HSS College Faculty Council Meeting

JAN. 12, 2016

11:00 am, Dean’s Conference Room

Attending:

Dr. Chuck Aust, Dr. Jeanne Law Bohannon, Dr. Stephen Collins, Dean Robin Dorff, Dr. Lynn Fedeli, Dr. Beth Giddens, Dr. Dorothy Marsil, Dr. LeeAnn Lands, Dr. Ernesto Silva, Dr. Jun Tu, Dr. Ken White.

**MINUTES**

1. Minutes from the NOV. 10, 2015 meeting were approved, with one name spelling correction made (Humayan Zafar).
2. Dean Dorff: CHSS update, initiatives, developments, policies, misc.
   1. Dean Dorff informed the group about a new opportunity related to faculty professional development. Initiative coming up in Germany. Criteria were finalized. Departments will nominate applicants. Each college will be asked to put 2 candidates forward. Ten from across the university will be selected for the trip. Departs May 12- return May 20. It will feature timely themes related to current events, as well a cultural, historical, political, economic aspects. There will be a KSU Inform announcement coming. Dean Dorff asked CFC for input about who would select our 2 nominees from CHSS? Several ideas were put forth, such as the Awards committee, the members of the CFC, or possibly the International committee. Dean took ideas under advisement, will decide soon.
   2. Reasons that faculty have provided in the past about the basis for a course reassignment were discussed. For example, why a reassignment? What do they equate to? We are looking most closely at administrative reassign time, explained the dean. More will be discussed about this in the future.
   3. General Education- Because of the tremendous significance of CHSS in delivery of the Gen Ed program, Dean Dorff explained that he is advocating at the University level for an approach that views General education and Majors as two distinct missions of KSU and that resourcing (faculty, staff and other funding) should be assessed and allocated accordingly at the university level. This is a critical issue when one looks at CHSS Gen Ed demands and demands for our majors. Science and Math is in a similar position though Gen Ed is not as large..
   4. Writing Center will still report to Dean Dorff’s office, but will be expanded to have university-wide scope in its service. Commensurate resources will be allocated for the expansion, Dean Dorff assured the group.
   5. Library space at the Marietta campus was established for the Writing Center. The hope is that this location in the library will make the resource more distributed, similar to a “Learning Commons” approach and will ensure equitable access for Marietta campus students to the same support offered students on the Kennesaw campus.
3. Remaining concerns about external letters in the promotion and tenure process.

A lengthy discussion ensued about this matter. It began with Dr. Dorothy Marsil sharing that the Psychology Department has concerns regarding not just the external letter issue but the entire P&T process that is emerging post-consolidation. She enumerated the multiple concerns. She suggested that the CFC might want to sign on to the letter that Psychology will draft or draft a letter of its own about its concerns to echo the concerns of the Psychology Department. But Dr. Marsil explained that most likely the Psychology Department would move ahead with communicating its concerns to the administration regardless of CFC actions.

A variety of concerns were expressed during this discussion. One was that the need for external letters might motivate candidates to put excessive emphasis on research and less emphasis on teaching.

The view was expressed that five letters for promotion from associate to full professor seems excessive, given that five are more than are required at level Rl universities and the University System of Georgia in general.

Perhaps it could be proposed to switch the required number of letters to 5 for promotion and tenure and then 3 for promotion to full professor.

The concern was expressed that the rules for external letter writers have not been clearly and completely established.

Dr. Marsil mentioned that she spoke with Andy Pieper, KSU AAUP chapter president, and he is aware of the concerns of the Psychology Department.

Another concern was mentioned about candidates now in “mid-stream.” The candidate’s mix of teaching and service *vis-a-vis* research might have been approached very differently if the candidate had known external letters were going to be required. The faculty member might have made different decisions regarding mix of goals and commitments.

The idea of the way recording of vote counts would be handled is problematic too, according to Dorothy. Psychology has strong concerns about that, too.

Dr. Marsil said that the Psychology Department would like a unified voice with CFC in sending a letter about these concerns to Provost Harmon.

Dr. Beth Giddens posed a question: Do CFC decisions (such as writing a letter) have to represent constituents or can we take a position independent of constituents? A member shared that if a CFC decision were in clear contradiction to the prevailing view on an important issue held by department colleagues, that would be of great concern and possibly be problematic. Even so, based on the discussion that followed, the sentiment of the CFC members in attendance seemed to be that we can.

Another question posed is whether the external letter matter has gone through sufficient shared governance deliberations. It was mentioned that the Faculty Senate has an upcoming agenda item to address in this regard. Since this issue is still pending in Senate, one CFC member suggested that perhaps the CFC should send a letter to Faculty Senate about our concerns and send a cc: to Provost Harmon. A member suggested that such a letter should make specific recommendations, and not just be a general letter of concern.

Another approach that was suggested was to influence senators in our departments and communicate it to DFCs too so they can influence the Faculty Senate deliberations from their perspectives.

Dean Dorff made the point that an important inflection point is the Faculty Senate. A letter sent directly to Senate empowers that body to then make specific recommendations. And the more specific the recommendations, perhaps the better. He further noted that empowering the Faculty Senate increases the likelihood that Academic Affairs will acknowledge and give serious consideration to the message.

Dr. Giddens asked the group to think about what process they might wish to pursue. Dr. Marsil offered that the Psychology Department will draft a letter delineating the concerns she outlined here at the CFC meeting, and after we receive it, we could return to our constituents and seek their input.

A member noted that time is of the essence.

A motion was put on the floor and seconded that the CFC should take the position that it supports the Faculty Senate proposal now under consideration that would reduce the number of external letters from 5 to 3 for candidates who are going up for promotion from associate to full professor. The voice vote supporting the motion was unanimous.

Dr. Marsil will send us details about the Psychology Department’s concerns and we will seek input from our department colleagues and then decide if we want to make a further declaration of our specific concerns and recommendations and in what form.

The remaining items on the January 12, 2016 agenda that could not be addressed because of time constraints will be moved forward to the next scheduled meeting on February 9, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned 12:25 p.m.

Minutes by Chuck Aust