

**Faculty Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2011  
8:30am**

**Present:** Jörg Bibow, Ben Givan (scribe), Reg Lilly, Paul Sattler, Barbara Black (chair).  
(The chair joined the meeting at 9:20am, due to a scheduling conflict with a meeting between administrators and major committee chairs.)

**I. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the September 30, 2011, meeting were approved with minor changes.

**II. Update on Round I Willingness-to-Serve (Committee Elections)**

The WTS will run until the close of business today. Currently there are enough candidates to fill all the openings, but not enough to ensure competitive elections in all cases. The election will run next week.

**III. Updating the Governance Website**

The chair of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Committee (MALSC) has notified FEC that the governance website refers to this committee by its former name (External Master of Arts Committee). FEC will make this correction on the governance website.

In the course of the FEC's routine review of committee membership listings on the Dean of Faculty's website, it has come to light that the status of the Assessment Steering Committee is uncertain. The ASC's chair, Sarah Goodwin, says that all the ASC's faculty members resigned, for individual reasons, last year, and there have also been some changes in the administrative representation. CEPP has agreed to consider the future of this group. The FEC noted that the ASC does not appear to be described in the faculty handbook, and decided to ask the ASC chair to provide further information, including the ASC's charge and operating code.

The FEC also noted that there are currently in existence other groups of faculty and administrators whose charge and function are not indicated in the handbook and are not otherwise clearly defined. These include the Science Working Group and the Space Planning Working Group.

**IV. Faculty Interest Group Report**

Two members of the FEC attended this week's meeting of the Faculty Interest Group, in which about fifteen or so attendees discussed the role of the faculty in shaping the college's educational mission. These members reported that the FIG discussion was wide ranging. Among the issues discussed at the FIG were: Should the college allow fundraising considerations to influence curricular decisions? Does the fact that the faculty approved the college's long-range strategic plan obviate the need for further substantive faculty consultation or votes on subsequent implementation of the plan, given that details of its implementation are subject to interpretation and influenced by an evolving external environment? A variety of disparate views were expressed at the FIG meeting.

The FEC discussed the sense that faculty no longer seem always to play a substantive role in the development of major curricular initiatives. Often faculty are only brought into a process after its goals and parameters have been defined by administrators.

The FEC discussed whether information and discussion of college policies could profitably be conducted through the medium of an online "blog." For instance, administrators and/or faculty could maintain blogs where information about ongoing initiatives could be posted. Various pros and cons were discussed.

## **V. Update on Faculty Meeting Query**

The FEC has requested input from the faculty at large as to how the format of the college's monthly faculty meetings might be enhanced. Responses received so far were distributed (respondents' identities were anonymous except for those who expressly waived their anonymity). The FEC would like to receive more responses. Ben Givan will send a second email to the faculty summarizing some of the common themes that have emerged, and encouraging additional respondents to convey their thoughts.

So far, a number of respondents have expressed concern that our faculty meetings currently do not allow sufficient time for the faculty to discuss issues of concern. Administrative reports could conceivably be issued by email rather than delivered in person. Questions have been raised as to who should be entitled to attend faculty meetings, and who ought to preside. Power imbalances at the meetings may influence who speaks.

## **VI. Preparation for the Upcoming Faculty Meeting**

[The FEC chair arrived at this point in the deliberations]. The FEC chair offered some brief preliminary reflections on the meeting between the President, certain administrators, and chairs of the six major committees. She will report more thoroughly on this meeting in due course.

At this afternoon's faculty meeting, the faculty will vote to approve the 2011–12 edition of the faculty handbook. This motion was presented at the September faculty meeting.

The FEC discussed two proposed changes to the faculty handbook that were not announced when the motion to approve the 2011–12 handbook was presented last month. The first is a “housekeeping” amendment to Part III of the handbook, proposed by the VPAA. This amendment's rationale is to ensure that the IPPC description no longer designates the three IPPC representatives as concurrent members of FEC. (A motion to this effect was passed by the faculty last spring.) Changes to Part III of the handbook do not require a vote by the full faculty; they must simply be approved by IPPC, FEC, and the SGA.

The FEC discussed whether one of the VPAA's proposed handbook alterations to this end—modifying the language that currently indicates that President and Vice Chair of IPPC must consult with FEC in setting the IPPC's agenda—is a substantive change raising complex questions beyond the housekeeping at hand. (The VPAA has proposed eliminating the reference to FEC's role in setting the IPPC agenda.) Although IPPC has not, in recent times, been in the habit of consulting with FEC about the IPPC agenda, such a process is stipulated by the current handbook language. After taking a vote, the FEC determined to approve the other housekeeping amendments but not the elimination of FEC's stated role in the IPPC agenda.

The second proposed change to the faculty handbook, which was delivered to the FEC chair by the Dean of Faculty shortly before last month's faculty meeting, is the replacement of the faculty parental leave policy (Handbook Part IV) with a re-written policy that has been developed, mainly by administrators, over the course of the last year or two. The VPAA sent the new parental leave policy to the faculty via email on September 26, and sent a further email describing the process for implementing this handbook change.

There has been some uncertainty about the appropriate process for implementing this handbook change: the administration wishes to waive the prescribed month-long layover period so that the new parental leave policy can be included in the 2011–12 handbook, which has already been submitted to the faculty for approval. After some discussion between FEC and the VPAA, it was decided that the VPAA will present the handbook amendment and request a waiver of the layover period, and that FEC will, if need be, speak in support of the waiver request.

After consultation with the faculty's parliamentarian, the VPAA has decided to present the new faculty leave policy during her report, rather than as a “new business” agenda item. The FEC discussed whether the handbook's language describing amendment procedures suggests, to the contrary, that the motion ought to be presented under “new business” and that the layover waiver ought to be submitted to a faculty vote. Ultimately it was decided not to press the issue.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:50am

Respectfully submitted,  
Ben Givan