

DASNR Faculty Council (AFC) Minutes November 17, 1999

Members Present: Francis Epplin, Doug Needham, Mike Kizer, Kathleen Kelsey, Don Turton, Tom Phillips, Janice Hermann, Ulrich Melcher, Gerald Horn, Glenn Selk, Jeff Hattey, and John Ritter

Members Absent: Darrel Kletke and Terry Bidwell

Ex Officio Members Present: Dean Sam Curl and Bill Weeks

Non-Members Present: Astri Wayadande representing Carol Bender

Call to Order:

DASNR Faculty Council Chairman Francis Epplin called the meeting to order.

Secretarial Report:

Gerald Horn motioned approval of the September 14, 1999, AFC Minutes; Ulrich Melcher seconded. Motion carried. Doug Needham reported that Dwayne Hunter had established a web address for AFC, www.afc.okstate.edu, and that he (Needham) would be building the web site, which will include AFC documents in Adobe Acrobat pdf format. Kathleen Kelsey voiced her preference for native MS Word documents. Needham noted that not all departments in the Division use MS Word as their standard word processing software and that Acrobat pdf documents are independent of platform or word processing software.

Old Business:

Report from RPT Committee

Don Turton reported that the AFC RPT Committee was charged in 1998: 1. to review the RPT policies and procedures of each department in the Division to determine if the existing documents facilitate evaluation and guidance for non-tenured tenure track faculty who have programmatic responsibilities to units other than their academic department; and 2. to issue a request to current chairs of departmental committees in departments that have faculty with program responsibilities in other units to prepare a written statement as to how these cases expect to be evaluated. The submitted report contains the results of the AFC RPT Committee's work along with a discussion and recommendations resulting from its work. See "Report of the AFC RPT Committee to the DASNR AFC, November 17, 1999" for details.

Turton highlighted a few points from the document, including question #6, which asks, "How is the evaluation and guidance for non-tenured tenure track faculty who have programmatic responsibilities to units other than their academic department accomplished?" He reported that only one department, Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering, has a statement addressing this issue in its written RPT document. Other departments are handling the situation; although, it is not written in their RPT documents. He noted that only two departments specifically state in their RPT documents how faculty members are informed about the conditions and terms of employment and procedures to achieve tenure (question #3).

Recommendations:

Based on the results of its survey, the AFC RPT Committee presented the following recommendations for discussion and consideration for adoption by the DASNR AFC.

Dean Curl and his associates are commended for creating channels of communication between themselves, the academic unit, program heads outside the academic unit, the RPT Chairs and the RPT candidates. However, newly hired tenure track faculty need to know at the time of hiring the process by which they will be evaluated. Therefore, we recommend:

1. The Dean require Academic Units to include a section in their RPT documents that describes the process by which faculty who have programmatic responsibilities to units other than their academic department are to be evaluated.

Since only 2 departments indicated in their RPT documents that new faculty are informed of the provision (Appendix D 1.1.3, para. 2) that the specific job description, and terms and conditions of employment should be available to them, we also recommend:

2. The Dean require Academic Units to include a section in their RPT documents that states that new faculty will be provided, at the time of hiring, with their job description, terms and conditions of employment and a copy of the current departmental RPT document. Commend Dean Curl. Enter recommendations. These recommendations represent official motions of the RPT Committee.

Turton presented the AFC RPT Committee's recommendations as motions. Mike Kizer seconded motion #1, and Dean Curl favored the clarification it describes. Motion carried.

Ulrich Melcher seconded motion #2, which addresses question #3 posed by the AFC RPT Committee. Gerald Horn encouraged that we clearly identify the association between motion #2 and question #3. Motion carried.

Turton voiced the AFC RPT Committee's thanks to Niels Maness and Gerald Brusewitz for their previous work on the project.

Location of AFC Minutes archive in Dean's Office

Francis Epplin noted that the Minutes are yet sitting on a desk, rather than being filed. Patty Speaker is organizing the Dean's Office files.

