

College of Arts and Sciences
Fall Meeting Minutes
19 August 2009

- Dean Wendy Ford welcomed the faculty and introduced the new Department Heads in English and Mathematics & Computer Science
- Department Heads introduced 12 new faculty members/faculty in new positions.
- Dean Ford introduced the Dean's office team members and responsibilities.
- Dean Ford commented on four key issues from the Chancellor's morning address
 - Alignment: all units (including all academic support units) need to be aligned with the direction Western is headed
 - Admissions: we are now admitting a larger number of students, and our College feels this first and more than anyone else; we are also admitting differently prepared students than we have been. A new question is whether we should be looking at other qualitative factors in admissions.
 - Academic programs
 - "Strategic Program Analysis" will begin this year: we are not yet sure what shape this will take. We have already been engaging in some streamlining of academic programs/concentrations, but will perhaps be refining that process more. We will be putting together mechanisms to make sure there is faculty voice in this process.
 - General Education Review will begin soon: this is what constitutes the core of a university graduate. Dean Ford noted that she believes this defines the difference between a university and a technical school. Chancellor Bardo has indicated that this process will be extensive rather than rushed.
 - Restructuring
 - Colleges: what will they look like at the end of the day? We still don't know whether there will be a College of Science and Technology. But the Chancellor is also opening this up to broader restructuring/revisioning questions.
 - Dean Ford is co-chairing the task force identifying key strengths and weaknesses in other institutions that have moved toward a College of Science & Technology model. When their work is done, the Provost will then set up a structure to include faculty voice. The Provost wants to hear directly from the faculty, and plans to come in and listen early in the semester. There will be a process where there will be faculty voice here.
 - Faculty Governance and voice. We already have certain processes in place; Chancellor Bardo wants all Colleges to have a governance structure to make sure all faculty have voice. The Chancellor mentioned, for instance, the budget cuts last year as a place where faculty voice was needed. Dean Ford noted that she heavily involved the College Department Heads Council in last year's discussion. Once she was allowed to communicate with the faculty about the reductions, she discussed the college's reduction proposals and rationale with the faculty in a special meeting.

- Dean Ford designated Associate Dean Dave Butcher to chair the discussion on six proposed changes to the College by-laws that were emailed to the faculty by Butcher on 2 August and 5 August 2009. *[The following includes excerpts from Butcher's email; the proposals were presented by overhead projector at the College meeting.]*
 - (1) Possible third year review: The College Tenure, Promotion, and Reappointment (TPR) Committee has proposed a third-year review by this committee for candidates for reappointment. The question posed of the faculty is whether we support a third year review of reappointment by the College TPR Committee, and if so, whether that review should issue in written feedback only, or in written feedback and a recommendation on reappointment. A lengthy discussion by the Faculty followed.
 - A faculty member asked if there could be a separate vote by tenured and non-tenured faculty? It was indicated that there was no procedure for this in the by-laws.
 - Another faculty member noted that he was on the university task force that began considering this summer whether we really need to evaluate folks on the tenure track every year (as in the current TPR process). It is possible that the task force might recommend only one (3rd year) TPR review event. This change would make us consistent with the potential direction of this group. One of the concerns the task force is addressing, is what if you have a situation that's just not working out, and this is clear prior to the third year. It is possible that the task force might recommend an "administratively-triggered review" in which the Department Head, in conjunction with the Dean, trigger a review earlier than the third year.
 - Some faculty indicated worry that this review would be punitive and result in non-reappointment of some faculty.
 - A College TPR committee member indicated that the intent of this was to be specific feedback to help the faculty member on the tenure track, not punishment.
 - It was also noted that in the TPR process, all "votes" (including Departmental Committee, Department Head, College Committee, Dean, University Committee, Provost, and Chancellor) are, strictly speaking, positive or negative recommendations that are sent up through the channels, with the Board of Trustees ultimately acting.
 - There was concern by some faculty about voting. Some believed there was to be an electronic vote, rather than a vote today.
 - A clarification of consequences of the votes was asked.
 - Butcher noted that the College TPR committee recommended two votes: the first, on whether there should be a third year review; and, if positive on that count, a second on whether that review should include written feedback and a vote, or written feedback only.
 - Some faculty thought the tenor of the discussion indicated that the annual TPR review would go away, and that just having a third year review and then a tenure decision makes it awfully difficult for someone.

