

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AFFAIRS (SCFA)

September 15, 2015

Minutes of the meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.

[In these minutes: Agenda Setting for the 2015 – 2016 Academic Year]

PRESENT: Scott Lanyon (chair), Christina Bourland, Joe Price, Phil Buhlmann, Teresa Kimberley, Allen Levine, Christine Blue, Teri Caraway, Sophia Gladding, Tabitha Grier-Reed, Robert Kudrle, Monica Luciana, Peh Ng, Lori Rhudy, Juanjuan Wu, Leah Reinert

REGRETS: Ken Horstman, Theodor Litman, Joseph Konstan, Ruth Okediji, Aks Zaheer,

ABSENT: Kathy Brown, Ninitha Jeyaraj

1. **Meeting convened:** Professor Lanyon convened the meeting, welcomed those present and called for a round of introductions. He then noted that the primary purpose for today's meeting is to set the SCFA agenda for the 2015 – 2016 academic year and to think about what the committee wants to accomplish. The consensus coming out of this year's Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC) retreat, said Professor Lanyon, was that over the last few years Senate committees have taken on a variety of topics, but not a lot has actually been finished, per se. This lack of progress was the result of momentum having been lost in committees, in various administrative offices, or a combination of the two. As a result, the suggestion was for Senate committees to focus their efforts and move items along to completion. He added that given a number of topics have been discussed for months and in some cases even years that it would be helpful to have a document outlining where the different topics are in the governance process, and include a short history of each as well as next steps.

2. **Agenda setting for the 2015 – 2016 academic year:** Professor Lanyon began by highlighting possible topics for the committee's consideration, which included:

- Transition once a new Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs is hired to replace interim Vice Provost Levine.
- Salary equity.
- Graduate and professional education.
- Partner accommodations in faculty searches.
- Post-tenure review (PTR).
- Sabbatical policy.
- Caregiver support.
- Post-tenure faculty support, e.g., investigate ways to professionally “boost” faculty after tenure.
- Decay of health benefits.

- Employee Engagement Survey, COACHE Survey, etc. – is anything being done to follow up on lessons learned from the surveys, and should the surveys continue to be administered, and, if so, at the same or reduced frequency?

Professor Lanyon opened up the floor for discussion.

FACULTY SABBATICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL LEAVES: In response to a question about where things are at with the SCFA Subcommittee on Faculty Sabbatical and Development Leaves, Professor Ng reported that she provided an update to the Faculty Senate at the April 30, 2015 meeting (for more information please go to page 18 of the April 30 Faculty Senate minutes - <http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/usenate/minutes/150430sen.pdf>). To summarize, Professor Ng said faculty liked the idea of a half a year, fully paid sabbatical and a full year sabbatical with compensation at or preferably over 50% of their salary. Also, she noted that at the Senate meeting, there were a couple of faculty members who asked about the possibility of retaining the current single-semester structure in addition to having the fully funded half-year sabbatical leave. Professor Lanyon noted that the committee has been talking about this topic for a couple years now. The reason the issue was raised in the first place was because it is a well-known fact that the use of sabbaticals is highly variable across the University, and there is some evidence to suggest that faculty are not taking as many sabbaticals as may be in the best interest of the institution. Sabbaticals are great professional development opportunities, but there are barriers in how the policy is set up that are preventing people from taking advantage of these opportunities.

To clarify, said Vice Provost Levine, the options that are being discussed by the deans are 1) the fully paid half-year sabbatical and 2) the half salary plus full year sabbatical. With that said, the economic cost of these options need to be weighed. So, at this point, the deans and chancellors are in the process of reviewing and discussing the proposed options. With respect to the single semester leave, however, which is culturally different across the University, a department head could decide at any time not to have a faculty member teach for a semester. *Current status - this issue is no longer in the committee's hands but in the Provost's Office.*

WORK/LIFE BALANCE RESOURCE FOR APPLICANTS: Professor Kurdle said he thought the committee made a recommendation last year that the administration develop a website or identify a contact person to provide information/resources concerning partner accommodations in faculty searches. Professor Lanyon confirmed that this is correct, but said he sees the role of this committee as keeping the committee's recommendation at the forefront to make sure it gets done. He added that because this is an issue that spans multiple offices at the University it is not clear-cut who will do it or if multiple offices need to work on it collaboratively. Vice Provost Levine said this is accurate and commented that his office actually started working on developing a brochure, but was stopped because there are others inside and outside the University that provide this information. *Current status – this issue is no longer in the committee's hands but in the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs Office.*

POST-TENURE REVIEW (PTR): Professor Blue said she is interested in learning more about PTR and how it is implemented at the University. Professor Lanyon said the committee talked a little about this last year and learned that the implementation is all over the map in terms of how it is being done. Vice Provost Levine said the implementation instructions are outlined in the procedures, but, unfortunately, they are not always read or followed. It is hard to imagine more could be done centrally around this issue yet it is likely there are best practices out there, said Professor Lanyon. He said he believes the committee should think about how it could help keep this issue moving forward so PTR is a meaningful endeavor.

25% RULE FOR ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHING FUNCTIONS:

Vice Provost Levine reminded the committee about the unresolved issue of the number of contract positions and academic professional with primary responsibility for teaching, which are not to exceed 25% of the FTE tenured and tenure-track faculty in a college (Academic Appointments with Teaching Functions policy - <http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Hiring/TEACHING.html>). He recalled that AF&T and SCFA had at one point formed a subcommittee but that subcommittee no longer exists. AF&T co-chair Phil Buhlmann added that this is AF&T's big issue for the year and they would like to work with SCFA on it. He noted that their goal for this year is to develop a white paper that outlines guiding principles in developing the right ratio for each unit, and then a logical outcome of the white paper could be a resolution or statement. Graduate student Leah Reinert volunteered to serve on this subcommittee. Professor Lanyon thanked Ms. Reinert for volunteering. *Current status – a joint AF&T and SCFA subcommittee will be re-established with the goal of completing the work on this issue during the 2015 – 2016 academic year.*

Professor Lanyon asked members about other ideas the committee should work on this year.

Other ideas for agenda items included:

- NON-TENURE TRACK/CLINICAL FACULTY ISSUES: Clinical Professor Rhudy said she would like the committee to keep on its radar the non-tenure track/clinical faculty in terms of their roles, responsibilities, recognition, etc. This is an issue in the School of Nursing as it relates to engagement and job satisfaction. She recalled that the Academic Health Center (AHC) had formed a task force to look at this matter and a report was issued in November of 2010, *Report of the Clinical Faculty Task Force*, but she is not sure where things are at with the recommendations the task force made.
- STRENGTH OF FACULTY GOVERNANCE: Professor Grier-Reed said she would like the committee to have a discussion about the relative strength or impotence of faculty governance. Because of the unionization effort that is underway, it might be a good time to talk about this issue. Professor Caraway seconded this idea.

- FACULTY SURVEYS: Professor Gladding suggested looking at the various survey results such as COACHE to see if there are any issues that need to be championed or moved forward. Professor Lanyon said he would like SCFA to take a position about the best way to engage faculty in surveys. SCFA may want to consider making a clear statement about its stance on surveys.
- SALARY EQUITY: Professor Lanyon said salary equity remains an issue at the University. Vice Provost Levine noted that the Salary Equity Review Committees (SERCs) would be continuing their work; this is an on-going effort. Professor Lanyon suggested receiving a summary report annually on these efforts to ensure progress is being made. If this is to happen, said Vice Provost Levine, a methodology for compiling the report's results will need to be established because last year some of the reports came to his office and other were sent to the Provost's Office.
- ENTERPRISE SYSTEM UPGRADE PROJECT (ESUP) STATUS REPORT: Professor Luciana suggested receiving a report in the spring on the issues arising out of the upgrade of the Enterprise System impacting faculty.
- HEALTH CARE COSTS: Piggybacking off of an issue Professor Konstan sent in because he could not attend today's meeting, Professor Caraway suggested talking about rising health care costs, and their impact on people with families and lower-paid employees in general.
- GRADUATE EDUCATION: Professor Lanyon mentioned graduate education as another issue to keep on the committee's radar screen. While he said there is no specific agenda item at this time, he asked members to pay attention to this issue.

Professor Lanyon thanked members for their ideas, and noted that as other things arise during the year to let him and Renee Dempsey, Senate staff, know.

3. **Adjournment**: Hearing no further business, Professor Lanyon adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate

