University Faculty Affairs Committee
Minutes: February 9, 2015
Monroe 4th floor lounge, 1:00pm

Committee members in attendance: Eric Gable (Chair; CAS), Louis Martinette (COB), Hilary Stebbins (Secretary; CAS), Jo Tyler (COE)

Special guest: Jonathan Levin (Provost)

- During our January 26th meeting UFAC discussed a request by Provost Jonathan Levin to brainstorm ways to elicit faculty input regarding the distribution of funds to faculty for salary increases if said funds should become available. UFAC decided that they would like to meet with the provost in person in order to ask questions regarding the amount, source, etc. of these funds in order to make the best possible recommendation. The following minutes are from this meeting with the provost.

- The provost began by relaying that it is probable that there will be a 2% increase for raises in salary from the state this year. Traditionally the way this works is that approximately half of the 2% will come from the state and the other half will come from the University. This 2% increases still needs to be confirmed, but if it happens the provost anticipates it will be used for across the board raises (as opposed to being used for merit pay or to address any salary inequities).

- The provost reported that the President has been asked by the board to develop a salary proposal plan. This raised the question of how funds should be distributed to faculty if any were to become available for this purpose. The provost noted that salary savings from retired faculty (which last year was used to address budget cuts) may result in approximately $100 - $150,000 for distribution. If this were used for across the board raises it would result in only about a 0.5% bump for each faculty member so it might be better used in another context, such as addressing inequities in faculty salary.

- In 2011 a report was commissioned that looked at faculty salary by discipline and rank and compared current salary to minimum and goal benchmarks based on our peer institutions. This resulted in two occasions during which some faculty received raises to correct salary inequities (in 2011 $81,000 was distributed among 69 faculty and in 2012 $99,000 was distributed among 66 faculty).

- Jonathan suggested doing something similar if money were to become available via salary savings from retired faculty this year. He presented four models that assumed between $90,000 and $180,000 that could be distributed over 30 – 120 faculty as examples of possible distributions. He estimates that 50 – 60% of faculty are still below their benchmark and while we may not have enough savings to correct everyone behind their benchmark, it could be used to address some of the worst case scenarios. He also noted that since the study of benchmarks was done in 2011, it might be worth updating the numbers. He noted that this would not cost the University additional money as the consulting group is already on contract for this type of work.

- UFAC agreed that this course of action seemed reasonable. If approved by the sate an across the board raise will result from the 2% increase mandated from the state and paid for out of combined state and university funds. The correction of salary inequities would be in addition to the 2% across the board raise and would come from salary saving from retired faculty. Eric suggested that we meet again with the provost once he had a better sense of the amount that would be available for further discussion and the provost agreed.

- We briefly spoke about the current merit system and how it likely wouldn't work to distribute the funds based on merit since it has been so long since merit evaluations were used. We discussed some potential options for how the merit system might be adjusted based on the expectation that there won't be a consistent source for merit pay and we also discussed whether it would be possible for a merit fund to be established in some way (e.g. Eric asked about whether it was possible to establish something from the endowment).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:03 pm.

Submitted by: Hilary E. Stebbins