- Butcher indicated that all we were considering here is adding a 3rd year review by the College committee, not eliminating the review events by the departmental committee and Dean in other years. The University task force is considering those other issues.
- Another faculty member indicated that there would still be an annual faculty evaluation (AFE) event every year by the faculty member's Department Head.
- Some faculty asked about making the third year review optional, or stipulating some protective provision regarding a first negative response.
 - Another faculty member noted that a 3rd year review would give junior faculty the chance to see how faculty in other departments view their case, and that this would actually be helpful for junior faculty in the long run.
 - Dean Ford noted that currently, everyone on the tenure track has an annual TPR review event at the departmental, Department Head, Dean, and Provost level. This currently does not come through any college committee until the individual goes up for tenure. In that year, the College TPR committee reviews the case before the Dean considers it. This recommended revision to the by-laws would only add a college-level feedback process at 3rd year. There is a separate conversation going through university level consideration about whether a TPR review event is needed every year.
- On faculty member indicated he was pleased to hear this discussion, because it indicated a universal commitment to maintaining integrity of the review process, and protecting the interests of tenure track faculty. However, what if the 3rd year college-level review were to differ from the department's review? If there's a conflict in 3rd year, there's a discrepancy between the college and department committee, so a report to the faculty member risks being punitive, whereas the college committee should only be verifying that the departmental committee correctly applied the standards in the department's Collegial Review Document (CRD). A substantive discussion of the role of the college TPR committee followed.
 - One faculty member responded: but isn't that exactly what happens in the tenure year anyway?
 - Another asked: Isn't the purpose of the college committee only to make sure the Department Head and department are consistent in their interpretation of the CRD ? This is not supposed to be an independent review.
 - Another answered: But a differing opinion in the 3rd year could be an indication that the faculty member is not making a wide enough case beyond her or his department.
 - Another noted that he hoped that the Dean would be very cautious in recommending against reappointment/tenure in a situation of mixed opinion by the departmental and college committees.

- A previous college level committee member at a previous institution said that he had always viewed his role as keeping the departments honest, and wanted to be there for the faculty member.
- A faculty member asked: What is the role of the college TPR committee anyway? At the college level, shouldn't it be questioning the department regarding their CRD rather than the candidate, in instances where departmental opinion is negative? Faculty know their specialty areas; there is a concern that you have to make your case directly to other college faculty. Maybe the discussion we need to have is what the role and function of each of those committees is supposed to be.
- There is a certain lore that says that the college TPR committee's decision is about the candidate; the university TPR committee's decision is about whether proper procedure was followed.
- Dean Ford indicated that she is always evaluating the candidate against the CRD criteria. The university level committee is for generalized campus expectations. Departments may feel they're evaluating candidates with regard to broader university criteria, but sometimes they're just not, and this is evident in the discrepancies in cases that come before the university TPR committee. The college level review is just to give feedback, extra input. Without it, the Dean does not have that extra input. The point would be to try to eliminate surprises in the tenure year. To the extent that a 3rd year College TPR committee review might eliminate some surprise, it could be very helpful, because the Dean can hear thoughts from the full college perspective.
- There was a question as to what "3rd" year means: in the third year, or after the third year (at the beginning of the 4th year), and whether a review in the 4th year might be more appropriate.
 - Dean Ford indicated that, as proposed, it would be in the 3rd year.
- A faculty member noted that some departments still do not have functioning CRD's. For those departments, what are faculty being judged on by university administration?
- It was clarified that, according to the by-laws, a 2/3 vote of the faculty in attendance at a College meeting must vote in favor of the amendment.
- A procedural suggestion was made on flipping the order of consideration of the two questions so that faculty would have a better sense of what they might actually be voting for: first allowing the faculty to vote on whether any 3rd year college TPR committee review should include feedback only, or feedback and a vote, and then voting on whether the faculty were in favor of that review.
 - **A motion was offered to amend the ballot to this effect. The motion was seconded and carried by show of hands.**
 - **The question was called on amending the ballot, and carried by show of hands.**