Revised Bylaws

Epplin reviewed the purpose statement change made to the AFC Bylaws.

New Business:

Discussion with the Dean

Response to Issues and Questions

1. What faculty-relevant issues are the Dean and Associates discussing or planning to discuss in the next months?

Dean Curl's response: We discuss many teaching, research, and extension issues within Agriculture administration, and would hope that practically all of them are relevant to faculty. Some of the issues we are discussing and will be discussing in the upcoming months are the following:

- Budget discussions with central OSU administration
- Management sessions with unit administrators
- Planning for Federal Initiatives (Special Grants) for FY 2001
- Planning requests to the legislature for the coming session
- Planning for positions in DASNR
- Allocation of research support
- Reappointment, promotion, and tenure process for DASNR faculty
- Completing the search for associate director, OCES; department head, Agricultural Economics; and department head, Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering

Other than university-wide changes in RPT policy, no substantive changes are being discussed on issues focused solely on faculty, *i.e.* faculty appraisal policy, appointment length policy. Central OSU administration's view of sabbatical requirements has recently been discussed with unit administrators and we anticipate no change in the Division's policy in this regard.

Melcher questioned means of input to the Dean with respect to the above issues. The Dean stated that always there is the channel through department heads for faculty input.

2. What committees or study groups (formal or informal) have been established in the last months with faculty participation? Please identify the issues being studied and the faculty members involved.

Dean Curl's response: Two new task forces being formed which will have an effect on faculty, include the

following:

- Information Technology – We will be forming this group as an expansion of the distance education committee. Faculty will be involved.
- OSU Tulsa – Study involves primarily department heads for now, although several faculty were included on a recent visit to the OSU-Tulsa campus

Ed Miller is forming and will be working with both of these groups. The College anticipates no new study groups other than the two noted above. The six standing College committees (Curriculum and Academic Standards; Committee on Student Counseling, Advisement and Retention; Scholarship and Awards Committee; Committee on Effective Teaching; and Committee on Careers in Agriculture) continue to function.

3. University RPT policy provides deans with authority to have a college-level RPT review. DASNR has not had a college-level review, and AFC has consistently opposed a college-level review. Do you anticipate any change in the DASNR policy?

Dean Curl's response: We plan no changes to our current practice and do not plan to establish a college-wide reappointment, promotion, and tenure committee. Melcher stated that it is in the AFC Bylaws that the AFC RPT Committee can provide assistance to the Dean as needed.

4. What is the status of annual appraisals of department heads by DASNR faculty? How is information (meaningful input) solicited from faculty? Are the results of these evaluations communicated back to the faculty?

Dean Curl's response: It is University policy to examine and assess the effectiveness and productivity of administrators, and it is the dean's responsibility to initiate performance appraisals for administrators in the Division. The purpose of the appraisal is to help individuals do a better job by identifying both strengths and weaknesses and to determine if an individual is successfully performing and achieving the established roles and requirements of his/her position. According to OSU policy, administrator appraisals are to be conducted during each of the first three years an individual holds a particular position. After the initial period, performance is evaluated formally at least every three years. An informal appraisal by the Dean is conducted in the "non-formal" appraisal years.

Faculty and staff in the department/unit of the administrator being formally appraised are sent a memorandum and evaluation sheet and asked to complete and return the evaluation to the dean's office. In addition, off-campus Oklahoma Cooperative Extension staff are also asked to provide comments on campus-based administrators as appropriate. The Dean is to communicate in some manner the results of the formal appraisal to faculty and staff in the administrator's department.

5. Some departments in Ag Hall have difficulty finding office space for their current faculty and staff while others have individual offices devoted to emeritus faculty. How does DASNR make space allocation decisions?

Dean Curl's response: An inventory assessment is made periodically to evaluate space assigned to departments and how the space is utilized. Department heads are encouraged to talk to (and often do) with members of agriculture administration regarding space needs. The issue can also be addressed as a part of the annual management sessions held with each unit administrator. If faculty have specific concerns regarding space needs and allocation, I encourage them to discuss the issue with their respective department head. As appropriate, the department head will bring issues to the attention of the associates and/or the Dean.

