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Minutes of the University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC)

August 30, 2017

3:30-4:45 PM, Mercer 131

Present: Cate Brewer, Courtney Clayton, Betsy Lewis, Miriam Liss (chair), Marie McAllister (secretary), Xiaofeng Zhao

Minutes: The minutes of the last meeting were approved as corrected.

I. OLD BUSINESS

1) Mentoring and evaluating teaching

Committee members discussed procedures across departments and colleges using input from COE, COB, and a few CAS departments. There is great variability in evaluation procedures: some departments and colleges require chair or peer observations, some employ grade distribution reports, and so on. Mentoring is similarly varied.

Miriam will follow up with the CAS Interim Dean to learn the results of two surveys of CAS chairs (one recent, one ongoing) concerning how CAS departments conduct junior faculty mentoring and annual evaluations.

The committee drew several preliminary conclusions:

A. *Faculty Handbook* language about documenting teaching excellence for annual evaluation does not match that about documenting teaching excellence for tenure and promotion. The committee agreed to examine section 6.3.2 and Appendices I, J, and K to see if we can create better, and appropriately parallel, language on the many ways of documenting teaching excellence beyond student evaluations. Xiaofeng volunteered to review the COB language; Courtney, the COE language; and Betsy, the CAS language.

B. The COE has worked out detailed language on the evaluation of teaching and on mentoring in Appendix K. Members agreed to read K.1.1, K.1.1.1, and K.4.3 in preparation for discussing whether it would be desirable for other colleges to create something similar. [Direct link: <http://publications.umw.edu/facultyhandbook/appendices/appendix-k/>.]

C. The committee will investigate whether the *Handbook* needs to state more explicitly that the duties of department chairs/college deans include oversight of junior faculty mentoring. There was brief discussion of chair workload, and oversight was distinguished from direct mentoring. It was noted in passing that the Interim Dean is talking about developing a handbook for chairs.

D. The committee wondered if the Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation could offer more mentoring in teaching, particularly for junior faculty. Miriam and Courtney volunteered to

collect ideas as a prelude to meeting with the CTEI Director to discuss possibilities.

2. Adjunct faculty welfare

Marie sought advice on how to move forward with the information gathered in April. The committee concluded that our charge permits us to bring both motions amending the *Handbook* and resolutions to the UFC. Marie volunteered to organize a list of possible actions for consideration at our October meeting. Members suggested adding a) recognition for years of service, and b) efforts to give maximal warning if a class scheduled to be taught by an adjunct is cancelled.

3. Service workload

Remains tabled.

4. Student recordings of class materials

In preparation for our October meeting, members will review the AAUP statement on recording circulated before this meeting, the charge from the UFC, and UVA's policy, all of which Miriam will circulate.

5. Unpaid leaves of absence

Last year the chair of the UFC reported that a faculty member had expressed interest in having a "more flexible" policy on unpaid leaves of absence, and suggested that we add this to future business. It is unclear what flexibility was desired. There was discussion of the difference between unpaid and other leaves. Betsy noted the disruption created when faculty repeatedly extend unpaid leaves. The committee agreed to look over the unpaid leave policy, with Cate volunteering to pull the relevant *Handbook* language on unpaid and other leaves for our next meeting.

6. Communication with faculty / UFAC as a faculty resource / ombudsperson

Miriam will ask the chair of UFC to remind faculty that they can approach the UFAC directly with issues. Discussion about a possible faculty ombudsperson ("omnibussy") remains tabled.

II. New business

No new business at this time.