

Faculty Caucus Minutes
Wednesday, September 29, 2010
(Approved)

Call to Order

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

Approval of Faculty Caucus Minutes of September 15, 2010

Motion: By Senator Hoelscher, seconded by Senator Stier, to approve the Faculty Caucus Minutes of September 15, 2010. The motion was unanimously approved.

External Committee Confirmation and Elections

Motion: By Senator Cedeño, seconded by Senator Cox, to confirm the faculty nominees for the Council for Teacher Education. The motion was unanimously approved and the following nominees were confirmed:

David Barker (Math) (CAS), 10-13

Barb Meyer (C & I) (COE), 10-13

Marla Reese-Weber (PSYCH) (CAS), 10-13

Motion: By Senator Stewart, seconded by Senator Fazel, to elect the following nominees as a slate:

Council on General Education

Catherine Miller, MCN, 10-13

University Curriculum Committee

Kent Walstrom, COB, 10-13

The motion was unanimously approved by acclamation.

Information Item:

09.07.10.01 ASPT System Proposed Changes (Chuck McGuire, Associate VP for Academic Administration, Rodger Singley, Chair of the University Review Committee) (Please bring copy distributed in 9/15/10 packets)

Item 1:

Senator Holland: The addition of: "Unless otherwise provided, revisions of these policies shall be effective as of January 1 of the year following approval by the Faculty Caucus of the Ac

Senator Ellerton: My question relates to the actual time of the year because that is effectively in the middle of an academic year.

Senator Holland: It is actually in the middle of an academic year, but it is at the very beginning of the year that you are evaluated on.

Senator Ellerton: People who are thinking of putting together their application for tenure and promotion, depending on the timing of that within the application process, January can be a r

Senator Holland: I can't imagine anyone preparing for promotion in January.

Professor Rodger Singley, Chair of the University Review Committee: We are not suggesting any revision to that material set-up of how we would prepare materials to move forward th

Senator Kalter: Are you saying January 1 of the academic years following approval? If it is approved by the Senate in December 2010, it would be January 2012?

Professor Singley: Correct.

Senator Kalter: I think that's confusing and it could be clarified by inserting "academic" prior to "year".

Senator Holland: Actually I thought that it meant that if it got approved in December, it could go into effect January 1.

Professor Singley: Because we are wishing to give the departmental committees, for example, a full year to comply with these requirements.

Senator Holland: That is only for this particular one, though. In future additions, when you do tweaks, I think we can make that adjustment in the fall or the spring and it would go into eff

Senator Crowley: If we did approve, when would this be effective?

Senator Holland: For this one, January 1, 2012.

Professor Singley: Correct.

Senator Holland: When this gets to the point of being sent forward as a motion, it will be specifically stated in the "unless otherwise provided" section.

Senator Fazel: The first sentence reads revise in five-year intervals or as needed. I am saying the "or as needed" could be less than five years. So maybe you could tweak the language to s

Senator Horst: If somebody goes up for tenure next year, they would be under...

Senator Holland: The current rules.

Senator Horst: Even though their tenure case might extend beyond January 1.

Senator Holland: All documentation has to be in by November.

Item 2:

Senator Holland: If you are going to be on the CSFC, you actually do have to be in the college. The other one is the removal of "Except for the Chairperson, CFSC members shall not part

Senator Kalter: It was suggested last time that we leave this to be determined on a college-by-college level. I wanted to know how democratic the processes were in each college, so I ask

Senator Holland: In my department, I am very fortunate to have someone who has served on the DFSC, CFSC and the AFEGC. I asked him if the person should be allowed to stay or if he

Senator Crowley: You are suggesting that the person who is nominated from departments may stay with the permission of person who is up for promotion and tenure?

Senator Holland: And the chair of the committee. Both of them would have to agree that that person would be allowed to stay.

Senator Crowley: What about making it cleaner and instead of the cumbersome permissions, making sure that process is done? What about inviting the chairperson of the DFSC to be part

Senator Holland: The problem that I see there is if you had somebody from your department on the committee and they did not recuse themselves and the chair showed up and you are ap

Senator Briggs: So the chairperson is the dean. So this is advocating that the member of the person's department can attend the appeal...

Senator Holland: If it's alright with the person, who is appealing, then it's fine to have the person there.