- **The question was called on the amended ballot, as to whether any 3rd year college TPR committee review should include written feedback only, or written feedback and a committee vote. This was seconded and carried by show of hands.**
- **Voting on this occurred by secret ballot, with “No” signifying there should be written feedback only, and “Vote” indicating there should also be a committee vote. Votes were tallied while the faculty considered the second proposed amendment. The Final tally was “No” = 66, “Vote” = 26.**
- **Given the results of this vote, it was moved to amend the by-laws as recommended by the College TPR committee:**

“VII 2.3 The Committee shall review and make recommendations to the Dean on all candidates for ~~reappointment~~, tenure, or promotion within the College, following the procedures in the WCU Faculty Handbook. **The Committee shall also review all candidates for their third year of reappointment within the College. In the review of third year candidates, the Committee will abstain from a vote, but will provide written feedback on the candidate’s progress toward meeting goals for successful tenure. (This feedback will be included in section 9 of the AA-12 document.)** Members of the Committee shall not vote on cases involving members of their departments. The Committee shall develop additional procedures, including whether or not members are permitted to discuss cases involving members of their departments.”

- **This proposed change was voted by secret ballot. The motion carried with 77 voting yes, 13 no, and 1 abstaining.**
 - A faculty member requested that those faculty who would now be subject to the college-level TPR committee third year review, in this academic year, be notified in writing at the earliest possible date.
- (2) Between the first and second secret ballot votes on the third-year review, the second proposed amendment to the by-laws was considered. Butcher noted that due to a change in the university student appeals process, a college Student Appeals committee has been proposed, that would have membership from each department. This would be one 11-person committee handling undergraduate and graduate appeals, and would meet only when necessary, and probably not often, as there have been 1-2 appeals per year in the past few years, and some years none at all.
- **It was moved and seconded to amend the by-laws to read as follows:**

“Section 14. Student Appeals Committee.

VII 14.1 The Committee shall be composed of one of the Associate Deans of the College, who will serve as chair of the committee, and eleven full-time faculty members, including those faculty who are participants in the University of North Carolina Phased Retirement Plan, (no more than two from any one department) constituted such that there is a representative from each of the departments of the College. Each department will select its representative.

VII 14.2 Initially the Dean shall appoint four members to four year terms, four members to a three year terms, and three members to a two year term. Thereafter, all terms will be for four years with no limits on succession.

VII 14.3. The Committee will hear academic student appeals according the university student appeals process and make recommendations to the Dean on the cases.

VII 14.4. The Committee shall meet when a student appeal is forwarded to the College of Arts and Sciences office. Normally, the entire committee will not hear each appeal. Since the required number of faculty members to hear appeals is normally lower than eleven, one of the Associate Deans will select members in closely related disciplines for each case.”

- **The motion passed by show of hands.**

- **(3)** Addition of three functioning committees, Graduate Education, Secondary Science Education Advisory, and Science Safety, to the by-laws. These three are currently functioning as standing committees, but are not included in the by-laws.

It was moved and seconded to adopt this addition to the by-laws:

“Section 11. Graduate Education Committee.

VII 11.1 The Committee shall be composed of one of the Associate Deans of the College, who will serve as chair of the committee, graduate program directors in the College, and department heads whose departments are responsible for graduate programs.

VII 11.2. The Committee shall advise the Dean’s Office on all matters related to the College of Arts and Sciences’ responsibilities in the area of graduate education.

VII 11.3. The Committee shall meet at the call of its Chair or upon the request of at least two of its members addressed to the Chair.

“Section 12. Secondary Science Education Advisory Committee.

VII 12.1 The Committee shall be composed of the Director of the Secondary Science Education Program, representatives selected from each of the programs in Science Education (Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, and Physics), a representative selected by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and a representative selected by the Dean of the College of Education and Allied Professions. The Committee shall elect the chair at its first meeting of the academic year.

