

## Faculty Life Committee--St.Olaf College

Minutes of the meeting of April 28, 2009

Members present: Brian Borovsky, Beth Christensen, Eric Cole (Chair), Dona Freeman, Mary Griep, James May, Arnie Ostebee, Xun Pomponio, Judy Stromayer,

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. in Dittmann Center 204.

1. Minutes for the meeting of April 21, 2009 were approved with a few friendly amendments.

2. The committee reviewed the lists of **suggested activities** for faculty development funding that had been distributed with the minutes of the April 21 meeting (and later amplified by a list provided by Eric Cole at today's meeting). After discussion, the committee endorsed the following list of suggested activities for faculty development funding:

- Seed money for projects (e.g. preparing the way for writing larger grants or ambitious sabbatical projects)
- Stipends or other support to encourage seeking outside funding (grant writing), or to help faculty members take maximum advantage of a sabbatical leave
- Building strong and cohesive departments, including retreats that include visiting experts and/or common readings
- Co-mentoring between faculty for curricular or research reinvention
- Funds for small group retreats to design professional development clusters organized around topics, sub-disciplines, or interdisciplinary clusters
- Off-campus teaching teams (to develop linked courses)
- Off-campus training in instrumentation and/or techniques
- Workshop development, delivery, or attendance for training faculty
- Assistance in the preparation of a manuscript for publication
- Travel to conferences, collections, seminars, etc.
- Support for the presentation of creative or scholarly work

3. The committee then reviewed the list of **things valued** in faculty development grant proposals. After discussion, the list agreed upon was:

- Collaborative work among faculty members, both within and across departments
- Student-Faculty collaborations
- Innovative curricular and pedagogical development
- Leadership
- Expertise
- National and international reputation
- Scholarship
- Diversity of projects
- Openness and flexibility
- Seeking outside funding
- Creativity
- Originality
- Interdisciplinary brainstorming

4. After additional discussion, the committee **voted on the distribution of faculty development funds**. The options considered were: a) 50% small grants/50% (i.e. two) released time grants and b) 75% small grants and 25% (i.e. one) released time grants.
  - The committee was unanimous that any decision would be subject to further evaluation: the Faculty Life Committee will formally re-consider this resolution after three years but could decide to change the decision at an earlier date if strong faculty sentiment dictated.
  - With this in mind, the majority of the committee (9 in favor) **voted to distribute 75% of faculty development funds toward small grants**, leaving one released-time grant per year.

**Action items for next week's meeting include:**

- 1) **Prepare for discussions** about:
  - a. Stipends for faculty development grants (Corliss Swain and Brian Borovsky)
  - b. Funding for meals/food (Brian Borovsky)
  - c. General criteria for faculty development grants<sup>1</sup>:
    - i. Released-time (Mary Griep)
    - ii. Small grants (Eric Cole)
  - d. Philosophy (Judy Stromayer)
  - e. Activities and Values (Beth Christensen)

Based upon the discussions above, we will consider language and format for the Faculty Development website at the next meeting.

The committee's final meeting (May 12) will allow time to 1) introduce new members of the committee, 2) elect a committee chair for 2009-10, and 3) consider an agenda of issues need to be addressed next year

The meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Christensen

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<sup>1</sup> A member of the committee reminded us that issues of the proposed project's overall impact – not the type of individual project – should influence our decisions.