

Committee of Committees Meeting
December 14, 2006
Faculty-Staff Club
3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

The Faculty Executive Committee is charged with convening the Committee of Committees (CoC), which comprises faculty members of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC), the Institutional Policy and Planning Committee (IPPC), the Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure (CAPT), the Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR), the Committee on Educational Policy and Planning (CEPP), the Curriculum Committee (CC), the Faculty Development Committee (FDC), and any current ad hoc committees whose presence FEC believes would be helpful. The CoC convenes at least twice a year to assess the interactions among committees and between committees and the administration, and to discuss ongoing issues (problems or successes) in committee operations.

The first CoC meeting of AY 2006-2007 took place on Thursday, December 14, from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. Members from all of the above named committees were present, with the exception of CC, which sent no representatives. The Director of the First Year Experience (FYE) was also present at the invitation of FEC. FEC extended a belated invitation to the Athletic Council (AC), which was represented at CoC last year, but no members of that committee were able to be present.

What follow are minutes of the meeting. A condensed version of a committee's report is given first, followed by a synopsis of reactions to and discussion of that report, where applicable. The order of reports is the order in which they were actually given. The purpose of these minutes is to make faculty and administration aware of concerns within the faculty governance structure, and of observations on college operations by members of standing committees.

Furthermore, FEC has shared these minutes with appropriate members of the Administration as a courtesy. The Administration has responded in a separate document, also available from the FEC website.

1. IPPC.

Report. IPPC has an ambitious agenda this year, with little progress to report thus far. The committee has adopted an operating code, in which the finer points of subcommittee structures and functions are defined, as well as procedures for annual reports. IPPC has discussed the issues surrounding the Integrity Board, but the matter is currently in the hands of SGA. IPPC has also given greater hearing and priority to issues raised by the Campus Environment Committee. Budgetary discussions have gotten off to a late start (perhaps because of the dining hall project), and the Budget and Finance subcommittee has met only twice so far. Some faculty representatives of IPPC would say that their time thus far has been wasted, while others would not go that far, since much of the year's substantial work lies ahead. Recent meetings of the committee have been cancelled due to scheduling conflicts and lack of pressing business.

Discussion.

- Subcommittees of IPPC are standing subcommittees, some of them filled by willingneses.
- The Vice-chair of IPPC has input in establishing the agenda for IPPC meetings.
- FPPC was abolished and some of its responsibilities shifted to the Budget and Finance subcommittee of IPPC. Have we lost some transparency in the budgetary process with this shift?
- Last year we had a good process with regard to compensation, many hands contributing to a good result. This year the pressures of the dining hall project might have caused a late start with the budget; it is still important to begin the process in October. Faculty members of IPPC do not know what has caused these delays. Less frequent meetings are problematic in theory, but not necessarily in practice.
- IPPC can only make recommendations to the President and his cabinet. How well can IPPC make recommendations without time and without information? This was the problem with FPPC (though even in the days of FPPC the basic budgetary parameters were in place by December).
- There should be \$500,000.00 in the budget for compensation this year above baseline increases; this money will not be consumed by increased health care costs.
- CEPP has a small role in budgetary matters, and Dean Poston worked with this committee to weigh in on Academic Affairs initiatives both last year and this year.

2. CEPP.

Report. The focus this year is on two major issues: (A) tenure-track lines in ID programs, and (B) Writing Task Force recommendations. Two smaller issues: (C) whether or not certain classes should be pass-fail (such as physical activity courses); (D) mandated review of the new structure in the Dean of Studies office, to be begun at the end of this AY, with a report due sometime in the next AY. CEPP reports good relations with CAPT in the process of working on ID lines, and has standing sub-committees at work on various topics. CEPP is connected to the administration through Muriel Poston and Pat Oles, but the question of whether the VPAA should serve on CEPP persists (the current VPAA herself has asked this question). Currently the committee is inclined to retain the Dean of the Faculty, and to consult the VPAA as needed, on issues like Special Programs and writing.

Discussion.

