

Faculty Handbook Revisions Committee May 29, 2013

Members Present: Lisa Jones, Cynthia Waskowiak, Jalen Lowry, Carol Vogel, Randy Pembrook, Bruce Mactavish

Discussion:

Our first discussion topic was the procedure for appointment of Department Chairs. The current procedure allows for either a formal internal or external search with final approval from the Board of Regents. The functional process is that the department picks a Chair itself and tells the Dean, skipping most steps listed in the handbook. Also, there is rarely more than one individual considered by the Dean, as the handbook lists. In CAS, the Dean has a meeting with the department and accepts nominations, either self or from others. The nominator then makes a case to the Dean who considers that along with “departmental politics” to make a selection.

There are many “cultural” differences among departments. Some departments rotate the Chair appointment amongst all qualified faculty, while others choose differently. Additionally, there aren’t many extra benefits to being Chair like at other places. Chairs have a half time class load and small pay bump, but more responsibilities. There are no qualifications listed; most are tenured but not all. CAS and SAS are the only areas that have Chairs.

The Committee discussed the ideal procedure. We would eliminate the formal selection committee currently required (but not used). One suggestion is that the Dean would hold a department meeting explaining the list of expectations for a Chair. He or she would then take nominations, interview those nominated, obtain input from the department, and pick a Chair. Another suggestion was that the process would be more like an employment search, with a committee making two or three recommendations to the Dean, who would then select the Chair. Randy will ask CAS and SAS for input at the next Committee meeting.

Our other topic of discussion was whether to keep General Faculty as the name of the governing body instead of changing it to Voting Faculty. When Lecturers were added to General Faculty a few years ago, the language specified that they must be full time, while the other ranks (Instructor, Professor, etc.) did not. We discussed future considerations of who should be permitted to vote, given the likely increase in online classes and part-time faculty. We will discuss this more at the next meeting.

Randy will send suggestions for a Chair selection process for the Committee to consider. We briefly discussed eliminating the external chair search procedure. Carol explained that it is different than a regular employment search as it has a special focus on administration. She felt we needed to keep that procedure.

Decisions:

- Members present liked Randy’s suggested Chair procedure. They’d also like to change it to better reflect current procedure while keeping some of the external search language.
- At the next Committee meeting, we will continue the discussion of Chair selection and General Faculty.

Next Meeting: June 12, noon in Baker Conference Room (BTC)