Senator Briggs: We have had situations where we have had one faculty member appeal every single decision. It depends on our chair to give another viewpoint of the situation. The person

Senator Holland: That is a separate issue. That is whether or not the CFSC can call witnesses or call people to come in and give additional information. That's fine. This is having an activ

Senator Briggs: We are talking specifically about tenure?

Senator Holland: This is any decision...

Senator Briggs: I beg to disagree then.

Senator Horst: I would be against what you propose and I would like our college to make the decision on how this is handled.

Senator Stewart: As it stands now, if we have somebody coming up for tenure, the CFSC is made up of Art, Music and Theatre. So the person coming up for tenure from Art, right now th

Senator Crowley: Wouldn't you have already gotten the input of the theatre people from the DFSC decision?

Senator Stewart: Right, but you are meeting with the CFSC so that everybody has input and clarification if needed.

Senator Crowley: Why wouldn't the chair of the DFSC come and meet?

Senator Stewart: I think the chair introduces the person.

Senator Crowley: If we trust our colleagues on DFSCs to make good choices and deliberate with authority, I want to trust my colleagues in either department that is participating in this an

Senator Stewart: Why have a representative from your school or department on the CFSC if they are not going to have any input in the deliberation of tenure? Everybody should participa

Senator Rich: A middle ground might be is that the CFSC member from that department be non-voting, but not precluded from consultation by other CFSC members, which would put the

Professor Singley: The URC discussed a lot of these and that was one of the possibilities. One of the issues is the small college size that would desperately need all of the voting members.

Senator Van der Laan: I suggest that we direct our questions to our two guests because we have devolved into discussion. We are going to have discussion at a later date.

Senator Kalter: Could we make it so that that person is non-voting, particularly since this is a pretty drastic change? To go part way may be better than going all the way. Do you really be

Senator Fazel: If the faculty member affected decides whether a member from their department should be a voting member of the CFSC, if that decision is left to the faculty, would that ad

Senator Stewart: I would just like to see everyone participating.

Senator Fazel: As a faculty member, you could say I would like that person to participate. In other words, you will have that option. If you have a toxic department and you do not want th

Senator Stewart: Why are we electing members from our school to the CFSC? The faculty is elected to represent us at the CFSC and then when issues of tenure come up, they are not rep

Senator O'Rourke: As the policy is currently is written, it specifies that in certain situations, recusal is required. If you take that statement out, does it leave it up to the colleges to fashion

Professor Singley: Yes.

Senator O'Rourke: So without that statement, each college has the freedom to do what seems to be desired here this evening.

Senator Kalter: Do we not elect members to the CFSC, not for our own department, but for others, so that they can serve in a college capacity to make decisions about what's going on in

Dr. McGuire: CFSC members are nominated by the department and then elected college wide.

Senator Ellerton: Could it be or has it been considered to add a fourth possibility to the options. This one would address the lack of representation from all departments. Where there is no

Dr. McGuire: That option is already in the appeals process.

Item 3:

Senator Holland: If you want to be on the DFSC, you have to be in the department.

Item 4:

Senator Holland: C.4.d. "Anonymous communications other than officially collected student reactions to teacher performance shall not be considered in any evaluation activities." We did

Professor Singley: That's a really good idea.

Item 5:

Senator Holland: A. "Search committees should be appointed pursuant to department/school, college, and University policies".

Senator Solberg: Does that mean that currently they are done differently department by department?

Dr. McGuire: There literally are no search committee policies unless they exist at the department level. There are some policies that the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action have cr

Senator Solberg: It is anticipated that departments would...

Dr. McGuire: Yes.

Senator Solberg: So we could theoretically have four different ones in the College of Business?

Dr. McGuire: Yes.

Senator Holland: I have one here that was sent to me. It says, "I have a serious problem with the suggested changes under Article VI., Appointment Policies. The issue deals with who can appoint search committee members. Probably the proposed change means that a department chair can appoint search committee members. Please let me know if I am wrong, but I did not know if a department chair was supposed to appoint committees for faculty appointment, reappointment, tenure, promotion, salary adjustment, etc."

Professor Singley: We are going to ask the department to create the policy, so if the department all decides they want the chair to do it, then they could certainly do so. I would be surprised to see that happen.

Senator Holland: It says that in their department, the chair appointed four search committee members and they are reviewing applicant materials. Active DFSC members are not allowed access to these things.

Professor Singley: This is a clear case why we need these things to prevent abuse.

Senator Holland: My part of the question would be that this line would actually force the departments in their year to get caught up to actually state how these would be appointed.

