

Academic Senate Faculty Caucus Minutes
November 19, 2008
(Approved)

Call to Order

Academic Senate Chairperson Dan Holland called the caucus to order immediately following the Senate meeting.

Approval of Faculty Caucus Minutes of October 22, 2008

Motion: By Senator Peterson, seconded by Senator Hoelscher, to approve the Faculty Caucus Minutes of October 22, 2008. The motion was unanimously approved.

Parking and Transportation Advisory Board Faculty Election

The nominees for the faculty representative on the Parking and Transportation Advisory Board were Marie Dawson, College of Business, Jack Howard, College of Business, Sandra Klitzing, College of Applied Sciences and Technology and Academic Senate Faculty Representative, and Kevin Laudner, College of Business. By ballot, the first vote resulted in a tie between Sandra Klitzing and Marie Dawson. With the second ballot, Marie Dawson was elected as the faculty representative for the Parking and Transportation Advisory Board. Her term of service is 2008 through spring 2011.

Election of Council on General Education Faculty Representative for Mennonite College of Nursing

Motion: By Senator Zielinski, seconded by Senator Van der Laan, to accept by acclamation Ameer Adkins as the Mennonite College of Nursing faculty representative for the Council on General Education. The motion was unanimously approved. Her term of service is 2008 through spring 2011.

Report on Summary of FY09 Recommendations for Salary Increments as Required by ASPT Policies

Provost Everts: Section 12.A.4. of the Illinois State University ASPT Policy requires that a summary of recommendations for salary increments be submitted to the President of the university and to the faculty members of the Academic Senate in Executive Session. A summary of the recommendations were made available in the President's office and in the Provost's office on Monday, October 20th and Tuesday, October 21st.

Senator Holland: From what you have just said, it sounds like this should be in Executive Session.

Senator Borg: The announcement of availability is not in Executive Session, but a presentation of results should be.

Provost Everts: I am just going to give an overview. Is that alright?

Senator Holland: It says here in (the Open Meetings Act) that it allows for closed meetings to consider "The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body."

Senator Borg: Let me suggest that we get an agreement from the caucus by vote that we proceed without an Executive Session, with the exception of a potential conflict with the rules.

Motion: By Senator Borg, seconded by Senator Stewart, that the Faculty Caucus proceed in open session,

rather than in Executive Session, for the report on the recommendations for salary increments.

Senator Borg: Since we are in Executive Session now anyway—we have no visitors—it seems to me that this is one of those instances in which obsessive procedure is perhaps unnecessary.

Senator Kalter: We do have public minutes.

Senator Holland: My reading of the Open Meetings Act is that as long as there is no specific name, we should be alright.

Provost Everts: Right, it is a general overview.

Senator Holland: So, do we need to do a vote on your motion, Senator Borg?

Senator Borg: I would go ahead and vote on it anyway.

Voting Results: The motion by Senator Borg to proceed without going into Executive Session was unanimously approved.

Provost Everts: For the 2009 salary increments, there were 625 faculty who were eligible for this raise and 625 faculty received a raise. We have not run the figures I am about to give you for this last round of raises, but I can give the projections from Institutional Research. I am certain that by the time the midyear raises are finished in January, we will really move much closely to our priority one goal of faculty salary increases, as President Bowman mentioned during the Senate meeting. In 2005, salaries for full professors lagged 14% behind peer group averages. In 2007, the lag was just over 10% and, for fall 2008, we project a 9.7% lag, moving in the right direction, in essence. For associate professors, the lag percentage in 2005 was over 10%, in 2007, approximately 7%, and the lag projected for fall 2008, 5.5%. Again, we are moving in the right direction. These are only projections as the new figures for peer institutions are not all available at this time. We may have caught up even more when we move into the midyear raises.

Senator Holland: Do we have information on the number of people who are eligible for tenure?

Provost Everts: We don't have that in this particular report.

Senator Holland: Are assistant professors still at or above the average?

Provost Everts: Yes.

Senator Kalter: This is not for the midyear, but for the fall of this year?

Provost Everts: Yes, and this is the report that you received notification about in September indicating that that report would sit in the Provost's and President's offices for two days for examination by the Academic Senate.

Information Item:

11.12.08.01 Midyear Salary Enhancement Proposal (Provost Everts)

Provost Everts: I would mention before I do this short item, and you have additional questions for me, that it is a very unique university that has so many salary increases that we need to provide two sets of reports

within one meeting. I think one should be congratulated for that.

I am requesting the Faculty Caucus' endorsement of the fourth year of the salary enhancement program in order to begin the fourth midyear salary raise project, which, as in the past, is designed to recognize under-recognized, long-term merit. The endorsement constitutes a waiver of the ASPT processes so that this midyear process can be done, as in the past, based on merit. I understand that the entire reason for this program is to address salaries that are lagging behind the median and I understand also that this process varies within the cultures of the colleges. These last items relate to comments or questions you had last year or the year before associated with this process.

