

FACULTY AGENDA ITEM 18-5

Date: 10/3/2017

Submitted by: Melanie Worsley on behalf of the Academic Affairs Committee

SUBJECT: Task force to Explore Academic Freedom Policy and Freedom of Expression Statement

Description:

1. The Academic Affairs Committee requests that the Faculty Senate support the creation of a task force to explore academic freedom policies and freedom of expression statements. The task force is charged only with issuing a report and recommendation to the Faculty Senate and will not create or make any changes regarding academic freedom or freedom of expression.
 - The task force will be sponsored by the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
 - The Vice President of Academic Affairs in collaboration with the Vice President of Student Life, the President of Faculty Senate, and the Vice President of Faculty Senate will appoint the task force as well as its chairperson.
 - The executive committee of the Faculty Senate will recommend the names of faculty for consideration to participate on the task force.
 - The task force will be comprised of approximately 12 members, including representation from each academic unit, Mabee Library, Washburn Tech, WSGA, Student Life, and Staff Council. University Counsel and the Special Assistant to the President will serve as non-voting members of the task force.
 - The task force will study academic freedom policies and freedom of expression statements at Washburn and at other academic institutions. The study should include an examination of the process other academic institutions have used to adopt or revise academic freedom policies and freedom of expression statements. The study should also review whether an academic freedom policy and a freedom of expression statement should be combined into one unified policy or remain two separate policies.
 - The task force will issue a report to Faculty Senate regarding its study and will issue a recommendation for future action. The task force will issue the report and recommendations to the Faculty Senate by the beginning of the fall 2018 term.
2. The Academic Affairs Committee also requests that the Faculty Senate support a request to the Vice President of Academic Affairs to sponsor events on campus to promote dialogue and education regarding academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Rationale:

In light of recent events occurring across the nation, Academic Affairs Committee members would like the University to take a proactive approach to explore issues surrounding academic freedom and freedom of expression. Although there are currently provisions in the faculty handbook addressing

academic freedom, committee members viewed these provisions as disjointed and difficult to find. Ultimately, the committee would like the faculty senate to support the creation of a task force to examine what action the University should take, if any, regarding academic freedom and freedom of expression.

Financial Implications:

There should be no financial implications to the creation of the task force.

Proposed Effective Date:

Upon Senate approval

Request for Action: *Approval by AAC/FS*

Approved by: *AAC on October 9, 2017*

Faculty Senate on November 6, 2017

Attachments No