Dr. McGuire: Exactly.

Senator Solberg: So as of now, it would be perfectly appropriate for a department chair to say this is who I would like on the search committee? Or wouldn't that violate university policies?

Dr. McGuire: Yes. One of the issues that we hope departments will deal with, and we didn't put it in here, is the whole issue of confidentiality and access to information, etc. Those need to be determined and I think that we will have some best practices coming from the university level fairly soon. By the same token, they need to be dealt with and they need to be set up in a policy manner. For each department, because of its unique recruiting situations, there are probably different kinds of guidelines and policies that are necessary.

Senator Cox: We have no university policy. Is it advisable to wait until this batch of ideas that you have now is formulized before departments sit down to the business of constructing their own?

Dr. McGuire: We have best practice notions based upon HR, Diversity, the Provost's Office and the like. We are trying to get together right now to come up with some best practice guidelines.

Senator Cox: Will we see them as the Academic Senate before...

Dr. McGuire: We haven't gotten that far.

Senator Holland: There are policies for just about everything except faculty.

Senator Rich: This is a question from a colleague of mine. "Whatever is done with regard to search committees, is there a definition of a DFSC role as the hiring authority beyond that stated in Article B?"

Dr. McGuire: No. This is the only mention of the hiring process, which is the whole appointment process under IV. So everything you see is all you get.

Senator Holland: There are lots of questions from departments about who gets to see what files and when, so it will be very helpful to have a best practices. There's also in Section VI., Article I("i"). Article I("i") says, "A letter of intent should issue from the Department/School upon final approval setting forth all of the essential terms of employment for the perspective faculty member and providing the candidate with information regarding department/school, college, and university policies. The letter of intent should be approved by the relevant college dean and the Provost. Employment will not begin until an appointment contract is issued by the University."

Dr. McGuire: This is a process that has evolved over the past couple of years under Provost Everts. In the past, we have been surprised by the contract letters that have gone out from departments that we haven't seen. We are asking for just a check off to look at and see what we promised.

Item 6:

Senator Holland: Section VII.D., "Department/School ASPT Guidelines should provide guidance regarding the format and content of activities reports. Electronic submission of activities reports is encouraged and may be required by DFSC/SFSC Guidelines. Items that are difficult or impossible to document electronically may be submitted directly. Reports are due by January 5 of each year."

Senator Cox: Since I know that the policy stated here doesn't include any mention of consequences of a late submittal of the performance review, I wonder if it is a matter that has been considered before.

Dr. McGuire: It has; we have had that case come up and if there is no material for the department to deal with, they have to give it basically what you would give your student who hasn't turned in their assignment, which would be a zero. Most of the time, the threat of that encourages the submission rather quickly. Just because you missed it, most department chairs would accept that the next day or whatever it takes.

Senator Cox: I ask this because it does say that faculty will have their performance evaluated. So a late report will produce, in our department, an evaluation of "unsatisfactory", with no mention of an evaluation done at all in the years previous. So it appears that the faculty's work throughout the year is voided in the case of a late submission.

Professor Singley: So your department has refused to accept something five days late.

Senator Cox: In the case of less than 24 hours late, with a medical excuse. So I wonder if the wording about the consequences of late submittals might be taken into consideration or is that something left up to departments.

Dr. McGuire: It is; it has historically been. I am very surprised at that.

Professor Singley: I'm shocked.

Dr. McGuire: There is a rule of reason that you have to apply.

Professor Singley: I can imagine a DFSC being angry if it were seven days late and perhaps saying this is a B- journal instead of a B+. I can't imagine in that event that they wouldn't look at it at all. Has then been fairly recent?

Senator Cox: Yes.

Professor Singley: I am amazed because as URC Chair, I hear many issues. I am very surprised.

Senator Cox: But the policy doesn't prevent that from happening again, so I wonder if that is an anomaly and we don't have to worry about that happening across the university in other departments or even in the same department again.

Professor Singley: I speak as the URC Chair; I'm surprised and shocked. I cannot speak for the Provost, but I can't imagine that your office would look kindly upon a chair who takes that sort of...

Dr. McGuire: I get those kinds of calls and I have never heard of that one.

Senator Cox: Who would the faculty member appeal to in a situation like that?

Dr. McGuire: I would go to the dean immediately.

Senator Holland: That's the first person and if that gets refused you have the URC.

