Faculty Senate Welfare Council Minutes
Minutes for Thursday, January 16, 2014

Meeting Convened at 2:35 p.m.

Present: Jeff Banker, T.R. Carr, Christine Durbin, McKenzie Ferguson, Erin Heil, Mark Hildebrandt (Chair), John Hunt, Steve Kerber, Ken Moffett, Tim Ozcan, Xudong William Yu

Absent: None

Guests: Tom Jordan, Office of the Provost; Mary Sue Love, Ombudsperson

Announcements

1) The committee thanked Carly Hayden Foster for her excellent service on the Council for the Fall 2013 semester as Ken Moffett’s sabbatical replacement.
2) The committee welcomed back Ken Moffett from his sabbatical leave.
3) Tom Jordan was planning to come to today’s meeting, in part, to discuss the development of Family Friendly policies. He has asked that this item be postponed to the regularly scheduled February meeting.
4) Ari Belasen was scheduled to update the Welfare Council on the status of revisions to the Salary Equity distribution plan, but was unable to come due to personal reasons.
5) Mark Hildebrandt has agreed to meet with Ari to discuss the progress surrounding revisions to the Salary Equity distribution plan, and will report on these discussions at the February 2014 meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

1) The minutes of the November 2013 meeting were approved, with technical corrections that do not interfere with meaning.
2) T.R. Carr moved to approve the minutes.

Reports of the Standing Committees

1) Faculty Status Committee reports that the Digital Scholarship footnote to the Promotion and Tenure guidelines is before the Faculty Senate for a second read at its February 2014 meeting.
2) Faculty Benefits and Facilities met to discuss the Social Media Policy. This policy was discussed further at this Welfare Council meeting. The members of the Welfare Council amended the Social Media Policy to remove all language that encouraged, but not required, certain actions be performed. The reasoning was that such language constitutes the creation of the policy under the cover of recommendations. Thereafter, the Welfare Council unanimously agreed to approve the Social Media Policy, as amended, for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

Presentation from Mary Sue Love

She came to talk with the Welfare Council about its search for an Ombudsperson to replace Seran Aktuna. She discussed the skillset required for someone to be a successful Ombudsperson, including informal conflict resolution, impartiality, and being able to listen and brainstorm alternatives with others
involved in a conflict. In addition, the Ombuds has participated in meetings with varying administrators on several occasions.

She also pointed out that the Ombuds office might suffer from a lack of publicity. This office is located in an unmarked office on a busy hallway in Rendleman Hall. In addition, there is no signage on the elevators or anywhere in the building that indicates the presence of this office. The location of this office might be problematic, too, as its location in a primarily administrative building might dissuade some from utilizing its services.

She also stated the numbers of visits to the Ombuds office was substantially higher during the 2013 calendar year than it was during previous years. The Ombuds office is going to issue a report in March that discusses this and other trends. Many of the cases over the last year have been about policy and alleged policy violations, though others have also involved interpersonal conflicts, too.

**Other Business**

1) All portions of the Ombuds applications will be loaded to SharePoint. Once this happens, Mark Hildebrandt will notify the members of the Council with further guidance.
2) The respective units who need to elect members to the Faculty Grievance and Salary Equity Committees will be notified of the need to do so by the end of the Spring 2014 semester.
3) Faculty Grievance Committee
   a. Due to the number of additional grievances from a particular unit in the university, an issue has arisen surrounding the ability of the committee to hear and decide the outcomes of grievances in the time frame that is specified in the Grievance Policy.
   b. This issue involves the mathematical possibility that the Faculty Grievance Committee might be unable to supply enough members to comprise its portion of a hearing panel.
   c. The Welfare Council discussed this issue, and agreed on two approaches to rectify this concern:
      i. Modify the Operating Papers of this committee to allow for alternates to be drafted as regular committee members for the purposes of comprising hearing panels;
      ii. Modify the Operating Papers of this committee to allow for the selection of additional temporary members of this committee. These temporary members would only be allowed to serve on hearing panels, and would have no role in determining whether there is enough to a particular case for it to proceed to a hearing panel. Also, temporary members would not be able to be selected until the available pool of alternates is exhausted.
   d. The Welfare Council also authorized Mark Hildebrandt, Steve Kerber, and Ken Moffett to meet with Tom Jordan and Kay Gahle to draft language that would rectify concerns that surround the Faculty Grievance Committee’s ability to constitute hearing panels.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:22 through a motion by Steve Kerber that was seconded by Ken Moffett

Respectfully Submitted
Ken Moffett

*Minutes Approved by Welfare Council on February 20, 2014*