

Minutes*

Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Tuesday, September 10, 2013
2:30 – 4:30
238A Morrill Hall

Present: Joseph Konstan (chair), Teri Caraway, Arlene Carney, Dann Chapman, Sophia Gladding, Tabitha Grier-Reed, Heath Himstedt, Frank Kulacki, Scott Lanyon, Theodor Litman, Karen Miksch, Peh Ng, George Sell

Absent: Kathryn Brown, Randy Croce, Carl Flink, Lori Rhudy

Guests: none

[In these minutes: (1) welcome, introductions, and committee charge; (2) update on salary equity study, recommendations, and implementation; (3) report on New Faculty Orientation (Twin Cities); (4) issues pending]

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Committee Charge

Professor Konstan convened the meeting at 2:30, welcomed Committee members to the first meeting of the year, and called for a round of introductions.

Professor Konstan then turned to the Committee's charge and asked rhetorically "where do we fit?" He offered two analogies. One, the nutritionist for a football team gets none of the credit for success—that all goes to the coach and players—but the nutritionist seeks to ensure the health of the players. This Committee tries to ensure that the University has healthy and happy faculty who are recruited and nurtured. A second analogy is with the top general in the U.S. Army: it is the Chief of Staff, recognition that leadership is development of the organization and support for its people. What this Committee does is try to ensure that the faculty are nurtured so that the teaching, research, and public engagement/outreach/service missions can be fulfilled. Moreover, if the Committee is really successful, no one will notice. So the work of the Committee will not appear in the Minnesota *Daily*, but it will appear in the docket of the Faculty Senate. The Committee is responsible for the human infrastructure of the University.

Professor Konstan reviewed the elements of the charge to the Committee. He noted that some of the work is in conjunction with the Benefits Advisory Committee. Mr. Chapman noted that the Committee also has a Subcommittee on Retirement that does the heavy lifting on issues associated with the Faculty Retirement Plan.

Professor Konstan observed that the Committee may wish one or two additional representatives from the Academic Health Center, given the issues facing the Committee.

2. Update on Salary Equity Study, Recommendations, and Implementation

* 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 represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.

Vice Provost Carney began an update on salary equity by explaining that there will be a memo to all faculty about the matter; the plan is to communicate with all faculty members at the same time because they want the process to be as transparent as possible, and not be explained only through the governance system.

Dr. Carney reviewed the background behind the study that led to the recommendations. The original study, using a consultant from the University of Wisconsin (selected by a group of faculty including representatives from the Women's Faculty Cabinet), used 2007 data and found a 2.2% difference between men's and women's salaries. The study was of the Twin Cities campus and did not include colleges in the Academic Health Center except for Pharmacy and Public Health (because it is difficult to calculate faculty salaries when there is a clinical component). When it came time to make salary adjustments, after significant discussions, it became clear that the data were too old, so they re-did the study with 2012 data. This time there was a 2.4% difference—which is not statistically different from 2.2%.

There were differences by rank, Dr. Carney said: 4% at the full professor rank, about 1.5% at the associate professor level, and no difference at the assistant professor level. So while they are small differences, they will be addressed. She explained the methodology used in the analysis (it will rely on regression analysis using both years-since-degree and years-since-hire). A number of people have looked at the data, but faculty are more difficult than other University positions because faculty positions are not standardized. Dr. Carney emphasized that they are conducting an overall salary equity study, not just a gender-equity salary study, although the hypothesis is that there will be more equity questions about women's salaries than men's, but they do not want to overlook equity questions for men.

Each Salary Equity Review Committee (SERC) appointed or being appointed by the colleges is looking at the data and developing rubrics for evaluating the information, Dr. Carney said, and they must now read the CVs (which are not all formatted in the same way. One problem is that not all colleges have repositories of CVs and some departments do not even collect the CVs from their faculty, so that information has to be provided. People want to look first at the highest salaries, but that is not the point and it will slow down the process if they do; the SERCs need to look at merit—and so need a rubric or criteria by which to assess merit. CV analysis, however, will not be easy.

From her perspective, Dr. Carney related, the question is what to do to prevent the problem in the future. Is there something in the way salaries are set that causes it to happen? Her hypothesis, she said, is that units with elaborated metrics for assessing merit will see less variation than when a department chair or head alone makes the decisions. SERCs will need the CVs for all faculty in the college and the metrics that departments use in order that there are comparators so they can evaluate whether the salary differences are based on research, teaching, and student-rating scores. She said she knows that there will be many questions from the SERCs, and she and former Vice President Carol Carrier will provide training. The college SERCs are to start their work in October.

Professor Lanyon recalled that Dr. Carney had talked about last spring; will that information be added to the data available? It will, Dr. Carney said; Provost Hanson has requested of the colleges data on faculty recruitment, retention, and retirement, so there will be information on starting salaries, start-ups, the first few years of teaching, and retention, information that may help explain some of the salary

variation. All of the information for a college in one place should stimulate interesting conversations and allow the SERCs to look at similar individuals and ask about different salaries.

Dr. Carney said she hopes that the SERCs will be able to develop advice for the deans by the end of the year, before merit decisions must be made, so that the deans can see what adjustments will be needed.

Professor Konstan observed that one difference that will not be addressed will be salary differences across disciplines. Dr. Carney agreed.

Professor Konstan asked if the SERCs would receive any training about the source of funding for adjustments. They will not, Dr. Carney said. The issue for SERCs is "who is not compensated correctly?" and recommendations on a fix so that salaries are not capricious. One problem is retention offers. Professor Clayton, the analyst from the University of Wisconsin, believes that if someone in a discipline receives a salary adjustment because of a retention offer, everyone in the field should receive an adjustment; that is not practical, but retention offers could cause departments to have serious discussions about such offers. The process cannot solve all the problems of justice but it should stimulate serious conversation when the SERCs find an "oops."

Professor Konstan inquired what faculty members who are identified as having low salaries hear at the end of the process. Dr. Carney said that some faculty do not want to be compared. Professor Konstan asked if those who do agree to be compared could hear that they are below what was expected and the evaluation concluded that they are low because their merit is low. They could, Dr. Carney said. And could they hear that they should make, for example, \$9,500 more? The SERC would not say that someone should make \$X more, Dr. Carney said; the SERC is advisory to the dean; it informs the dean someone is underpaid and it is the dean's job to deal with the problem. The faculty member will be told that he or she has been identified as underpaid—and may not like to hear that there is a reason for the lower salary, such as lower merit, so there could be some unhappiness as a result of the process as well.

Professor Kulacki said that the long tails on salary adjustments could affect the ability of a dean to reshape a department, if the funds must come from salary lines. Dr. Carney said the dean must find the money. Her guess, she said, is that the problem began with starting salaries. She noted that her office has nothing to do with hiring (although some of her peers at other institutions have more to say in that matter). She does review hires with tenure but does not have a say in salaries. Wisconsin had a larger problem than Minnesota and one result of the adjustments was there was less money for new hires. That is why SERCs are advisory to the dean: a person is unfairly paid and the dean must act on the advice, in consultation with the faculty. If all the changes are made at once, they could use up all the money for new faculty hires, so adjustments may have to be spread out a little over time. She reminded the Committee, however, that the overall gender differences at the University are very small. One question is whether there are larger salary issues to be addressed; there could be higher salaries in some cases because of a retention offer or because someone was brought in at a higher salary to start with. Will a department say it won't do that any more? Will they decide not to try to retain someone because the person is in an area where they do not wish to retain people?

Professor Kulacki said he believes the unit culture will dominate the decisions. Can they evaluate how much different a department is from normal salary distributions? Dr. Carney said she did not believe there are "normal" salary distributions. What about a time-series analysis, Professor Kulacki asked? The

fundamental problem is that the analysis makes most sense within units, Professor Konstan said, but there is nowhere near enough data to be statistically significant; few departments have 200 faculty and many hires, promotions, and retentions. In most cases these are very small numbers. As for Professor Kulacki's question, Dr. Carney said, the SERCs need address the data they will have and make recommendations to the dean before merit decisions are made for 2014-15. After that they can look at other issues.

3. Report on the New Faculty Orientation (Twin Cities)

Vice Provost Carney next provided the Committee with a report on this year's New Faculty Orientation. She reviewed the elements of the 3-day orientation, which touch on diversity, serving students, teaching, research and grants, technology, governance, the promotion-and-tenure process, and other topics. The big surprise this year was that there was about double the number of participants over last year, because each dean has hired a few more people. There were 118 attendees this year (10 tenured, 76 tenure-track, and 31 contract faculty). She noted that this program does not include the Crookston, Duluth (except for Medicine and Pharmacy), and Morris campuses; Rochester faculty are included. Morris has its own program; she goes to Crookston each year for a full day to offer a program for new faculty; she has not been invited to the Duluth campus although would offer assistance if asked.

In addition to the orientation, she hosts new-faculty lunches during the year, with guests. As a result of discussions last year, she also sponsors a new-faculty social hour four times per year, which allows new faculty to build a community and make friends. She said she sees those events as preventive retention.

Professor Konstan thanked Dr. Carney for her two reports.

4. Issues Pending

Professor Konstan next asked Committee members to review the list of issues pending for the year. He highlighted ones he believed to be higher priority.

- Report from the subcommittee on sabbaticals and leaves, which Professor Ng has agreed to chair to complete its work.
- Faculty rights and online courses; e-learning and conflicts of interest.
- Data on retirements and discussion of retirement paths in light of recent articles indicating the faculty are retiring later than they have in the past.
- Retention offers (depending on the data available from Dr. Carney)
- A group of issues that might be categorized as the "professor mom/dad problems" related to the family-friendly workplace, child care, variations in appointments, and so on.
- Report from the subcommittee on college personnel plans.
- "Who Teaches What," data on the percentage of courses taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty, P&A teaching staff, graduate assistants, and contract or adjunct faculty.

-- Spousal hires.

Committee members offered suggestions for additional items.

-- Professor Kulacki suggested alternative employment practices, such as term tenure or rolling contracts (e.g., 15-year appointments renewed every 5 years).

-- Professor Lanyon suggested evaluating lessons learned from college mergers (Professor Miksch reported that the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure is developing a procedures document to accompany section 12 of the tenure policy, which deals with programmatic change; Professor Konstan said the issues go beyond tenure and include teaching loads, research funding, etc.; Dr. Carney observed that it can also affect staffing).

-- Professor Ng asked if the Committee wished to revisit the issue of tuition benefits for dependents of University employees (Professor Konstan said one question is whether such a benefit would create stronger bonds to the University for faculty members; he said he thought the Committee should take up the issue only if there is overwhelming interest in it and if it needs the benefit to be among the top public research universities).

-- It was agreed the Committee might look at the process of annual performance evaluations for tenured faculty in light of the goals and expectations established by departmental 7.12 statements (after the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure completes its review of the process).

Professor Konstan adjourned the meeting at 4:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota