

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Monday, August 27, 2001
9:00 - 3:00
Fireplace Room, Landscape Arboretum**

Present: Richard Goldstein (chair), Josef Altholz, Carole Bland, Robert Fahnhorst, Daniel Feeney, Darwin Hendel, Roberta Humphreys, Robert Jones, Cleon Melsa, George Seltzer, Tom Walsh, Carol Wells

Regrets: Carol Carrier, Joan Howland, Dwight Purdy, Wade Savage, Sheila Warness

Absent: none

Guests: William Garrard (chair, Tenure Subcommittee); Sharon Lund (Family Practice and Community Health)

[In these minutes: numerous issues before the Committee]

Professor Goldstein convened the group at 9:15 and drew the attention of Committee members to the agenda and handout. In the course of the day, the Committee did the following:

-- Reviewed the charge to the Committee.

-- Reviewed the issues that it had dealt with last year: academic appointments, the retirement plan, emeritus faculty, post-tenure review, salaries, tuition reduction, electronic privacy, the faculty mortgage plan, retirement benefits for new faculty (elimination of the waiting period).

With respect to the last item, Professor Goldstein noted that none of the other Big Ten schools have any waiting period for new faculty before they participate in the retirement plan. There will be on the docket of the first Faculty Senate meeting a recommendation to the administration that the waiting period be eliminated.

-- It agreed to inquire if emeritus faculty might be permitted to use the first two steps of the grievance policy, which are informal; the former University Grievance Officer indicated that allowing them to do so would not place an undue burden on the Grievance Office

-- It agreed that there needs to be a message to faculty about important policies that are available on the web.

-- Agreed that at the end of the year the Committee should re-examine the parking policy with respect to new faculty. There is supposed to be another committee to look at parking policies; this

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Committee will want to be involved in it. Professor Goldstein suggested that there should be some college control over parking spaces.

-- Agreed there should be an annual letter from the chair of the Committee to department chairs about important policies.

-- Discussed the possibility of replacing the existing Faculty Mortgage Program (which now costs the University money, which it did not in the past, and which may not be of much help to faculty given current low mortgage rates) with an advisor or advocate who could help faculty find the best mortgage.

-- Agreed that last year's Subcommittee on Retirement would continue unchanged, with Professor Feeney as chair.

-- Agreed that the report from the University of Florida evaluating research universities should be distributed to it and to the members of the Faculty Consultative Committee and that Dean Rosenstone's comments to the conference on "The University's Contribution to Minnesota's Economic, Social and Cultural Vitality" should be distributed to it, the Faculty Consultative Committee, and the Senate Committee on Educational Policy.

-- Heard from Professor Garrard on several issues pending before the Tenure Subcommittee, and voted unanimously in favor of recommending a Senate bylaw change which would re-establish it as the Senate Tenure Committee. The issues of importance were college policies regarding the use of non-faculty instructional appointments and hiring part-time and non-faculty in order to avoid granting tenure. Also to be taken up are post-tenure review and shared appointments.

-- Expressed concern about the administration of faculty salary increases for 2001-02: there was no discussion of the plan with faculty and it appears that the result will be a bi-modal distribution of increases, with most receiving an average of 3% and perhaps one-quarter receiving increases of 11-13%. The Committee agreed it wished to be provided an analysis of the results. A related concern was the attrition of tenured/tenure-track faculty lines, although Vice Provost Jones informed the Committee that the number of faculty lines in recent years has increased, not decreased.

-- Agreed that it wished to meet with the individual hired to be responsible for health care/health plans.

-- Heard via telephone hook-up from Professor Bland about the work of the Faculty Development Working Group. They have been gathering interview data from 37 highly-research-productive departments to identify the research-facilitating practices of these departments. In addition, in order to identify influences on faculty careers, a faculty exit survey was sent to 118 tenure-track faculty who left the University voluntarily during the preceding three years for reasons other than tenure denial and who took positions in other academic institutions. The report from the interviews and surveys will be completed late Fall Semester.

-- Agreed that there is a continued need to analyze faculty salaries and that the effort should be joint with the Committee on Finance and Planning. Professor Humphreys agreed to take on this task for the Committee; it was agreed that someone from CLA should be asked to participate as well.

-- Agreed that on the issue of electronic privacy, Professor Walsh should be asked to take the lead and to recommend whether a general University policy is needed. Associate Vice President Cawley should also be asked to join the Committee for a discussion of the issues.

-- Agreed that it should hear from Professor Fogelman about the work of the Task Force on Civic Engagement, inasmuch as there are faculty workload implications in a number of its recommendations.

-- Expressed concern about the apparent lack of regularity in the reviews of administrators, particularly department heads/chairs. A question was raised about whether closed ballots/surveys concerning administrator performance are permissible; the length of terms of department heads/chairs was also the subject of discussion. It was agreed that the Committee should review college constitutions. It was also noted that there was a systematic effort to think about reviews of administrators when Professor Kuhl was in Academic Affairs and there is a policy on reviews of administrators; with respect to the latter, it was agreed that Vice President Carrier should be asked about how the policy is being implemented.

-- Agreed that the ratio of staff to faculty should be examined. There has been no growth in DEPARTMENT support for faculty; the growth in staff appears to be in areas where the University believes it must do things. A related issue which elicited concern is the practice of charging faculty for services from the University, apparently predicated on the concept of the department as a self-supporting unit.

-- Agreed that it would wish to support an increase in the central administrative support for sabbatical leaves.

-- Agreed that it should consider the impact of the change to semesters, now that the change has been in place for two years, and the possible impact on faculty workload.

Professor Goldstein thanked everyone for coming. The meeting adjourned for a tour of the Arboretum.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota