

January 7, 2004 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

Members In attendance: Bruce Wessels, Caroline Bledsoe, David Buchholz, Sonny Cytrynbaum, Bill Gradishar, Abe Haddad, Hamlin Jennings, Deborah Lucas, Martin Mueller, Mario Ruggero, Michael Stein

1. Approval of December minutes

Minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Review of Meeting of GFC with Trustees

The annual GFC/Trustees meeting was held December 15, 2003. More than 80 trustees, senior administrators and GFC committee members were in attendance. The topic discussed was ethics and the university. There were four breakout sessions. Bruce Wessels summarized the research infrastructure session. The session centered on compliance issues. The overall sense was that the University needs to invest more in research infrastructure and in particular compliance. Abraham Haddad reported on the NU and the community session. Group members indicated that greater efforts should be made to keep the Evanston community informed about University activities. Mario Ruggero briefly talked about the main topics covered in the session on equality and the University. Minority faculty and minority student body populations need to be expanded. The limited pool of qualified applicants makes attainment of these goals difficult. Debbie Lucas indicated that the ethics and education session discussion centered on ethics and teaching.

3. Reports from GFC standing sub-committees

Research sub-committee: David Buchholz summarized the recent meeting with VP Brad Moore. Brad Moore summarized activities of his office on compliance issues. He welcomed interactions with the GFC Research sub-committee. He has made the Huron report on University compliance available to sub-committee members. The sub-committee will review the report and prepare recommendations on priorities.

Benefits sub-committee: Abraham Haddad indicated that the committee met with associate VP Guy Miller regarding faculty benefits. Topics discussed included an increase in the tuition benefits and the medical plan.

Budget and Policy sub-committee: Deborah Lucas summarized activities of the GFC of the sub-committee. The committee will meet with VP Sunshine to discuss the university budget process later this month.

Faculty Development and Minority Issues: Hamlin Jennings gave an update of the sub-committee agenda. Sub-committee members are currently working on reassessing the committee's mission. Sub-committee topics of interest include broadening and enhancing the faculty professional experience. Discussion of academic leave policies is high on the agenda.

4. Review of Meeting with University Budget and Strategy Committee

Bruce Wessels gave a brief overview of the presentation given by the GFC leadership to the University budget and strategy committee. This was the first such meeting involving the GFC and is part of the faculty governance initiative. A power point presentation of the GFC strategy and priorities was given to the committee. GFC priorities on research infrastructure were discussed in some detail. As a result of this meeting, GFC members were given authority to meet with VP McCoy and her office to obtain needed supporting information on budget and strategic issues for future meetings.

5. Meeting Agenda of GFC meeting with senior administrators on January 12, 2004 at 3:30pm

The agenda for the quarterly meeting between the GFC steering committee and the senior administrators was discussed. Issues to be discussed included the University budget, research infrastructure, faculty leave policy, administrator searches and the proposed consensual relations policy.

6. Old Business

a. Consensual Relations Policy: Debbie Lucas presented the proposed university faculty consensual relations policy for discussion. A spirited discussion ensued. Major issues with the document include strong wording and stated punishments for non-compliance. Specifically, the dismissal policy is too strong. There was also discussion on the specific wording of the policy.

Bruce Wessels indicated that the AAUP does not have a policy that proscribes consensual relations although the manual indicates that they are 'fraught with difficulty'. The AAUP Washington office was requested to review the proposed document and indicated that the university document was problematic. There were also questions regarding the enforcement of the policy. The GFC leadership was requested to get clarification of the policy from the administration. The initial consensus was that the policy should be dropped or thoroughly revised.

b. Faculty governance and administrator searches: There was a discussion on administrator searches and the involvement of faculty in the process. Although faculty are included in search committees, they are excluded from meeting with the candidates. This was felt to be problematic especially in dean searches. Faculty buy-in is needed in order for any new dean to succeed, especially for those administrators that were recruited from the outside. The higher turnover in deans was also noted.

7. New Business:

a. Senate Meeting Agenda:

GFC members were asked to submit topics to be discussed at the next Senate Meeting. Bruce Wessels suggested presentations be given by the GFC committee chairs on issues being addressed by their sub-committees.

In Conclusion:

a. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00. The next GFC meeting will be held on February 4, 2004 at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room)

Minutes Submitted by:

Diana Snyder