- Why not have the VPAA sit on CEPP, especially if that position is the conduit to Academic Affairs on the President's Cabinet? There is no one answer to this question (and CEPP itself is divided on it). The position of the Dean of the Faculty allows that administrator to be a vocal and substantive contributor to discussions of educational policy (and the current DOF has done so). Also, the previous VPAA saw himself more as a referee, and wanted to step back so as to be in a better position to hear recommendations.

- FEC was consulted on this issue last year, and ultimately recommended that the DOF be on CEPP. The current VPAA apparently wants more involvement in the process. Is there a need to review the administrative structure of the College? The DOF, for instance, does not have the authority of the Dean of Student Affairs, who sits on President's cabinet.
- Is CEPP involved in the review of Special Programs? Not at the present, which is probably for the best — the Study Group should be given space to do its work. CEPP expects to be consulted at some point down the line, however.

3. CAPT.

Report. CAPT reports good relations with the administration this year on a number of issues, such as with the Dean of the Faculty on ID lines (and also with CEPP). The administration has provided information when asked, and has adhered to the procedures of the *Faculty Handbook*. CAPT is also gratified that the administration has sought its counsel voluntarily.

4. CAFR.

Report. CAFR has been busy so far this year. In the spring Faculty will hear about an issue for which the committee has consulted with Muriel Poston, Susan Kress, CAPT, and FEC.

5. FDC.

Report. FDC has seen many transitions of late, especially in terms of clerical staff. The committee has worked hard on proposing sabbatical fellowships through the Dean of the Faculty. The initiative had fallen apart last year, but is back on the table due in part to close consultation with the current Associate Dean, Mark Hofmann. The committee also recently changed the guidelines for Summer Collaborative Research Grants. The committee is requesting doubling the amount for faculty development grants for the 07/08 academic year (\$88,000.00); this amount is helpful, but does not make up for the money formerly received from the President's Discretionary Funds (PDF) for major completion work and Tang Exhibition Grants. The conversations with the DOF and the VPAA have been open, but subject to intense prioritization — money gained has to be given up elsewhere.

Discussion.

- Due to such intense prioritization we are losing ground on faculty development. Other competing initiatives and pursuits, such as diversity and science, are worthy and exciting, but something has to give.
- There are other avenues to pursue in the form of ad hoc money. Perhaps FDC needs to issue a stronger appeal to the President to reinstate the PDFs.

- Due to the CoC meeting of last spring, FDC spent the summer and fall researching ways to change the guidelines for Summer Collaborative Research. This research opportunity often benefited the student more than the faculty member and has been heavily weighted toward the sciences. Therefore, to open up avenues for those in other disciplines to engage in this kind of research the FDC changed the guidelines to include other research opportunities in addition to truly collaborative experiences.

6. First-Year Experience.

Report. The Director of the FYE thanked FEC for being invited to past CoC meetings, but noted that such invitations are no longer necessary.

7. FEC.

Report. FEC worked with CEPP and CAPT on a few initiatives this fall. The committee reports good working relations with the DOF and VPAA, both of whom attended FEC meetings over the course of the past term. The Chair of FEC and the Vice-chair of IPPC have also met twice with the President to discuss broader issues of governance. A topic at the first of these meetings was the relationship between FEC and IPPC. Specifically, the will of the faculty at the November 2004 meeting was for FEC to act as the “primary conduit of information...into and out of the faculty concerning all-college issues and policies,” and for the faculty members of IPPC to represent the interests of FEC. Furthermore, FEC is concerned about a potential crisis (some members of the committee would not use this term) in faculty service, which has in the recent past manifested itself in two ways: (1) the difficulty in getting a robust ballot for our fall election, and (2) the proliferation of ad hoc groups of one kind or another. FEC recognizes the need for such groups, and the good intentions behind them — two examples being a faculty advisory group for scholarships, as well as the recently announced Special Programs Study Group — but worries about the impact on service for our standing committees. If such groups are formed, FEC wants to be involved; the scholarship group, for example, was initially proposed at a faculty meeting without FEC being consulted. The committee is also working with the administration to streamline faculty meetings; much progress has been made on this front, but FEC hopes to go further.

Discussion.

- FEC is thinking, following a discussions with the DOF and VPAA, about a survey on faculty service: what do our colleagues consider service, and why? The VPAA has suggested mining the faculty’s annual reports for data, an intriguing but logistically problematic notion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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