the pieces *would* be available, because they're already looking at your evaluations and such.

DW: And that makes for better faculty with no punishment.

BB: It says (reads relevant portion of policy: 3B). It goes to the dean and faculty and chair.

MS: Then the RTP Committee is not the appropriate body to deal with post-tenure review.

DW: That's what I'm saying.

DH: That's what Candace Mesa also said on the Opine list—RTP is already very work-intensive, so this would be a double load.

DW: Another issue is: how can people outside a faculty member's field effectively evaluate him/her? That's why it has to come to faculty. The RTP committee is a front for administration.

PA: As it is now, it goes to the faculty member's division before RTP.

MS: It should be within the department before going to the dean.

BB: I like the idea of it being discipline-specific.

MS: At present, it's campus-wide.

DW: Yes, and that's why I'm uncomfortable with it. It has to remain in the control of faculty to be used to help faculty; it *cannot* be used as a lever for administration to use against faculty. Issues would only go to administration if faculty were unresponsive to change.

PA: We'll continue this next time.

DW: We do need to have recommendations soon, though.

PA: Yes, so check the link and give feedback, and encourage your colleagues to make comments. DW, can you send out a link to the AAUP info?

DW: I'll find one.

PA: For the next meeting, bring feedback from your departments.