VII 12.2. The Committee shall advise the Dean’s Office on all matters related to the College of Arts and Sciences’ responsibilities in the area of science education.

VII 12.3. The Committee shall meet at the call of its Chair or upon the request of at least two of its members addressed to the Chair.

“Section 13. Science Safety Committee.

VII 13.1 The Committee shall be composed of one of the Associate Deans of the College, who will serve as co-Chair, the College Research Operations Manager, who will serve as co-Chair, and one member from each of the Departments of Biology, Chemistry & Physics, and Geosciences and Natural Resources, selected by the departments. A representative will be selected from the University Safety Office by the co-Chairs of the Committee in consultation with the Director of Facilities Management.

VII 13.2. The Committee shall advise the Dean's Office on all matters related to the safety and security of science laboratories in the College of Arts and Sciences.

VII 13.3. The Committee shall meet at the call of either of its co-Chairs or upon the request of at least two of its members addressed to the co-Chairs."

- **The motion passed by show of hands.**
- (4) Reduction of membership for certain committees from 11 members to 5 plus a chair.
 - **Initial formulation of the proposal in Butcher's email was that the by-laws be amended to read as follows:**

"Section 4. Strategic Planning Committee

VII 4.1 The Committee shall be composed of the Dean or the Dean's designee as Chair, and five members from the College, including those who are participants in the University of North Carolina Phased Retirement Plan. All of the appointed members will be in different departments of the College. All terms shall be for four years.

VII 4.2 Initially the Dean shall appoint two members to four year terms, two members to three year terms, one member to a two year term, and one member to a one year term. Thereafter, all terms will be for four years with no limits on succession.

VII 4.3 The Committee, assisted by department reports and data from the Institutional Studies Office, shall perform the functions listed in the Strategic Planning Manual for the College.

VII 4.4 The Committee shall meet upon the call of its Chair or at least four of its members addressed to the Chair.

"Section 7. Student Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation Committee

VII 7.1 The Committee shall be composed of one of the Associate Deans of the College, who will serve as chair of the committee, and five full-time faculty members, including those faculty who are participants in the University of North Carolina Phased Retirement Plan, plus a Chair. All of the appointed members will be in different departments of the College.

VII 7.2 Initially the Dean shall appoint two members to four year terms, one member to a three year term, one member to a two year term, and one member to a one year term. Thereafter, all terms will be for four years with no limits on succession.

VII 7.3 The Committee shall investigate, discuss, implement, and evaluate various recruitment, retention, and graduation strategies based on the constraints of the units served. This work shall be closely coordinated with the efforts of the Admissions Office, Enrollment Management, and the Graduate College.

VII 7.4 The Committee shall meet at least once each term, at the call of its Chair, or upon the request of at least three of its members addressed to its Chair.

"Section 10. Technology Committee

VII 10.1 The Committee shall be composed of one of the Associate Deans of the College, who will serve as chair of the committee, and five full-time faculty members, including those faculty who are participants in the University of North Carolina Phased Retirement Plan. All of the appointed members will be in different departments of the College. Additionally, the Committee

shall have two non-voting outside members from Information Technology, selected by the Chair of the Committee in consultation with the Associate Provost of Information Technology.

VII 7.2 Initially the Dean shall appoint two members to four year terms, one member to a three year term, one member to a two year term, and one member to a one year term. Thereafter, all terms will be for four years with no limits on succession.

VII 10.3 Duties

(a) The Committee shall advise the Dean on any issues of concern to the Dean or the Committee related to technology.

(b) The Dean may refer problems related to technology to the Committee for its advice. Faculty members may present to the Committee statements of need and perceived problems in the area of technology.

(c) The Committee shall receive periodic and timely briefings from the two outside representatives relating to issues of concern to the Committee.

VII 10.4 The Committee shall meet at the call of the Dean, its Chair, or upon the written request of two of its members addressed to the Committee Chair.”

