

Minutes of the Faculty Executive Committee

FEC-6

Monday, October 6, 2008

11:30 – 1:00 p.m.

Tisch 208

Present: John Brueggemann (Chair), Jennifer Delton, Pat Hilleren, Dan Hurwitz (Scribe), and Natalie Taylor

- I. No minutes were available
- II. Round One WTS has begun.
- III. John was present at a meeting at the President's house with numerous other major committee Chairs. There was extensive interest in FEC's business.
- IV. There have been statements of interest in seeing FEC's survey. John is working on it now, and he will probably try to put together a summary of the survey's "results", if they could be called that. In any case, we will not send anything out right now.
- V. The Service/Governance Problem (SGP): as planned, we engaged in a discussion of the question, "What is the problem?", as a starting point for our deliberations. Here are some of the topics discussed and points made, separated into three classifications:
  1. Common understandings about S and G: Many faculty seem not to know (or, perhaps, care) what governance means here, and what is at stake. The faculty role in decision making at the College and how this fits in with other participants, the way faculty-driven issues can be brought into consideration, and the role of service in personnel decisions are just some of the issues either not well-defined or not well-understood by some faculty members. Part of the problem may be related to a lack of memory or context, an insufficient transfer of the S and G ethos from those who have experienced it. In any case, the general question of the relationships between public-spiritness and reward deserves serious debate in the collegium.
  2. Larger issues affecting The SGP: It is felt that the Faculty is polarized on many issues, although the existence of a third group, along with the two disagreeing clusters, which might be called "the indifferent", was hypothesized. A culture which breeds antagonism toward service along with distrust of administration plays a role in this tension. Whether service is worth the effort, especially given increasing demands on time, is a fundamental question to be answered.
  3. How should FEC proceed? We will each briefly interview 2-4 colleagues, asking two questions of the type: "Why do you serve or why not more?", or "What problems do you see with service?". These will be talked about at the next

meeting. We are aiming in the long range to formulate a diagnosis which we could distribute for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Hurwitz