**Faculty Affairs Committee**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Wednesday, September 13, 2023**, **6:00 p.m.**

**Dobski Conference Room, Bone Student Center**

***Call to Order***

***Roll Call***: Tom Lucey (chair), Martha Horst, Mary Hollywood, Steven Peters, Kevin Edwards, Craig McLauchlan

***Public Comment (guest sign in with the FAC chair; not more than two [2] minutes each)***

***Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2023***

Motion – Mary Hollywood

Second – Tom Lucey

Motion passes – Tom and Mary are the only returning (voting) members.

***Presentation: Jeannie Barrett, Office of General Counsel***

Introductions were made around the table.

Last fall Faculty Affairs recommended to the provost to disband the Ombudsperson Council and explore having a professional Ombudsperson office.

Issue – Ombuds as a profession demand absolute confidentiality with individuals they speak to. However, there is a conflict with the employer in regard to sensitive issues dealing with Title IX issues, for example.

Pros – No challenge finding people to serve. A professional Ombuds would not have the issues of release, or pay, or service issues. An office that is professionally prepared would be an asset because people are trained to handle the issues that may arise.

General Council Barrett is willing to work with the provost to create this office. There will be changes – including adding student issues, would not overturn or override any current policies related to grades, etc.

There would be only one ombudsperson in the beginning. This person would need to be well-versed in many different issues related to the various groups across campus.

Senator Lucey asked how the search for this person would be created.

Answer – use an outside firm (International Associations of Ombudspersons) to find people that are trained in ombuds and versed in higher education.

This would not be a therapy role as that is offered elsewhere on campus. The person hired would need to understand this distinction and know where to refer people to receive therapy services.

The Interim Provost is looking for a space on campus that would allow for a waiting room and a space that offers discretion in a meeting. Then, there is to whom the Ombudsperson would report. They are leaning toward the provost.

Chairperson Horst mentioned a cross situation between a student and a professor. Does this conflict with reporting to the provost. General Council Barrett does not believe so, but the reporting structure could change as the role and office develops.

Senator Edwards asked whether one person would be enough given there are three now.

Answer – This new person would be professionally trained and would not face the same issues as the current council with having another role and learning on the job.

Policy 3.3.8C mentions the Ombudsperson Council. We could just strike the word council in any policy the ombudsperson council appears.

Senator Edwards asked if there would be a difference in what student issues are handled. For example, student life, issues currently managed by the Dean of Students office.

Answer – there would need to be some training on ISU policies and procedures. Some of the issues would not be in the realm of the ombuds office.

Senator Peters asked what would happen if the Ombuds office received hundreds of students trying to get around a policy.

Answer – triage will be important. Chairperson Horst gave information on the current processes and people involved. Martha sent a file to Jeannie to give information. This file will be posted in Teams for the FAC.

Tom should go to the Civil Service Committee and talk to them about eliminating the current system.

***Discussion:***

1. Policy assignments
   1. We ran out of time.
2. Executive Committee Charges for 2023-24 and other committee tasks
   1. Ran out of time for this.
3. Policy 4.1.1. Honorary Degree Policy (Martha Horst to lead discussion)
   1. Changes to the selection procedures.
   2. Executive Committee would like to reduce procedures and focus on the policy.
   3. The write up is in Teams.
   4. These changes were proposed in 2019 and are outdated and need to be updated.
   5. How do we decide who is a “friend of the university”?
   6. We can adjust degrees given – General Council decision.
   7. Proposed nominations remain active because the procedure contains a lot of steps.

***Adjourn – 6:50***