

January 8, 2003 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

Members In attendance: Al Hunter, Alice Eagly, Al Farbman, Dan Garrison, Bill Halperin, Hamlin Jennings, Ilya Kutik, Eva Redei, Mario Ruggero, Robert Ten Eick, Bruce wessels

1. Minutes

The minutes from the December meeting were approved by all GFC members with specified changes.

2. Review of Meeting With Trustees

The Trustee meeting, which took place Saturday December 7, 2002, gave trustees, administration and faculty representatives a chance to discuss various issues and topics affecting the university. There were four main topics of discussion.

A. Benefits Issues

A general point of the trustees was that quality of life issues are very important.

Childcare: All were in favor of campus childcare. Trustee co-chair announced that the trustees want to move forward with campus childcare.

Housing: Cost of housing around both university campuses is very costly and may be affecting employment negotiations. The issue was raised as to whether or not the university is sufficiently assisting in this area. There is currently a policy but it is not a routine policy. Improvement of this type of benefit is not opposed it is only a question of resources availability.

GFC members agreed that this policy needs to be more transparent. Members were asked to come up with creative suggestions for dealing with this issue.

B. Faculty Involvement in university issues

A general comment was the need for greater administrative transparency to increase faculty understanding and commitment.

Trustee position is that faculty should take a stand on major issues and own those that are important to them. Trustees articulated that they view the GFC as the principal oracle of faculty.

It was concluded that there could be missed opportunities if faculty does not express their views and broad goals.

The Policy Advisory Board, for example, was instituted by faculty and is and has been very productive. This is proof that faculty can join forces and produce outstanding results. GFC is exploring the possibility of pursuing the generation of a similar group. A couple of vital things to keep in mind during the inception process are the legitimacy of the group as well as the mobilization structure of issues.

C. Athletic Committee

The CIC resolution of intercollegiate athletics was discussed. The trustees are very positive about supporting athletics. The general consensus is that the economics of athletics is powerful. Revenue sports are key to a successful athletics program.

GFC members are to decide how to pursue this issue further. One specific goal is to explore the transparency of where the dollars are going, and the GFC should have routine annual reports. The University Athletic Committee chair should be invited to a GFC meeting.

D. International Recognition

There is concern for how Northwestern University is recognized internationally. The university needs positive international exposure in order to attract top level international students.

GFC members are asked to put together some ideas for how to attract top international undergraduate students.

3. Announcements

A. Communication with audience

Jack Doppelt has been appointed as chair of communications. Among other things, he has agreed to take over writing of news announcements for the Observer, which is an important channel of communication in which the voice of the General Faculty Committee can be heard throughout the university.

B. Faculty Compliance with emergency evacuation

Faculty is strongly encouraged to comply with emergency evacuation procedures at all times. During recent emergency evacuation testing, classes which were in session completely ignored the warnings. Due to this recent failure of faculty response to emergency evacuation alarms the university is making it a priority to make emergency tests more effective.

C. Vice-Chair

A motion was made for Bruce Wessels to serve as Vice-Chair of the General Faculty Committee for the 2002-03 fiscal year. Members voted unanimously in favor of the appointment. Next fiscal year Bruce Wessels will also serve as GFC Chair.

4. Old Business

A. Committee on Cause: Bill Halperin gave a brief synopsis

The two main purposes of the committee are to mediate for faculty and administration and to determine if there is cause for institution of specific sanctions against faculty. The Cause Committee gets information on cases from interviewing the faculty member.

FYI...UFRTAP comes from administration and the Cause Committee comes from the GFC.

B. Benefits:

When meeting with the HR subcommittee of benefits of the GFC, we tell them what we want and they do what they can. Contraceptive coverage is among the many active issues that will be pursued. The economic benefits are clear and simple. Fewer abortions and fewer births equal less money spent. Currently twenty states have made it illegal to exclude coverage of this type of medical expense. Not providing coverage is a matter of fairness which translates into discrimination.

Other issues being discussed presently include cost savings of using more cost-effective drugs, mental health coverage or lack thereof. Newer drugs can be more cost effective – concept of new generation of expensive drugs. The university mortgage program is also being looked at.

C. Criteria for Faculty included in Faculty Senate:

There is some sentiment of extending the privilege of membership in the Faculty Senate. Suggestions were made to make inclusion more automatic and to do away with the Ad Hoc voting. Alice Eagly has agreed to write a proposal for next time.

E. Faculty Diversity

Faculty diversity is low due in part because of issues such as childcare and housing. It was suggested that the culture of Northwestern and student admissions is partly responsible for the gap in diversity.

5. New Business

Student Diversity:

A suggestion was made to get statistics of NU's student body as it relates to minority students for both the undergraduates and graduates. The Education Committee could possibly look into this issue. GFC members wish to learn more about admissions and will invite an admissions representative to educate members about the selection process. Members are interested to know who NU is admitting and if we have this minority issue. The role of admissions and the scholar/athlete was also considered as a possible point of review.

Conclusion of meeting:

The next GFC meeting will be held on February 5, 2002 at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room).