

FSAC Minutes

2/21/08

Convened at 1:05 pm

Members: C. Ayala, C. Blackshire-Belay, M. Hess, J. Sutanonpaiboon, S. Tiwari, B. Warner (recorder), H. Wautischer
Attendees: V. Garlin, S. Hayes, J. Kornfeld, W. Poe, J. Chrisman
Absent: P. Hammett
Visitors: L. Holmstrom, E. Ochoa

Agenda approved

Minutes approved with minor corrections

Reports:

1. Chair of FSAC – M. Hess reported on Executive Committee Meeting 2/20/08
 - a. There was a lot of support for moving the RTP document forward to the Senate despite some concerns.
2. Faculty Affairs – C. Blackshire-Belay
 - a. Of 32 searches, 16 have been canceled.
 - b. Structures and Functions found some conflicts in the definition of “faculty”; this definition differs in the Unit 3 and 4 contracts and in the Faculty Constitution, which could also conflict with the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
3. Academic Freedom Subcommittee – H. Wautischer – report under Business item #2, below.
4. Professional Development Subcommittee – no report

Agenda:

1. Excellence in Teaching Policy
 - a. Laurel Holmstrom, the Academic Senate Analyst, needed some guidance about procedures for the faculty pool for the Excellence in Teaching Award; practice is not reflected in policy. The immediate situation was resolved but FSAC will take up the pool policy in a future meeting.
2. Academic Freedom Subcommittee Issues
 - a. M. Hess shared some questions that the Executive Committee had about the Academic Freedom policy regarding legislative history, rationale, and complaints/grievances. H. Wautischer responded that the answers are in the committee charge and in the complaint procedure.
 - b. M. Hess will meet with AFS chair to clarify these issues.
 - c. H. Wautischer asked if there should be a new charge; suggestions include being formally included in the complaint procedures and to research the impact of IT on academic freedom.
3. RTP Policy
 - a. J. Kornfeld addressed the question of development of departmental criteria,

stating that it was necessary to find a way to support and guide the process without dictating terms. S. Hayes provided the example of the GE Subcommittee, which is conducting a program review. For each GE Area they are talking to the departments that offer the courses, or wish to, about learning objectives. The Subcommittee is acting as a mediator for the discussion. This process could be used to help departments develop their criteria. C. Ayala proposed that the FSAC Subcommittee that will review criteria for congruence with the RTP policy could be charged with this role.

- b. V. Garlin stated the view that the peer review processes used so far seem to have worked well and that inserting the Deans into the RTP process is essentially changing the boundaries of authority.
- c. Provost Ochoa addressed the Committee regarding his concerns about the revisions and that FSAC has not addressed the concerns he outlined in earlier communications. His primary concern is consistency, that the document may not align with practice and that if there are different criteria at different levels of review there could be grounds for a grievance. His other concern is about having a clearly-established process for creating departmental criteria. His vision is to have a University-wide common baseline; then School-wide criteria; then departmental criteria. He proposed the same levels of review for the criteria as for the candidates, favoring the inclusion of the Deans as consultants.

Responses to the Provost:

- a. C. Ayala amplified the Subcommittee's role in II.A.2 regarding reviewing criteria, as this discussion happened before the Provost's appearance, and pointed out that procedure does not belong in the policy, and asked whom the Provost would suggest be on that Subcommittee. The Provost will consider this question.
- b. H. Wautischer asked if the Dean is to be the spokesperson for the School's perspective, who advises the Dean? The Provost responded that the departments should. J. Chrisman presented his experience in his department and as former chair of URTP regarding criteria; at times the development of such criteria by departments on their own initiative was blocked by the Dean.
- c. W. Poe's opinion as a former chair of URTP is that the departmental RTP committees are not a good place to develop criteria because it is hard for them to separate policy from individual cases. In his view, University and departmental criteria are feasible, but School-level criteria are problematic because the cohesion between disciplines in a School varies; Education is relatively homogenous but Arts and Humanities is heterogenous.
- d. V. Garlin opined that the administration's interest has been amply represented by C. Blackshire-Belay throughout the RTP policy deliberations. Since there is no evidence that the current peer-review policy is not working, there is no need to add Deans to the process and change the boundaries of authority. The Provost responded that the Deans also have the academic viewpoint in mind, and asked that they be included in the conversation.
- e. S. Hayes suggested incorporating the changes in the Review Subcommittee into the document; this will be held until we get other changes from the Senate.
- f. H. Wautischer asked if the issue of using different criteria at the department, School, and University levels were not just an issue of transparency, that if this is clear from the beginning there will be no grounds for a grievance.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 pm.