August 12, 2011- Fall Semester Faculty Caucus

Minutes:

* Welcome by Erin McNelis-discussion of change in the day for caucus and hopeful that faculty participation will improve.
* Introduction of Faculty Senate Representation and attendees.
* Total of 26 faculty in attendance and 5 senate representatives.
* Erin McNelis provides update on the peer selection process. Every 5 years, WCU chooses peer universities, which will impact our budget, for expectations for graduation rates, retention rates, etc. The provost office has asked for volunteers to serve on the peer selection group.
* Reorganization Task Force representatives will be voted on for faculty this month. There will be one member from every college chosen. In addition, there are two representatives from the staff, the dean reps. are Gibbs Knotts, Linda Stanford. Charged quickly with reorganization policy. Looked at by senate of both faculty/staff, SGA
* Non-reappointment letters- Erin McNelis met with legal counsel (Mary Ann) and Beth Tyson-Lofquist on the issue and she will post the findings report on H drive
* Exec. Council-Vicki reports on the budget meeting with the Chancellor. Reversion: money must be sent back, not allowed to carry over the 2 million dollars this year. One time money- our new chancellor will not use it due to financial instability and there may not be other ways to fund after the 1st year.
* Comments on other UNC institutions (ASU and UNC-P) and ways people heard they dealt with budget cuts; upon follow-up with faculty governance leadership at these institutions, none of the actions mentioned had occurred as discussed.
* Program evaluation will not be done as discussed last year. Chancellor wants to do strategic planning first and will help in future planning for WCU.
* Colleges will send forward names for provost search committee. In addition, need members for an advisory council for the chancellor. This will consist of a large number of constituents (students, alumni, faculty, staff) Target for provost hire date is next academic year. WCU will be doing the search. Financially not feasible for firm to do search.
* Tracks of faculty lines-research, service, and teaching. Could this be a tenure track position to help the load of teaching for researchers? Create different tracks? GA approval needed or not? [Added to Faculty Affairs Agenda]
* UNC teaching system load-national buzz about teaching loads in general, what are expectations, what are we obliged to do, etc. WCU policies about this issue, we need to start talking about it now. GA looking at everything, looking for faculty to explain what they do to our NC legislators [Added to Faculty Affairs Agenda]
* Get feedback, how are budget cutbacks affecting faculty this year? [Chancellor Belcher addressed some in opening address and is planning follow-up workshops, documents, and information to keep university informed of budget]
* Adjunct faculty took a hit this year, any fixed term affected, lost email accounts May 15. IT can get email reinstituted, but there is a process to do so. There is a designation of affiliate faculty- play a role in the department, keep email, cat card. Anna McFadden recommends that we devote time during a senate meeting to understand issue better. Get overview to understand this issue-HR drives the policy and IT just implements it. 1-year contracts-contracts just now getting signed, contracts coming out late. Student info not received due to emails being turned off. Are there other solutions to this blanket-cutting faculty off from communication? Craig Fowler might be best one to speak to the issue could the deadline be changed-is this an HR question? Losing benefits of employment if they are getting their contract renewed later in the summer-this will be an issue for Heidi’s committee. [Added to Faculty Affairs Agenda; Anna McFadden has provided link to IT Audit report]
* Discussion of long-range planning needs; one-year contracts are not really good for long range planning
* Is it possible to hire a faculty member to start on any days other than 1st or 15th of a month? Need to go to Kathy Wong for clarification. [Erin to follow-up with Kathy Wong]
* Student evaluations-David McCord will get a report to faculty senate about the response rate during our August meeting. Assess faculty-where do SAI’s fit?
* Vicki, Beth, Mark Lord will do a workshop on the new tenure process. It will be on September 8 in Killian-questions for faculty will be answered.
* CRC (or Mark Lord) will be making a checklist with months and due dates for documents in tenure process. [On Collegial Review Agenda]
* Describe what collegiality is and how will it be assessed? Each dept. will decide if collegiality will be evaluated. Need to be cautious about terminology. Do faculty want collegiality or is it coming from on high? . Info from workshop on collegiality last year is on H drive in Collegial Review Council folder. [Collegial Review Council is currently working on this.]