Senator Holland: One of the things that we brought up in the Finance and Planning Committee's university priorities document was, in addition to the under-recognized, long-term merit, the potential issue of salary compressions and inversions. Is that also going to be part of this?

Provost Everts: Absolutely and, again, I would mention that this process has that in mind and those issues are among the details that the deans have as they go through this process. I would also mention that many institutions around this nation talk about the problems with compression and inversion, but very few have a process in place to do anything about. So, again, that is very much the aim here.

Senator Ellerton: There are certainly a number of instances that I know about, and one in particular where there is no question of the merit side, but the process has not been able to address that, so the salaries are still very badly inverted. That remains a concern with the current process. There was not sufficient funding to enable the department or the college to correct that. Therefore, it was not corrected. Are there ways that that can be addressed and picked up? Up until now, it seems to have slipped through the cracks.

Provost Everts: I am taking notes as we go here so that we can be sure that those items are addressed and/or discussed with the deans and chairs.

Senator Holland: I think that one thing that potentially could be done, depending on your chair, is that they can specifically request funds from the AIF to address specific issues. For example, if you had a Distinguished Professor who could document that he or she is the lowest paid Distinguished Professor...

Senator Borg: But is that (applicable to) the midyear enhancement that we are dealing with now or the regular process?

Provost Everts: The regular process.

Senator Holland: It is in the regular process, but that is something to be...

Senator Borg: The issue that you talk about is not directly related to this midyear process, which is exceptional, and the reason that it is brought here right now is because we have to grant the exception. If we do not do that as a Faculty Caucus, this will not happen. Those issues of that sort are addressed in this document only at the department/school and collegiate level.

Senator Holland: Without us approving this, then any of these funds have to go through the standard ASPT process, which means that it goes across the board and not just to associate and full professors as in the past few years.

Provost Everts: Yes, as requested by the President in his State of the University Address.

Senator Ellerton: I raised the issue because this has not been addressed in either the normal ASPT process or the previous midyear ones. So it needs to be looked at as an exception for those caught in that situation.

Senator Wang: When will the departments need to submit their rankings to the deans and to the Provost? My second question is in regards to the term “merit”. Does the Office of the Provost have an interpretation of what merit is? When we evaluate faculty members, we evaluate them in three categories: scholarship, service and teaching. So what is merit; how do we define it?

Provost Everts: Do you really want the Provost’s Office to define that?

Senator Holland: I believe that the standard procedure is that the departments will make their recommendations to the deans and the deans will then assign dollars according to their additional information.

Senator Wang: What I am saying is, at the department level, the actual operating procedure is based upon merit. So how do we define merit? Does the Provost’s Office have a definition or do we leave it to the college or leave it to the department?

Senator Holland: I believe that we would leave it to the department to a large extent. Your department is going to say who it thinks is the most meritorious and the department will make those recommendations to the dean.

Senator Thompson: To help out with that, technically, if you get an unsatisfactory rating, you are not eligible for any raise. So when you talk about merit in a general sense, anybody who has gotten a satisfactory rating, to my understanding, is indeed eligible for a raise. So then it is a department and college procedure to identify that group who gets how much.

Senator Wang: That helps, but some departments may define merit in terms of scholarship, period. Some departments would include everything.

Senator Holland: That is up to the department to decide that.

Senator Wang: That’s fine. I wanted to clarify whether the Provost’s Office has a position on this definition. If not, leaving it to the department is fine.

Senator Holland: I would make an argument, based on our Mission Statement, that you should include teaching, research and service, because we specifically state that in our Mission Statement.

Senator Wang: I don’t have a position on this; I just wanted clarification.

Senator Van der Laan: I served on a departmental DFSC for a couple of years when we went through the midyear reappropriations. Again, this was outside of the regular ASPT procedures. I know that we, as a DFSC, worked with the chair on that, but I don’t know if that is a mandate. That is just what we decided to do.

Provost Everts: That is the expectation.

Senator Borg: May I point out that the memorandum that we are dealing with here specifically states that should this group grant the endorsement, the DFSCs and SFSCs will be asked to forward the names of faculty members who have demonstrated significant and consistent merit that may have been insufficiently rewarded in the last five years. That is what is going on. Further, I will point out, both from past experience and in my responsibility (as interim chair), as well as being a current member of an SFSC, that due to the transient nature of these committees, they seldom have a complete picture of what we might, as scholars, feel is measurable as real evidence. Therefore, there is going to be some sort of variance among departments, among schools, maybe even from one year to another, but that is part of the nature of the evaluation process that we have adopted. Should we want to make things completely number-based, I would argue that we would lose in that effect.

