

University of Mary Washington
Sabbaticals, Fellowships, and Faculty Awards Committee
Minutes

September 7, 2020 1 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Meeting via Zoom

In Attendance

Wei Chen (CoB), Janie Lee (Chair, CAS), Jason James (Secretary, CAS), John Morello (ex-officio)
Kyle Schultz (CoE) Parrish Waters (CAS)

Chair's Report

1. Following introductions, Janie Lee called attention to a recent email from Provost Mikhalevsky regarding faculty awards etc. that may affect the committee's schedule in terms of evaluating applications. The exact effect has yet to be determined.

New Business

1. The committee discussed the effects of current financial and other conditions at the university on the status of sabbaticals, fellowships, and awards. John Morello explained that what happens with regard to sabbaticals and awards depends on the university's budget, and on the degree to which the university determines that it needs faculty to focus on teaching, especially given the current limited funds for adjuncts as hire-behinds. Awards and fellowships that are privately funded are not directly affected by the budget, but may be affected by the need for faculty in the classrooms. It may be possible to award sabbaticals, but it will likely be fewer than were awarded (and suspended) last year. It would probably be best to solicit a statement from those awarded a sabbatical last year whether they can still do the planned project, and choose from among those who are still able to pursue it.
2. The committee also discussed an email received from a faculty member who expressed that they were not able to take advantage of the benefits of a faculty fellowship in spring 2020 because of additional stressors and responsibilities related to the pandemic. The faculty member had asked whether something might be done to make up for this situation. Committee members expressed empathy with this situation, which was of course not under the faculty member's control. At the same time, there is no precedent for providing additional funding or time to a faculty member awarded a fellowship who encounters challenging circumstances during the award period. If it were possible to provide compensatory or additional funding or time, it would need to be made available to all awardees, and it is likely that most if not all faculty experienced difficulties in spring 2020.
3. John Morello told the committee he would update us on further developments at the administrative level that will affect the committee's work.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

