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## Faculty Affairs minutes 11/30/2006

Faculty Affairs Committee

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## Faculty Affairs Committee Minutes (11-30-06)

Present: Stacey Parker Aronson, Bart Finzel, Tom Mahoney, Argie Manolis, Alex Murphy, Pam Solvie and Timna Wyckoff

Absent: Janet Ericksen

The meeting was convened at 4:10 p.m.

The minutes of the previous meeting on 11-02-06 were unanimously approved.

### **SOTS Survey**

Wyckoff and Manolis talked to the committee about SOTS. Some divisions prepare teaching portfolios.

Ericksen had previously suggested that there be outside evaluators for the teaching section for the tenure review process, just as there are for the research section.

Finzel stated that he believes that there is an opinion among faculty that we rely too heavily on SOTS as a means by which to evaluate teaching effectiveness.

Solvie commented on the issue of having senior faculty conduct classroom observation to judge the teaching effectiveness of junior faculty. This is also done at the K-12 level. She believed that such classroom observation should be voluntary.

Wyckoff notes that the current system of mentorships encourages collaboration between senior and junior faculty members.

Solvie acknowledged that it is indeed a good thing to benefit from the expertise of others, but suggested that perhaps it be voluntary and not compulsory.

Wyckoff noted that if there were an expectation campus-wide of classroom observation, then it wouldn't be seen as a burden.

Finzel preferred the idea of peer review, rather than review by senior faculty.

Manolis noted that in the Humanities Division, unlike that of Social Science, tenure-track peers would not be present at the tenure review meeting. They could, however, write a letter addressing the individual's teaching effectiveness.

Murphy wondered how the SOTS Survey would be sent out. Someone remembered that Brugger's survey on research was electronic with an attachment, which could be submitted via mail so as to maintain the anonymity of the person filling out the survey.

Wyckoff will edit the SOTS Survey and will send it at the beginning of the spring

semester of 2007.

### **Exit Interviews**

Aronson shared the most recent edited Procedure for Exit Interviews with the committee. She relayed the details of her meeting with the Director of Human Resources Sarah Mattson. It seems to her that Mattson is not interested in bringing the Exit Interview Procedure to the Campus Assembly for endorsement.

Manolis expressed concern about who actually sees the data gathered from the Exit Interviews.

Finzel applauded Sarah's efforts but expressed concern that some data might get "buried."

Mahoney wanted to forward this information to the administrative group so that it knows about the Exit Interview Procedure and can advertise and solicit input.

Finzel wanted to know how we can ensure that the information gathered becomes part of the faculty domain (FAC?).

Both Mahoney and Finzel reminded the committee that it needs to request the information from the Director of Human Resources.

### **Semester Leaves**

Mahoney expressed concern that the issue of P&A Development Leaves not get lost in the discussion of Semester Leaves for faculty.

Finzel asked the committee whether it thought that the problem was due to the Sabbatical Leave program.

Manolis believed that all tenure track, non-tenure faculty should get a Semester Leave.

Solvie is a member on the Semester Leave committee this year. She told us that the Dean told the committee that it should make its selection based on overall criteria and quality of the proposals, not division affiliation.

Manolis suggest that tenure track non-tenure faculty proposals should have priority over those of tenure faculty.

Wyckoff asked why all couldn't get a Semester Leave, perhaps during the fall semester of the third year?

Finzel suggested that some times leaves are granted based on need.

Wyckoff suggested that it might be a hardship for some disciplines given that there is generally no money available to "cover" replacements; disciplines and division just figure out how to make them work. Therefore, why couldn't the disciplines and divisions figure out how to make them work for all tenure-track faculty? It likely would not be much more of a hardship than we have right now.

Finzel proposed a middle ground: a floating leave granted by the Division chairs.

Wyckoff feared that this could be even more divisive.

Finzel assured the committee that the leaves should be based on merit but that the Division chairs need to have some degree of flexibility, of discretion to grant leaves.

Mahoney noted that MASA has taken the same problem to the Chancellor. The problem is that there is no funding and no replacements. The leave opportunity seems to exist on paper only and is an unfunded opportunity.

Other committee members noted that even with Sabbaticals, there is no guarantee that there will be funding. Someone questioned why is there a limit as set forth by the TC campus, when these Semester leaves are not funded? Can we envision other ways to do this? Guaranteed leaves are standard at many institutions.

Finzel remarked that the Chancellor has the discretion to assign people to "Research" leaves.

How many leaves would we need? How many probationary (tenure-track, non-tenured) faculty are there? (Currently, there are a total of 34, according to Darla Peterson.)

### **Other Issues for Future Agendas**

Finzel suggested that we talk about the Tenure and Promotion Code Revision at our next meeting. He also suggested that we need to become involved with the Dean Search; Bert Ahern can get us on the schedule.

Mahoney proposed we discuss how the FAC fits into the UMM Constitution revision.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.