Senator Kalter: I realize that this memo is not a directive. It is to the Faculty Caucus rather than to the colleges, but I wanted to speak about some of the things that I have heard out of departments and colleges. Senator Borg just read that the DFSCs and SFSCs will be asked to forward the names of faculty members who have demonstrated merit, but I am little bit concerned about some of the reports I have heard. While some faculty may have merit, their names are not getting forwarded. In other words, the monies are going to sort of a select few. I am wondering if there is a mechanism or procedure by which all of the eligible names could be forwarded and then a rationale provided, based on the five years of ASPT letters that we get annually, for the ones selected. That would provide a body of comparison, especially since the earlier paragraph does mention both compression and inversion and it implies that it is not only under-compensated merit, but also the relative position in the department (that should be considered).

Provost Everts: Much of this conversation occurred, as I understand, before I arrived here; hence, I made sure I read through all your conversations associated with such. That process is in place and those documents are providing exactly those wording pieces. So that is communicated and continues to be communicated, but I have also made additional notes, as such.

Senator Borg: Perhaps I can make an observation. In the next paragraph, that seems to be perhaps the issue—not simply the decision on the part of the department or the school to make the forwarding, but, at that point, further vetting is asked of the CFSCs and deans to map this midyear salary incrementation. That sense of merit is mapped against the deficiencies, as compared to national standards, national averages, based on disciplines and comparator institutions. That is a step beyond simply saying, ‘I was good for five years, but I did not get anything.’ Maybe all of the other musicologists actually do receive a higher salary than I do, so it is not an equal thing across the university, nor, I might argue, ought it be.

Senator Ellerton: I would like to further comment on the comparison with other institutions, which may be something that is worth looking at. I know that those were named, the institutions that are used for that purpose, but perhaps over the last the four years that this has been in place, those institutions have changed in terms of their relative standing the country. In particular, we have made the Kiplinger list again. Therefore, are the institutions that we are being compared with indeed ones that would be listed amongst our peers on the Kiplinger list? It is just be an interesting point, which may, in fact, make us more deficient than we really are. It does not help the particular cause (under discussion), but it establishes that this should be looked at continuously where we are able to.

Senator Fazel: I have a suggestion. Instead of asking the colleges to look at merit and then how underpaid people are, perhaps they should start with the list of the people who are really underpaid and then take a look at their record to see if they deserve to have higher salaries. What has happened in the past, and that is why

we are having this conversation, is that in some places, good performers are being paid much, much higher than the rest of the faculty, so it is not really under-rewarded merit. It is just that meritorious people get more and more and more every year and some people just fall behind more and more and more every year. So, if we start at the bottom, look at the ones who are well behind and ask ourselves do these people deserve to be paid at this level or higher, then decide how much.

Senator Van der Laan: As someone who has taken part in these evaluations, all of those criteria were taken into consideration. I would like to call the question.

Senator Borg: There is no question yet to be called. We are at the information stage. If we are to adopt this tonight, we must agree to move it to an action stage, as a separate vote, and then approve it, if that is the will of the caucus.

Senator Wang: Provost Everts, what is the timeline?

Provost Everts: To ensure that these are in January paychecks, December 15th.

Senator Borg: If we do not approve this tonight, it cannot happen within that timeframe.

Motion: By Senator Borg, seconded by Senator Stewart, to move the Information Item to the action stage. The move to action requires a two-thirds vote in the affirmative. There was no discussion about moving the item to action and the motion was unanimously approved.

Motion: By Senator Borg, seconded by Senator Stewart, to accept the suspension of the ASPT process for the purpose of a midyear salary enhancement based upon the criteria in the memo of November 12, 2008 to the Faculty Caucus from Provost Everts.

Senator Kalter: I just wonder if we should make an amendment to the language of the motion. By saying “suspension of the ASPT process”, perhaps that is what is sending the signal that we only need to pull out a few names and send them forward.

Senator Borg: I disagree with that.

Senator Kalter: I would offer rather than to suspend the ASPT process to bypass the annual...

Senator Stewart: If we don't suspend the ASPT guidelines, then the money is available to everyone.

Senator Kalter: Yes, I understand that part, so we have to suspend the process somehow, but we are not going so totally outside of it that the past five years do not matter.

Senator Holland: It does specifically say that the past five years do matter.

Senator Borg: If we suspend the ordinary ASPT process, which I have moved to do, and then operate under the memorandum that I cited, that takes care of the issue, because all of those provisions are a part of this memorandum.

Senator Holland: Yes, the memorandum does address salary compression...

Senator Stewart: So we are suspending the ASPT guidelines for the specific purpose stated in the memorandum.

Senator Borg: Yes, and that is why we have had to do this every year.

Call the Question: Senator Van der Laan called the question, in essence, requesting a vote on the main motion. There were no objections to calling the question and the Caucus proceeded to a vote on the main motion.

Vote on Main Motion: The motion to suspend the ASPT process for the purpose of undertaking the midyear raise process was unanimously approved by the caucus.

Adjournment

Motion: By Senator Hoelscher, seconded by Senator Stewart, to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.