

March 2, 2005 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

Members in attendance:

Eva Redei, Paul Arntson, David Buchholz, Clarke Caywood, Sudhakar Deshmukh, Abraham Haddad, Deborah Lucas, Donald McCrimmon, Martin Mueller, Teepu Siddique, Michael Stein, Allen Taflove, Bruce Wessels

1. Presentation by Jake Julia, Assistant Vice President for Change Management

Jake Julia, Assistant Vice President for Change Management, gave a brief overview and led an informative discussion on the status of the three major administrative systems projects at Northwestern: Research Data Integration and Access (RDIA), Data Warehouse, and Financial Management Systems Replacement (Replacement of CUFS). The Provost Office hopes to roll out these initiatives in the next two to four years. The main goal for having each system is to offer simpler and more efficient resources to faculty and staff. The Provost has appointed an advisory committee to each initiative.

Training is a set priority in implementation, especially with the CUFS system replacement. The university has invested both time and money for training purposes and plans are currently in the works. Before the CUFS system is completely closed down, the university will offer an abundance of training sessions and post-training assistance, but it will, of course, be the responsibility of staff and faculty to put forth participation effort. There will be a time limit for training, but both the old CUFS system and the system will run simultaneously for about six months, giving staff ample opportunity to transition from the old to the new. The overall plan is to create a training environment in which people do not sink or swim, but will successfully transition into each new system.

Each system will be user friendly and provide useful detailed information. This information will be set up so that it can be easily accessed and effortlessly downloaded for further analysis. Initial rollout will be done in chunks to not overwhelm users and to more efficiently deal with glitches. Before actual production, there will be a testing process using test data, which will eventually lead to the use of live data and the final product. Jake Julia offered to come back sometime after the systems are implemented to give the GFC an update.

2. Approval of February 2, 2005 Minutes

Approval of the February GFC meeting minutes was postponed until the April GFC meeting, pending further editing.

3. Report on GFC Communication – Martin Mueller

Martin Mueller and Eva Redei met with the chief librarian about joining an existing university communication system. The meeting was very successful and resulted in agreement to set up a GFC BLOG system within the next month. Two issues still remain. First, the BLOG needs a name. The name “General Faculty Forum,” which was suggested by Martin Mueller, was received positively. Second, the newsletter format needs to be established. The format of the BLOG and newsletter will mirror existing library formats, which are currently very effective.

Once the BLOG is set up, Diana Snyder, GFC Administrative Assistant, will manage the system. She and the GFC chair will ultimately be in charge of editing and posting directly onto the BLOG, although initially Diana will handle everything.

4. Suggestions for the First Communication to Faculty

Eva Redei asked GFC members to come up with provocative primers for the newsletter/BLOG and gave suggestions and guidelines. Eva suggested items such as Ombudsman, Faculty Governance, IRB and Benefits. Subjects should be hot buttons specific to faculty areas of specialty and interest.

5. Discussion of Specific Meeting Documents

a. Henry Bienen’s letter to Chairman Ryan re GFC follow-up from Dec 2005: GFC members discussed the significance of the GFC’s report to the trustees in the light of the president’s letter accompanying it that justified several GFC action items. The general view was that the accompanying letter lessens the effectiveness of the GFC’s reflection on the outcome of the trustees meeting. Eva Redei’s recommendation for next year is that the GFC action plan document be sent directly to the Chairman of the Trustees. GFC members were in complete agreement.

b. COWAC Executive Summary: The Committee of Women in the Academic Community has put out an executive summary, which summarizes both faculty and staff status of women at NU.

GFC discussion of the executive summary led to many questions and to the recommendation to further investigate summary findings by inviting a COWAC representative to give a presentation.

c. The hotline initiative of NU; Michael J. Moody, Director of Compliance: University administrators are planning to set up a standard for business conduct hotline and would like input from the GFC. The GFC discussed the choice of using an outside company to manage the hotline. Confidentiality and trust issues are in question since the university is paying for the hotline. Where the information ends up and how is it guaranteed that it is kept confidential needs to be addresses more clearly. Ombudsman systems seem to work quite well for peer institutions, and could be an alternative to the EthicsPoint phone and web reporting system. Overall, GFC members believe that the initiative is a great idea and having more avenues available to staff and faculty is beneficial, however, there are still several details needing clarification. Michael Moody will attend the April GFC meeting to answer some of these questions.

c. NU Tracking of Investigator Award Credit and the Attributes of F&A Cost Recovery for Sponsored Programs Activity: The main purpose for the document is to remove administrative barriers that hinder research interactions across schools. GFC members were asked to look over the document and email any feedback to Eva Redei.

Conclusion

The next GFC meeting will be held on April 6, 2005, at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room)

Minutes Submitted by:

Diana Snyder