

Faculty Life Committee--St. Olaf College
Minutes for the meeting of November 25, 2008

Members present: Brian Borovsky, Beth Christensen, Eric Cole (Chair), Dona Freeman, Mary Griep, Anne Groton, Jim May, Arnie Ostebee, Xun Pomponio, Judy Stromayer, Corliss Swain, Irina Walter.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. in Dittmann 204.

1. Minutes for the meeting of November 18 were approved.

2. The Committee discussed several possibilities for allocating the \$70,000 in the Faculty Development Grants fund:

- a) all the money will go to small grants,
- b) all the money will go to four released time grants, or
- c) the money will be equally split between a) and b).

The two major arguments centered on the merits of spreading the money to more faculty through small grants (a), as opposed to investing all the money in released time grants (b). While the a) model has the support of the committee members who feel it is important to encourage and reward many faculty members through small grants, model b), though it gives money only to a few, is seen as having the advantage of rewarding the outstanding work of faculty and providing the valued commodity: released time.

The argument was put forward that since St. Olaf has a generous released time reward for the tenured faculty (sabbatical leave), the untenured faculty is not eligible for sabbatical leave and thus is more restricted in its opportunities to find time for projects. It is therefore fair to choose model a) as a way to reward faculty throughout the college.

It was also argued that because finding enough time for research is often so difficult, released time is the best reward to faculty. Moreover, released time benefits the faculty at large by disseminating the results of research through such venues as the Provost's Sabbatical Lunch series.

Eric moved to vote on model c), i.e., to preserve the status quo. The motion failed. The Committee will continue its discussion of grant distribution at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Irina Walter