

Faculty Life Committee - St. Olaf College

Minutes for the meeting of May 5, 2009

Members present: Brian Borovsky, Beth Christensen, Eric Cole (Chair), Anne Groton, Jim May, Alan Norton, Arnie Ostebee, Xun Pomponio, Judy Stromayer, Corliss Swain, Irina Walter

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. in Dittmann 204.

1. Minutes for the meeting of April 28, 2009, were approved as written.
2. It was acknowledged that time has run out this year for modifying the *Faculty Manual* to include the new pre-tenure leave. The text must still be drafted and submitted to the College's lawyers for their critique before the Faculty Governance Committee can bring the proposed changes to the faculty for ratification, subject to final approval by the Board of Regents.
3. Most of the meeting was devoted to discussing the issues connected with stipends for faculty development activities. Corliss Swain and Brian Borovsky had prepared a document laying out a principle ("No faculty should be paid extra for work that is expected of all faculty") and proposing three categories of stipends: \$250 incentive stipends "to provide an extra motive to do necessary but unappealing tasks"; stipends "to provide an extra motive to do something that goes above and beyond what is normally expected of faculty"; and stipends "to secure commitment" of the participants in a collaborative project.
Concern was raised about the incentive grants: would they eat up too large a proportion of the faculty development funds, would people be limited to just one per year, would the small amount of the grant justify the time and effort of applying for it? It was recommended that the references to providing "an extra motive" be eliminated and that the three types of stipends be renamed as completion grants (to support tasks necessary to complete a project), "overachievement" grants (to support work above and beyond the norm), and collaborative grants (to secure commitment to a collaborative project). There is no consensus, however, about what is "normally expected" of faculty: work that some faculty members are reluctant to do and consider "unappealing," others are eager to do and do not regard as "above and beyond." Everyone at the meeting did agree that stipends are less important than the other expenses for which grant applicants request funding.
4. There was brief discussion of what sort of funding for food it would be acceptable to request in an application for a professional development grant.
5. Last fall the Action Team used criteria suggested by Mary Griep to help rank proposals for released-time grants. The FLC took a quick look at these criteria, noticing that they were more "strategic" than the criteria for released-time grants currently posted on the website.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Groton

Action Items:

1. Eric Cole, with Brian Borovsky's help for the criteria section, will edit the proposed language for the Faculty Development website and circulate another draft to FLC members.
2. Eric Cole will invite the newly elected members to attend the last meeting of the FLC in 2008-09: 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 12, in Dittmann 204. Agenda for that meeting: the FLC will “take one more stab” at finalizing the language for the Faculty Development website, elect a chair for 2009-10, and contemplate next year's agenda.