

Faculty Issues Committee, Feb. 23 2012

All present (Jim Newman substituting for Teresa).

The meeting began at 3:30. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Kim reported on the feedback she received from Provost Minner with respect to the revised motion to amend the faculty handbook section on evaluations of faculty. The Provost's response was positive and the committee agreed to submit the new version without further changes to the Senate. Kim then reported on the IP meeting and provided a written summary addressing a change that will be made in their document prior to sending it to the Senate. She also reported that she had not received any new information regarding the tuition waiver for retired faculty.

Joe introduced two new potential topics for FI consideration (which were also emailed to all of us). The first concerned the question of including a box on the grade sheets completed by faculty indicating the number of absences each student had during the semester. The committee overwhelmingly decided not pursue discussion of this issue (one vote in favor of discussion, one abstention, and the rest were not in favor). The second issue concerned the question of creating a new line for promotion of special purposes faculty after 6 years: a senior instructor position. There was some discussion of this and it was felt that at this time, details regarding implementation were vague, we needed more input from departments, chairs and deans, and a careful reading of the Faculty handbook. We will return to this issue and Kim will read the handbook for relevant passages.

The committee has addressed objectives 1 – 5 and 9. Objective 7 is being addressed by a task force led by Bill Kennan. We thought it would be prudent to wait until we get input from that task force or perhaps have a meeting with Bill.

We began to discuss objective 6. This objective, regarding faculty absences and existing policies, appears to be anachronistic in some respects. The discussion that ensued noted that there are many ways to cover a class without necessarily being in the classroom. Although it may be worthwhile having something in the handbook about absence policies, what is currently there is clearly in need of updating to reflect online teaching, alternative activities that may take place in the field, mentoring and other forms of teaching outside the classroom. After some discussion, it was agreed that we would prepare a written statement summarizing some of the comments that came up and probably forward the issue to chairs, school directors and deans for their comments. Kim and Roann agreed to plan a draft of this statement.

We did not get to objective 8. The meeting adjourned at 4:48.