Issues for referral to OSU Faculty Council

1. When is it anticipated that the problems with University bookkeeping and the need for accurate, monthly reconciliation of accounts will be resolved?

Epplin felt, upon discussion with the Dean, that this was more appropriate for the OSU Faculty Council. The Dean commented that it remains a problem for all concerned. However, since those who perform these functions are not part of the Division, he has been addressing the same question with central administration. Epplin commented that faculty are almost required to maintain their own system to remain timely. Bill Weeks will carry the question to OSU Faculty Council.

2. In this time of booming economy and large university expenditures for new buildings and campus beautification, how do we justify giving our lowest paid staff members (janitors, etc.) only a 3% raise?

Bill Weeks commented that he had visited with Halligan on this issue. Halligan indicated to him that there is a special fund for campus security, including lighting, hedge removal, etc. It is because of these special funds that these improvements were made. Halligan requested input for other areas on campus that need security lighting, or other security features. Mike Kizer clarified the issue which had come from his department, indicating that the question was concerned not so much about the expenditures on things like lights, flowers and buildings, but the lack of expenditure by the administration for a significant salary program for the most poorly paid University employees. The Dean addressed the student and alumni pride that has been developed as a result of campus improvements. John Ritter commented that appearance influences prospective donors. Tom Phillips questioned the 3% raise since it really applied to more than just custodial staff. Kizer commented that it is understandable that donations are often for tangible improvements.

Horn reported that Halligan commented that Monroe Street is considered the major gateway and throughway for campus. The new OSU Foundation Office will be on Monroe. The Dean stated that the University has acquired nearly all property on Monroe Street through Sixth Street. Sixth and Monroe will become the main entrance to campus.

OSU Faculty Council Report:

Weeks commented on Student Affairs Resource Committee's task force for graduate student health benefits. Does the university pay benefits to students on .25 FTE? The Dean responded that it is important for the recruitment of top notch graduate students. However we must examine our funds to see whether we can provide benefits down to .25 FTE. The Dean feels that .25 FTE is too low; he would be more favorable to .5 FTE. Weeks reported that there about 1000 graduate students on hard funds and about 500 on soft money, of which about 1200 are .5 FTE or above with about 300 at .25 FTE. The Dean feels we must provide benefits to be competitive for graduate students, as well as fairness to these individuals who do much of the work at the university. Weeks commented that it is expected that a package in the range of \$500-600 should be available for graduate students. Insurance for dependents would be additional. The Dean stated that it would not be a comparable package as that available to faculty. He also commented that in situations where graduate students have been asked to vote on a benefits package vs. increased stipends, most have favored increased stipends since many are still covered by their parents' insurance. Weeks commented that if election were on an individual basis, rather than across-the-board for all graduate students, the package cost would likely be higher. Horn questioned if the Graduate Student Association has addressed whether there is a preference for benefits or stipend. Weeks reported that there was a forum this fall; however, it is not a matter of existing funds being distributed as benefits or stipends, but rather determining the need for benefits. Kelsey commented that at Cornell University she had paid \$700 per year for health coverage.

Weeks reported that OSU Faculty Council will continue to discuss faculty background checks and how this information would be used. December 15 is scheduled for a meeting between Council and central administration. Weeks expects forums to follow. Weeks commented that OSU Controller indicated that he uses background checks for his office. The Chief of Police sees the report and alerts the Controller of potential concerns. Phillips questioned the objective of faculty background checks. Weeks commented that criminal as well as credit checks are being addressed. Weeks stated that no other Big 12 university is doing this, but that doesn't mean we should not.

Adjourn:

Next meeting is February 8, 8-10 A.M. in AGH 102. Subsequent meetings will be held April 11 and September 12. Special meetings can be scheduled at any time.

Francis Epplin adjourned the meeting.

Douglas Needham
Secretary