* Ombudsman position-confusion about what the role is? Not resolved yet. Mediation program is free for any faculty members, training provided from the business law dept. [Provost Lofquist will work on this with Erin and/or Faculty Affairs Council]
* FPAC renaming to Bardo-who has the right to name buildings? 5 million dollar scholarships lost and Cherokee slighted. [Added to Faculty Affairs Agenda; recommended for Staff Senate concern as well]
* Could Senate look at hiring process-new school created, now head of the dept. new assistants but no advertisements done? Associate provost was not advertised. College Ed with 3 dept. heads. Position of evaluating other faculty, internal positions-are they being advertised? Faculty positions not advertised either. Hand picked? [Erin to follow-up with HR and Provost’s Office]
* Transparency and communication-fresh start with Chancellor Belcher, reinforce it
* These are the things we would like to see in a chancellor-nice document from senate. These are the ways we would like to work with you.
* Deans and faculty senate are now meeting one time each semester to improve communication
* Lack of voice at Exec. Council, change to a larger group. New chancellor not acting on the exec. Council request at the moment. [Chancellor Belcher is creating Leadership Council and will see it addresses Faculty Senate’s concerns]
* TPR process-Role of department head in committees is brought up. Dept. heads have so much say-it is unfair. Dept. head makes comments, in fact may be voting. Double voting issue, discuss issue of dept heads being on the committees. Follow CRD’s from the departments. DH presents the case. If questions, do committee members defer to DH? Vicki will ask for an articulation of process across the campus. Hard to create a system that is flexible and works for all depts. [Added to Collegial Review agenda]
* Request for a clearer definition of what you need to accomplish to go up early for tenure/promotion. [Added to Collegial Review agenda]
* Concerns that the faculty handbook does not explain how faculty on fixed term contracts can advance in rank (currently they have to cancel current contract and get a new contract). Shouldn’t this at least be addressed in the handbook? [Added to Collegial Review agenda]
* Question regarding evaluations of deans and department heads: who should get to see results/summary of these evaluations and when? It is believe that these would be personnel record and not available to people outside of the person being evaluated and their supervisor. Can check on when those being evaluated should expect to see the responses. [Erin to follow-up on this]
* Faculty hearing and grievance committees-summer issue? Not addressed in the handbook for the obligations of waiting until august for committee. Can come up at the end of the spring semester. Comm. can be asked to come in during summer. Do grievance members need mediation Training? Go to bylaws to see if there is the requirement for mediators. [Already on Collegial Review’s Agenda]
* Salary study? . How are they decided? AAUW is working on this. Support from the senate group would be helpful. Communicate. Have the data and request salary schedule. Salaries are published, but not until late in the year. Should be available. Is it equity issue or within the departments-perks? Titles and what is tied to it salary wise? [Henry Wong is working with AAUW on an equity study]
* Policy using indirects for scholarship-recommendations. Changing personnel has kept us from doing it yet? [Erin first to follow up with Chancellor Belcher, Robert Edwards, and Jack Summers; then to Faculty Affairs agenda]
* Course release issue-dept. head only teaches one class? Put salaries somewhere that it is readable, get it early and have it easily accessible?
* Patent policy? Finish the work. [Provost Lofquist is working on this]
* GA is talking about the “Academics First” Process – 10 bullet points. Common drops and withdraws across the UNC system, common calendar, course load for faculty. Pressure from legislators. [Academic Policy and Review is now aware of this; will add to agenda if appropriate in the future]
* Grade replacement, course repeated ability-financial aid might not want to pay for a course being repeated.
* Get paid on projections rather than the actual? Best to have them equal
* Chancellor seems interested in a new way to look at budget and how much we charge for courses/degree costs
* Erin McNelis ends by discussing the ways to get info and ideas to senate. We will solicit faculty input for questions before the meeting with Council of Deans.
* Best colleges to work at in higher education journal? Look at this as a way to give information to chancellor.