

Minutes*

**Senate Committee on Faculty Affairs
Tuesday, October 28, 2003
2:15 – 3:00
300 Morrill Hall**

Present: John Fossum (chair), F. R. P. Akehurst, Carol Carrier, Terence Collins, Janet Ericksen, Patricia Frazier, Darwin Hendel, Theodor Litman, Kathleen Sellev

Absent: Carole Bland, A. Saari Csallany, Jesse Daniels, Richard Goldstein, Robert Jones, Dan Lim, Claudia Parliament, Wade Savage, Charles Stech, Larry Wallace, Timothy Wiedmann, Aks Zaheer

Guests: none

[In these minutes: (1) course evaluation subcommittee, Big Ten salary increases/freezes, survey of employees; (2) reviews of administrators]

1. Committee Business

Professor Fossum convened the meeting at 2:25 and reported on two items.

-- The course evaluation subcommittee, appointed jointly with the Committee on Educational Policy, is up and running; the members are Professor Will Durfee, chair, Professor Jesse Daniels, Ms. Gretchen Haas, Professor Darwin Hendel, Mr. Scott LeBlanc, Professor Martin Sampson, Professor Joel Weinsheimer, and Associate Dean Shirley Garner.

Professor Fossum related that he had come across an interesting piece of research about "beauty in the classroom," which demonstrated a positive relationship between appearance of the instructor and student rankings. So, "to improve your teaching evaluations, get that botox treatment."

-- The Committee has received the information on salary increases in the Big Ten. A number of the institutions have salary freezes which the increases, where given, range from about 2-4%. Penn State is giving 4%, Ohio State 3.5%. Iowa and Wisconsin, like Minnesota, are not increasing salaries.

-- Later in the meeting, Professor Hendel asked Dr. Carrier if the proposed survey of employees was on hold. It is, she said, although it is ready to go. It will take people about 20-25 minutes to do, on the web, and will be sent in February. The survey will collect information employee attitudes and satisfaction, and everyone will have the opportunity to complete it. Dr. Carrier reported that Professor Bland has also partnered with some others to produce a survey for faculty over 50; that survey will be in addition to the employee survey and will go out this fall.

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2. Reviews of Administrators

Professor Fossum turned now to Vice President Carrier for a discussion of the reviews of administrators.

Dr. Carrier began by noting that there is a long and complicated policy that governs administrative reviews, adopted on the recommendation of a joint faculty-administration task force, in 1993, that covers deans, vice presidents, chancellors, the General Counsel, and a few others, and gives the President the authority to use it for other positions as well. The policy was written to cover the major assessments of the individuals being reviewed and is separate from the annual reviews that all administrators go through. She also distributed a one-page summary of the number of reviews that have taken place since 1998. There are to be 10 reviews started this year.

One issue with the policy is that sometimes the reviews are delayed for various reasons, Dr. Carrier told the Committee. For example, if a dean says he or she will retire in the next year or 18 months, the administrator may decide not to conduct a major review. When the retirement is delayed, it then looks like the person served for a long time with no review. Another reason a review may be delayed is because an administrator is dealing with some very big issue (for example, her review has been postponed until January because of the strike).

These reviews turn out to be a big deal, Dr. Carrier said. They involve a committee of 8-15 people that typically wants to do a survey in addition to focus groups, interviews, and so on. On average, it takes 8 months from the first meeting of the committee to the submission of its final report. The review committee report is one piece of information that goes into the review, along with other information the responsible administrator may collect.

Professor Fossum said he had been contacted by Dr. Maziar's office about the review of two deans this year. Dr. Carrier said there may be some deans at UMD and some in the AHC that are also being reviewed. All these individuals serve at the pleasure of the President, Professor Fossum noted; beyond that condition, is there an initial term of appointment or a renewal term? Typically there is a multi-year appointment to begin with, Dr. Carrier said (which is necessary in order to be able to recruit), and then they are usually annual appointments after that.

How is the result of the review used in discussions with the administrator who was reviewed or in deciding the question of reappointment, Professor Fossum asked? Dr. Carrier said that after the review committee finishes and provides a report to the responsible administrator, that individual provides a written report to the person reviewed and has a meeting with him or her to talk about reappointment and any development opportunities that may be appropriate.

What access does the individual reviewed have to materials in the review, Professor Fossum asked. Full access, Dr. Carrier said, but in some cases the administrator waives the right to review--and that waiver is made known to those who participate in the review.

There are a couple of problems with the policy, Dr. Carrier said. They fear that the reviews have begun to get out of control in terms of data. Each review committee wants to create its own survey instrument and wants everyone to fill it out; in one case, the review committee sent out 7000 surveys. They then get a very low response rate and have trouble dealing with the results. This year she has

appointed a small group of faculty and administrators (including Professor Hendel from this Committee) to look at the best ways to collect data for a review and to try for a more manageable plan that will not take excessive amounts of time.

In some cases there is slippage in the timing of the review, Professor Fossum noted; what mechanism is there to take care of a tardy evaluation? If, for example, a person said he or she is leaving-- but then doesn't. There is no concrete answer to that question, Dr. Carrier said. Her office sends a reminder each year to the three offices responsible for conducting reviews (the President, the Provost, and the Senior Vice President for the Health Sciences) to tell them who is up for review. Those offices, however, are responsible for running and staffing the reviews and preparing reports. Is it possible for the Committee to receive a schedule of the individuals to be reviewed in the next couple of years, Professor Fossum inquired? It would, Dr. Carrier said.

Do most administrators stay in office long enough to get to the review point, Professor Collins asked? They do, Dr. Carrier said. The system works reasonably well, once the review gets started. And there have been occasions when the staff members responsible for coordinating reviews leave an office, which causes some delays as well.

The complaint they hear most about the reviews, Dr. Carrier related, is from an interested party who wants to know how the review turned out. They cannot provide that information because it is private data.

Beyond the group of administrators identified, individual colleges can use the policy for others if they wish, Professor Fossum asked. They can, and some do, but the practice is not widespread, Dr. Carrier said. Professor Fossum said the Carlson School uses it for department chairs; one cannot be reappointed chair unless one has gone through the review.

Professor Fossum thanked Dr. Carrier for her report and adjourned the meeting at 2:50.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota