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College of Arts & Sciences Council Meeting : 2008 : 09 : 26

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College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council

Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 26th, 2008

In attendance:

Jim Gore, Chair

Joani Spadaro, Vice–Chair

John Arthur

Sheramy Bundrick

Tom Hallock

Rebecca Johns

Jackie Schneider

Absent:

Jessica Cabness

David Carr

The Chair, Jim Gore, opened the meeting with the first agenda item; election of the Vice–Chair. Joani Spadaro voted unanimously to the position.

Jim Gore stated that faculty was needed for the following committee positions:

Campus Tenure and Promotion Committee: 1 member.

Nomination’s Committee: 1 member

Scholarship Committee: 1 member

Tenure and Promotion: Tenure and Promotion guidelines are to be re–included in departmental and program by–laws. The T+P process would begin at the departmental/program level. If a faculty member has at least three years towards tenure, that faculty can opt for the original college T+P process.

The council discussed if guidelines should be given to departments/program to help with consistency and to follow the guidelines set by the university. How detailed should the guidelines be?

Jackie Schneider suggested that we seek guidance from the college dean and from the RVCAA, Norine Noonan. All councilors in attendance agreed. Jim Gore will follow up on this in a meeting with Dean Biafora.

CAS Travel applications and Awards: Since travel applications were due on the day of the council meeting the councilors agreed to review all applications at the next scheduled meeting.

Reassignment of Advising from Academic Affairs to Student Affairs: Jackie Schneider presented the council with the background for this decision. The councilors were concerned that this shift took place without the inclusion of those most unsettled by this decision (the academic advisors). Cyndie Collins, Director of Advising stepped down from her position as Chair of the General Education Committee arguing that general education is not the purview of student affairs . Jackie Schneider attended the campus Faculty Senate meeting where little discussion was given to this issue. This prompted a call to action from the councilors in support of Academic Advising. Discussion followed.

Rebecca Johns asked if the council wanted to make a formal statement in protest. Rebecca stated her concern for the lack of progress in shared governance that the campus has made. It was suggested that the campus is devolving in that area.

Tom Hallock discussed two concerns; the move of Academic Advising to Student Affairs and the manner in which it was done. Tom reiterated Rebecca’s comments that the move does not reflect a policy of shared governance.

Rebecca Johns made a motion stating that the CAS Faculty Council wished to express its dismay at the decision to move Academic Advising under the control of Student Affairs.

2nd by Jackie Schneider.

Tom Hallock asked what the council wanted to do with regard to this issue and recommended that we propose a campus–wide discussion (in the spirit of shared governance).

Motion passed unanimously.

Other business:

Tom Hallock discussed a faculty member's concern about the support and awareness of undergraduate research. Jackie Schneider discussed Disruptive Student Policy. New policy on disruptive students was rejected. The council asked for the wording of the failed policy? Was it circulated? Discussion continued.

How are disruptive students handled? No clear policy is defined.

Concerns were raised by the council that Student Affairs is there for student needs only and does not support the faculty nor does it take faculty concerns seriously. The council expressed concern that Student Affairs was more interested in issues of perceived discriminatory (or profiling) practices than about the safety of faculty. This was particularly troubling to the council in instances when Student Affairs has knowledge of prior disruptive behavior but does not share this information with the faculty. The council discussed issues of student privacy; a faculty member cannot acknowledge a student's disruptive behavior to another faculty member.

The council was unclear as to what policy had been rejected and what is the formal procedure in addressing disruptive behavior.

Rebecca Johns reiterated the regressive nature of shared governance. Faculty have little control of their safety and any progress is continually being undermined. The university is going backward in its commitment to shared governance.

Students continue disruptive behavior and in certain situations, escalate this behavior because it is not addressed and no clear policy exists for the faculty to refer to. The faculty must take extreme measures to ensure their safety including requesting police escorts. The council was troubled that the Academic Affairs office is reactive not proactive. Problems go away because a disruptive student either graduates or leaves the campus, not because the issue is addressed.

Jackie Schneider stated that from experience, she has no confidence in the Student Affairs Office. When she raised personal concerns for her safety she was told she was "overreacting".

John Arthur mentioned that there are few safeguards in campus classrooms, highlighting the lack of emergency classroom telephones. Faculty must have a cell phone with them during class to connect with officials if a threatening situation arises.

Jackie Schneider made the motion that the council request the failed disruptive student policy and that the council should request a campus discussion about a new policy; a policy that would be specific and appropriate to the USF St. Petersburg campus. Sheramy Bundrick seconded the motion.

Motion passed—6 yes votes, 1 abstention.

John Arthur asked what the policy was for guns on campus. Jim Gore stated that no guns are allowed on campus. Guns must be kept in locked automobiles. It was noted that the campus police now carry tasers.

Tom Hallock motioned to adjourn. Rebecca Johns seconded.

Meeting adjourned.