

# **April 2, 2008 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting**

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## **Members in attendance:**

Chairman John Elson, Vice Chair Laurie Zoloth, Paul Arntson, Jack Doppelt, Jeanne Dunning, Stephen Eisenman, Anupam Garg, Donna Jurdy, James Kjelland, Seth Lichter, Martin Mueller

**Introduction:** GFC Chair John Elson called the meeting to order at 7:10pm.

## **1. Approval of Minutes of 3-5-08 and 3-19-08 meetings**

The minutes of the March 3, 2008 and March 19, 2008 meetings were approved unanimously with no changes and will be posted to the GFC website.

## **2. Report on 2-1-08 meeting with Vice-President McCoy on program review process**

John Elson and Paul Arntson reported on the outcome of the program review meeting with Vice-President McCoy. The discussion centered on the transparency of final results and implementation of recommendations as well as the process of appointing, both, the outside reviewers and the faculty reviewers. Questions were raised about the process for developing the internal assessment report. John Elson will continue to work with the administration to get a better overall understanding of the program review process and its effectiveness.

## **3. Update on choice of faculty members for presidential search committee**

John Elson announced the official selection of Laurie Zoloth, the GFC member chair-elect, to serve on the presidential search committee. Additional names have not been released by the administration, so further GFC action will depend on the release of the additional names.

## **4. Report on progress on development of ombudsman program**

Because of its legal and financial concerns, the Administration has not consented to the implementation of an ombudsman program. The GFC plans to continue pursuing this program.

## **5. Report on 3-28-08 meeting with Provost on suspension of faculty governance issues and discussion of what is to be done**

John Elson reported on the outcome of the meeting with Provost Linzer. The discussion centered on the GFC's concerns over the process by which the administration determines the suspension of faculty

governance. The Provost did not agree with the GFC's proposals for procedures governing the process by which faculty governance might be suspended in the future. The Provost did express interest in more regular meetings with the GFC Executive Committee. The GFC discussed new concerns, its role in facilitating permanent change, and further plans of action, including the passing of a resolution.

**6. Discussion of plans for reforms of faculty governance structures (main item of discussion led by immediate past Chair Arntson)**

Paul Arntson gave a brief update on plans for reforming the faculty governance structure and made several recommendations, which are all laid out in his draft "Shared Governance at Northwestern University" document. There was agreement that the University Senate in its current state is ineffective and stagnant, mainly due to extremely low or non-existent Faculty participation and interest. Paul's main recommendation and focal point for change involves improving the GFC, first and foremost, by increasing its visibility and effectiveness. After an in-depth discussion, it was determined that major structural decisions need to be made within the GFC before making Senate changes. This can be accomplished by, but not limited to, establishing firm by-laws, running membership elections, developing and retaining active subcommittees, and making each monthly meeting important.

**7. Discussion of plans for 5-6-08 University Senate meeting**

GFC members discussed means for achieving a positive faculty turnout at the May 6<sup>th</sup> University Senate Meeting and discussed potential and relevant agenda items that would spark interest and draw faculty in.

**In Conclusion:**

The next GFC meeting will be held on April 30, 2008, at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room). The meeting was advanced one week from its original May 7 date in order to reach agreement on the plans for faculty governance reforms to be presented at the May 6 Senate meeting.

*The meeting was adjourned at 9:27pm*

Minutes Submitted by: Diana Snyder

Minutes Edited by: John Elson

Minutes Approved by: General Faculty Committee members