

Minutes of the RPC Meeting

March 31, 2004

Present: Rich Allen, Megan Astry, Jolene Barjasteh, Bryn Geffert, Jim May, Alan Norton, Nancy Paddleford, Marc Robinson, Pin Wan, Paul Wojick (Chair)

Wojick called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. in Library Room #355.

The minutes of the RPC February 25 meeting were approved as submitted.

Robinson reported on the work of the subcommittee looking at Joint Appointments. It was noted that St. Olaf College has policy that addresses joint appointments while many other colleges do not. The discussion focused on the statement of Significant Professional Activities that an individual holding a joint appointment is to be judged against for promotion and tenure. The comments the subcommittee has received from faculty have varied widely - from leave the current policy alone - to make changes that would make it clearer to faculty with joint appointments exactly what statement of Significant Professional Activities applies to them. Currently, unless the participating departments create a separate or unique statement of Significant Professional Activities for a joint appointment, one must assume that the candidate for tenure or promotion must meet the standards of both statements of Significant Professional Activities established by the individual departments. The subcommittee will continue its work, but there was support expressed by various members of RPC to make it a requirement that the participating departments must jointly establish a single statement of Significant Professional Activities that the holder of a joint appointment will be held to, before the Dean approves searches to fill joint appointment positions.

The Committee moved on to the topic of Governance Reform. Wojick reported on the work of the subcommittee looking at the role of a "Governance Committee" and distributed a handout that covered Purpose and Responsibilities for it. This committee would be the closest to the current RPC Committee in terms of responsibilities. As envisioned, the new Governance Committee would also appoint taskforces or subcommittees as needed to deal with topics that currently are handled by several standing committees including: ARFAC, Appeals Board, Athletics Committee, Board of Student Media, Nominating Committee, and IDOCS' responsibilities not related to curriculum. RPC briefly discussed several of the proposed responsibilities of the Governance Committee.

Wojick asked if members of RPC had any comments regarding the proposed content for the Faculty Handbook that has been circulated by Arnie Ostebee. Some questions were raised about provisions of the FMLA where a position might have been eliminated. The Provost will seek clarification and report back to RPC. Several Committee members commented that the provisions of the Consensual Relations policy are appropriate in today's environment.

Barjasteh reported on the work of the subcommittee looking at the role of a “Curriculum Committee.” The new Curriculum Committee would absorb responsibilities of the current CEPC, GEC and IDOCS. This subcommittee has discussed ways to streamline curriculum work by creating a web-based “virtual forum” so all faculty could comment on the curriculum matters being considered by the Curriculum Committee. Most actions taken by the Curriculum Committee would then be final and not go to the regular Faculty Meeting. Various RPC members expressed interest in learning more about how the “virtual forum” might work and be a key feature for faculty governance in the future.

Wojick adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.