

Faculty Life Committee Minutes for September 2, 2008 Meeting

Present:

Eric Cole, chair,
Brian Borovsky
Beth Christensen
Dona Freeman
Mary Griep
Anne Groton
Judy Stromayer
Corliss Swain
Irina Walter
James May, ex-officio
Alan Norton, ex-officio
Arnio Ostebee, ex-officio

The meeting was convened at 3:30 pm in Dittman 204

1. **Beginning.** A positive tone was set for the year through various comments and observations.
2. **Comment from chair of the committee, Eric Cole.** Eric indicated that this committee is likely to have two major tracks: first, doing the tasks laid before us in terms of reviewing grant proposals, etc... second, thinking in broader ways about the full cycle of faculty careers and how to be most supportive at various stages.
3. **Reviewing the charge of Faculty Life Committee.** It was noted, firstly, that the minutes of RPC and FDC meetings in the past need to be made accessible again over the web. Dean May agreed to take on this task. Then the committee reviewed the list of responsibilities of the committee, as well as the deadlines for tasks and decisions. A few recommendations were made for minor changes to deadlines.
4. **Mellby Lectures:** Charlie Wilson's lecture will occur on Nov. 13 at 7pm in Viking Theater.
5. **Considering the subcommittee structure.** Eric Cole guided the committee through a discussion of the subcommittees that will be needed. Arnie Ostebee noted that subcommittees may be populated, at least partially, by faculty who are not members of the larger Faculty Life Committee. This is in line with Roberts Rules of Order. This approach may help in several ways, when appropriate. It was also noted that Phyllis Stuckmayer in the Dean's Office is available to help with online documentation of the committee's work.
6. **Staffing the subcommittees:** It was decided that the work of reviewing grants will be accomplished by a "fall team" and a "spring team", with each team consisting of one representative from each of the five faculties of the college. Volunteers from the larger committee were assigned to these teams. Irina Walter was assigned to the task of overseeing arrangements for the Mellby Lectures this year.

7. **Reconsidering the subcommittee structure.** Discussion ensued regarding the idea of arranging subcommittees together under thematic groupings. The Mellby Lectures may be grouped with Honorary Degrees and other activities that provide opportunities directed at the whole campus. Also discussed was the idea of having the larger committee use its time to work at a higher level of consideration, addressing the entire career trajectory of faculty members and how best to support and enhance their work.
8. **Sharing of larger concerns.** Committee members offered their suggestions for issues of greater significance to be considered by the committee -
How to frame the issue of reviewing/supporting senior faculty.
How to support development of teaching skills.
The need for a pre-tenure sabbatical leave program.
The need to modify the grant programs to reflect current practices in research and teaching. Issues unique to faculty who are not on the tenure track.
9. **Loose ends.** There is a need for a student member of Faculty Life Committee. It was decided that Eric Cole will contact the SGA for a recommendation. Committee members were encouraged to email the chair with issues they would like discussed in the future. There are three more jobs to assign at the next meeting: Honorary Degree, Web Site/ Faculty manual updates, Representative to Benefits Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.

Action Items

- 1) The Dean's office will see that minutes from previous committee meetings, including RPC and FDC, will be made available again online.
- 2) Rick Goedde is expected to forward recommendations from the Tenure & Promotion committee for changes to the procedures for tenure and promotion.
- 3) Eric Cole will contact SGA seeking a recommendation for a student member of Faculty Life Committee.
- 4) Eric Cole will ask Kathryn Ananda-Owens to come to the next meeting and share perspectives on the honorary degree program.
- 5) Committee members will email Eric Cole with suggestions for topics to discuss in the future.