

University Faculty Affairs Committee
Minutes: September 8, 2014
Monroe 4th floor lounge, noon

Committee members in attendance: Eric Gable (Chair), Michael Lapke, Melina Patterson, Angela Pitts, Hilary Stebbins (Secretary), Jo Tyler

1. Election of committee officers

- Eric Gable volunteered and was elected to be chair of the committee
- Hilary Stebbins volunteered and was elected to be secretary of the committee

2. Discussion of motion regarding faculty input on consultant hires

- During the spring semester of 2014 the UFAC presented a motion to the UFC “that the President and administration of Mary Washington put into place a plan for consulting the UFC before hiring consultants that will be involved in issues affecting faculty activities such as teaching and research”.
- The UFC discussed the motion during their March 24, 2014 meeting and expressed concern that the motion seemed directed toward a specific consultant hire (contract for grant services) rather than addressing the issue of faculty input on consultant hires overall. They sent the motion back to UFAC asking for more clarity on the examples provided and asked UFAC to address how the motion differs from a search where faculty are engaged but not consulted.
- The UFAC discussed the fact that they would like more clarification from UFC regarding their decision to help guide revisions of the motion.
- On a separate, but related note it was also suggested that we ask the UFC what they suggest the appropriate mechanism would be for faculty input into matters such as these. This led to a discussion on faculty governance (see below).
- Melina volunteered to draft a memo to the UFC asking for clarification on the motion decision.

3. Discussion of faculty governance

- UFAC discussed the proposal circulated by the UFC to all teaching faculty regarding reforming the University Faculty Governance. The motion specifically proposes to replace the University Faculty Council with a University Faculty Senate. The members of the UFAC agreed that the current UFC governance structure isn't working in that it is 1) inefficient 2) does not provide an opportunity for diverse input from the faculty and 3) is light on faculty members in comparison to the proportion of administrators. Overall the UFAC agreed that a faculty senate would be a good idea, contingent on ironing out specific details.
- Angela Pitts volunteered to draft a memo to the UFC regarding the UFAC response to the proposal, which she has circulated via e-mail for consideration from other UFAC members.

4. Discussion of suspension of merit pay evaluations

- The chairs of CAS asked UFAC to consider putting forward a proposal to suspend the merit pay evaluations from the Annual Performance Review Process on the basis that faculty have not received merit pay in quite a while and that a lot of resources (e.g. peer review) are being put toward the system with no result. Members of UFAC raised some concerns regarding the legality of this and whether it would be possible given the current faculty handbook language.
- Jo Tyler volunteered to evaluate the handbook to determine whether there is language that relates to these concerns.

5. Unethical Publications (virtual discussion via e-mail)

- Provost Levin circulated an e-mail to the faculty regarding unethical publications and how such publications should be evaluated in the promotion and tenure process. He charged the UFAC with reviewing this issue, specifically considering whether the faculty handbook should be revised to address how the quality of journals are evaluated.
- Eric Gable volunteered to draft a member in response to this for UFAC consideration.

There were no new announcements.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50pm.

Submitted by: Hilary E. Stebbins