

# MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

March 15, 2017

4:05-5:40 pm

Present: Courtney Clayton, Miriam Liss, Lou Martinette, Marie McAllister (secretary), Angela Pitts (chair). Absent: Bob Greene. Guest: Nina Mikhalevsky, Provost.

## I. MINUTES

The minutes of February 17 were approved and a revised order of business for the day was adopted.

## II. NEW BUSINESS

### A) Motion from John Morello

The University Faculty Affairs Committee discussed a motion sent to the committee by John Morello. The motion provides a mechanism for the non-renewal of five-year senior lecturer contracts comparable to that for non-renewal of tenure-track probationary faculty. The language of the motion has been approved by Carrie Nee of the Attorney General's office.

The committee agreed to an electronic vote on the motion subsequent to the meeting so that further information could be gathered about the University's use of senior lecturers. The committee subsequently voted to approve the motion, which will now go to the University Faculty Council along with a rationale prepared by Angela Pitts.

### B) Suggestions from the Provost

The Provost suggested several items the UFAC may want to undertake:

1) **Student course evaluations.** This issue must be revisited periodically to see how effective the instrument is as a measure and whether it needs to be redone. The Provost's office receives frequent complaints about the rate of return and about the instrument itself as a method of evaluating teaching. It was noted that the UFAC met with the Director of Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness in February, and has suggested that her office begin gathering validated studies on student evaluation.

2) **Other mechanisms for evaluating teaching.** The Provost noted that UMW lags behind many schools in providing richer ways of evaluating teaching and suggested that UFAC take up the issue, researching what other schools do and consulting with the College of Education. The Provost suggested a three-year timeline, noted that having consistent methods of evaluating teaching across the university supports teaching development and prevents a liability issue, and mentioned such options as peer review and class visits.

Angela Pitts referred the committee to the two previously circulated relevant documents: "Changing Practices in Faculty Evaluation: Can Better Evaluation Make a Difference?" by J. Elizabeth Miller and Peter Seldin (*Academe*, 2014) and "Good Practice in Tenure Evaluation: Advice for Tenured Faculty, Department Chairs, and Academic Administrators" (American Council on Education, American Association of University Professors, and United Educators Insurance Risk Retention Group, 2000).

**3) Faculty Workload beyond teaching:** The ad hoc Faculty Workload Committee ended up focusing strictly on teaching load in the report forthcoming in April. The Provost suggested that UFAC follow up with the ad hoc committee to see if they found additional issues that require attention (e.g., service obligations, academic advising, admissions.) It was noted that the Diversity task force is currently working on the issue of minority being overburdened with service.

**4) Junior faculty service:** The UFAC should be making recommendations about junior faculty service. One area to consider is the frequent assignment of assessment to junior probationary faculty, who may then be placed in the problematic position of having to report senior colleagues' failures to complete needed assessment work.

Courtney Clayton noted that many of these issues will involve a tremendous amount of work, and asked whether a six-person UFAC can accomplish them. The Provost suggested that UFAC take the lead but pass particular assignments on to appropriate existing committees. Angela Pitts noted that UFAC can request help from the UFC, seek staff support, and seek expertise from other faculty. The UFOC can give us info about current faculty service, and we can request that the UFC form appropriate subcommittees.

### **C) Motion from Debra Schleef:**

The UFAC discussed and voted on a motion concerning student evaluations from Debra Schleef (Institutional Analysis and Effectiveness). The committee voted to approve the motion with an amended rationale. It will now go to the University Faculty Council.

Miram Liss reported that Psychological Sciences has asked that certain objections to the motion be registered: 1) Validity of instrument. 2) Who will use data? 3) Doubles chair's workload. 4) Some faculty don't like being watched every semester. Lou Martinette reported that the College of Business saw no problems with the motion.

## **III. OLD BUSINESS**

### **Adjunct welfare**

The UFAC considered a list of ways to improve adjunct welfare prepared by Marie McAllister using statements by various academic associations. Some are cost-prohibitive but others would be easy to implement. Marie will research which UMW is already doing, after which UFAC will prepare its recommendations.