

# **April 11, 2007** Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

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## **Members In attendance:**

Chairman Paul Arntson, Jeanne Dunning, John Elson, Abraham Haddad, Donna Jurdy, James Kjelland, Seth Lichter, Mark Seagraves, Robin Steinhorn, Allen Taflove

**Introduction:** GFC Chair Paul Arntson called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

## **1. Approval of March 7, 2007 Minutes**

The minutes from the March 7, 2007 GFC meeting were approved unanimously with no changes.

## **2. Benefits Subcommittee Report**

Abraham Haddad, Chair of the Benefits Subcommittee, gave a brief overview of the current standing of the committee. The subcommittee met with TIAA-CREF representatives to discuss various details of the program, including the Wealth Management division (new to the organization). Representatives also explained the advice planning services directed at younger employees, which aids in early retirement planning. The Benefits subcommittee plans to meet with representatives from Fidelity at a later meeting.

## **3. COIA Conference**

Donna Jurdy agreed to attend the upcoming COIA meeting as the Northwestern University representative. The General Faculty Committee will cover the travel expenses. After meeting with the Committee on Athletic Recreation it was clear that withdrawing from the COIA was not recommended or encouraged. Attending every meeting, however, is optional.

## **4. Executive Meeting Report**

### ***Progress on Having Faculty Elected to the University Senate***

The administration favorably approached the GFC's proposal to institute an elected Faculty Senate, but the burden of convincing the faculty body that this is a worthy initiative falls on the GFC. Fortunately, the plan does not restrict participation but recommends that the current charter

and statute remain the same, allowing any interested and eligible faculty member to attend Faculty Senate meetings and vote on issues.

The proposal to change the Faculty Senate will also need to clearly demonstrate how this new system compares to the old system and how it is an improvement. The General Faculty Committee in its present state is not an effective faculty governing body, so members will also need to give recommendations on the future of this committee.

Membership structure will be determined by the General Faculty Committee. Currently it is required that there be a quorum of 40 members in order to conduct an official Senate Meeting, therefore the GFC would like to have up to 42 elected members including representation from all schools and additional at-large positions. In order to encourage complete and effective participation, it was suggested that a course relief incentive be given to elected Senate members.

The GFC would like to officially present this initiative at the next Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for May 17, 2007. Before doing so, a well crafted bulk email survey will need to be sent to all faculty members introducing this proposal and giving the faculty body an opportunity to give feedback.

#### ***Progress on an Ombudsperson Program for Faculty***

The administrators were skeptical but open to the idea of instituting an Ombudsman program. Tentatively, it is to be done on a trial basis as a pilot program for next year, with the GFC taking full responsibility for structuring and implementing this program. After a brief discussion, GFC members present voted in favor of proceeding with the ombudsman program. The Faculty Rights and Responsibilities subcommittee, headed by John Elson, will continue to handle this issue and aid the GFC in creating a “position paper” to be presented to the administration.

#### ***Progress on Faculty Review of Administrators***

The administrators did not see a necessity for creating a “Faculty Review of Administrators” program. For now, the administration agreed to allow the GFC to be a part of the process that generates the questions for the AAU survey. Next year a subcommittee will be appointed to continue the pursuit of a “Faculty Review of Administrators” program.

## **5. New Business**

***Reimbursement Issues at McCormick School of Engineering:*** Allen Taflove explained the new NU reimbursement policies and more specifically the onerous task of providing detailed proof of payment for even the most minor of expenses. The GFC will invite an NU business administrator to explain the new rules.

***Report on Non-Federal Funding:*** Paul Arntson was promised a report on how NU is handling non-federally funded resources, which has not been delivered yet. He will follow up with the appropriate administrator.

***Recycling at NU:*** Jeanne Dunning was asked to present the concern that there is no real recycling at NU. Although recycling trash cans are provided, in certain departments the maintenance workers are not separating the trash accordingly. Paul will decide the best way to present this issue to Henry Bienen directly.

## **6. Meeting Dates for the Remainder of the year**

**GFC Meeting:** Wednesday May 2, 2007, 7:00pm, Scott Hall, 601 University Place, Ripton Room 201

**University Senate Meeting:** Thursday, May 17, 2007, 3:00-5:00pm, Rebecca Crown Center, West Tower, Hardin Hall, Lower Level, 633 Clark, Evanston Campus

**GFC Meeting:** Wednesday, June 6, 2007, Jacky's Bistro... 2545 Prairie Avenue, Evanston

## **In Conclusion:**

- a. The Elected Faculty Senate proposal will be put on the Faculty Senate meeting agenda scheduled to take place on May 17, 2007.
- b. John Elson and the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Subcommittee will work with John Margolis to further the Ombudsman pilot program.
- c. The GFC will be involved with the generation of questions for the AAU survey.
- d. The next GFC meeting will be held on May 2, 2007 at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room)

Minutes Submitted by: Diana Snyder

Edited and Approved by: the General Faculty Committee