- A faculty member asked if we wanted to reduce the Strategic Planning Committee’s membership as well.
 - Dean Ford noted that there was no longer a university-wide strategic planning process involving these committees from the various colleges. Last year, the Strategic Planning Committee was used for proactive planning.
 - **It was moved to amend the formulations in VII 4.1, VII 7.1, and VII 10.1 to read “All of the appointed members will be in different departments of the College and rotated among departments in the college.”**
 - **A friendly amendment was offered to alter the proposed emendation to read “All of the appointed members will be in different departments of the College, with broad representation of humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences/mathematics.”**
 - **The friendly amendment was accepted.**
 - **The emendation to the proposal was seconded and adopted.**
 - **A motion to call the question was lodged, seconded, and carried.**
 - **The proposal to alter the by-laws (as amended) carried.**
- (5) Elimination of the provision that 2 individuals must run for each open position on a college committee. It was noted that there is often a struggle to find a second person to run for each vacant position. The proposed revision to the by-laws is to strike the following phrase from IV 4.3:

“The names of at least two qualified persons for each vacancy being filled should be included on the ballot.”

- One faculty member noted that for some committees (such as TPR), you end up with some awkward situations, e.g. individuals from the same department running against each other, because you have to have one person from each department on that committee.

- A faculty member asked if we wanted to eliminate the provision for some committees, but not others.
 - Another faculty member noted that there seemed to be a culture of not running for committees here.
 - Another faculty member said that she did not believe it was the case that tenured faculty were shirking committee responsibilities: there just aren't enough tenured faculty to fill all of the committee roles!
 - Dean Ford noted that we currently have 18 committees operating in the college.
 - Another faculty member noted that there is not a problem getting enough people to fill all the committee vacancies, but that there is a problem getting *two* for every vacancy. There's not a dearth of individuals willing to serve, it's just getting two to run for every position that is difficult.
 - A faculty member questioned whether it is a real election without having at least two candidates.
 - Another faculty member responded that that's in fact the way elections do often work, with certain individuals running unopposed.
 - **A motion to call the question was lodged, seconded, and carried.**
 - **The motion to amend the by-laws as written carried by show of hands.**
- (6) Include the four themes the Strategic Planning Committee settled upon as unifying the entire college, by including the following statement at the end of Article II, Section 1 of the by-laws:

“Section 2. The College of Arts and Sciences is unified in its commitment to the following:

1. Professional Engagement: Every program in the college provides opportunities for students to become professionally engaged while completing their studies.
2. Regional Involvement: Faculty and students in all programs are involved in collaborative partnerships benefiting the WNC region.
3. Environmental Stewardship: Programs across the college demonstrate leadership in addressing environmental challenges.
4. Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The college is committed to developing programs and structures to foster interdisciplinary integration.”

- A faculty member asked whether this was a wish list or a mandate.
- Another faculty member noted that they liked these, but they seemed strange to include in the by-laws.
- Other faculty members noted that they would rather see this as goals language rather than part of the by-laws.
- One faculty member asked exactly what the professional engagement wording signified.
- Dean Ford asked if Article II, Section 1 by-laws could be read for context.
- A large portion of the requested section was read aloud.

- One faculty member inquired whether item 3. really applied to the college as a whole, or just the natural sciences. Several faculty responded that it applied more broadly than that.
 - A faculty member asked whether the language of the proposal could be amended in each case to read “Programs across the college...”
 - Dean Ford indicated that that was certainly possible to change the language in that way.
 - Dean Ford indicated that this was not intended to hold all faculty to all of these themes.
 - A faculty member asked whether these four themes came from the QEP or the UNC-Tomorrow report?
 - Dean Ford indicated that they did not, and instead had been distilled by the Strategic Planning Committee from what the various departments were doing.
 - **A motion to call the question was lodged, seconded, and carried.**
 - **Voting was by show of hands, with 36 in favor, 28 opposed, and 6 abstaining. A 2/3 vote being required, the proposal to amend the by-laws to include the four themes failed.**
- **The meeting was adjourned by Dean Ford.**

Respectfully submitted,
John F. Whitmire, Jr.
Secretary of the Faculty
College of Arts and Sciences