Professor Singley: If there is a medical reason, you probably have a legal case. You certainly have an ethics and grievance case. There are multiple things that should have happened.

Senator Van der Laan: Wouldn't this issue be addressed by one of the other items here concerning appeals?

Dr. McGuire: Yes.

Senator Van der Laan: That would be the immediate course to take.

Dr. McGuire: That would be another course to take. Really there are three or four courses.

Senator Van der Laan: Is there a need to have reference to tardiness when there are other options built in?

Dr. McGuire: I would counsel against specific references to tardiness only because you get into determining how much late is late.

Senator Kalter: For the purpose of that particular example, would you mind checking with HR and the legal department about the university's responsibilities to a faculty member in such a case because it does seem as though voiding a year for a day's lateness might be illegal. It would probably be good if we knew how much leeway organizations have with respect to that. We might open ourselves up to a legal suit. I don't know if we need to incorporate it into this document, but it would be nice to find out how much risk a DFSC runs if they decide to do that.

Dr. McGuire: I'm not sure that there is a legal issue on that basis unless there is a medical issue.

Professor Singley: Which she said there was.

Dr. McGuire: If there is a medical issue, in that case we are getting into situations where we have to create very specific policies. I'll check.

Senator Van der Laan: I do have a specific question about D., the January 5. I asked about it in our last meeting and you explained that elsewhere in our ASPT document it is clarified and means that it falls on the Monday after the weekend. I wonder if we could insert something here to make that clear.

Dr. McGuire: We have the rather strange rule of the last day prior to rule as opposed to the next day after.

Senator Van der Laan: Would we need a footnote in our document?

Dr. McGuire: It is actually the heading of Appendix 1, which has the complete schedule of events.

Senator Holland: Section E: "The annual performance evaluation process shall include (1) an annual assessment of a faculty members' performance in teaching, scholarly and creative productivity, and service; (2) a separate interim appraisal of the faculty member's progress toward tenure and/or promotion, if applicable; and (3) an overall evaluation of the faculty member's performance in the evaluation period as either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory". Departments/Schools may choose to provide separate assessments of faculty performance in each evaluation category (teaching, scholarly and creative productivity, and service) as either satisfactory or "unsatisfactory", but must provide an overall assessment as well. Departments/Schools must develop guidelines for what constitutes overall "unsatisfactory".

Senator Ellerton: I believe that the choice of terms satisfactory and unsatisfactory is entirely unsatisfactory. Is the intent of these changes to reduce the evaluation to the status quo and to eliminate any idea of excellence or outstanding in terms of the nature of the performance?

Senator Holland: Basically, this is putting things in a binary situation and you would prefer to see a more grey scale?

Senator Ellerton: I believe that certainly in our department, it is a much larger scale, and I believe that is something faculty can strive for. It means that if they are going for any awards or other appointments outside the university that to produce a document that simply says satisfactory, even with definitions of what satisfactory means, is putting a grey mask on Illinois State.

Dr. McGuire: At one time, we had a five-step scale and we spent inordinate amounts of time separating the high merit from the highest merit. This is not a change. This is exactly what we have had since 2000 or 1995 when this book went into effect. We have had the same binary system. It was reduced at that time to create just you're ok, you're not ok. It was done to eliminate those fine gradations that made very little difference, if any difference, in terms of salary. It was a huge change at the time. I would really, without a lot of study and discussion,

hate to move beyond what we have been done fairly successfully for the past ten years with this.

Dr. Holland: Theoretically, the letters should be written in such a way that it is obvious how well you have done and then you are putting a final stamp on it, "fine". My guess is the vast majority of cases are satisfactory. If you get satisfactory, you are eligible for a raise. It doesn't mean you are going to get the merit raise, but you are eligible for it.

Senator Horst: When we deliberate on the SFSC, something that is confusing is we mix our evaluation of a person that year with our evaluation of the person as a whole. If you are going to call somebody satisfactory or unsatisfactory, have you warned them in the past? So when we develop guidelines for satisfactory and unsatisfactory, will we also be able to consider past SFSC letters? As it reads now, it's sort of a snapshot.

Dr. McGuire: Yes, that's a one year snapshot for the evaluation. It actually does take into effect...it is supposed to look at long and short-term contributions. So, yes, you can look back some. That is what we are asking...departments please define this.

Senator Horst: Could we develop language for year unsatisfactory, year satisfactory and sort of longer term? So if somebody has been warned in a previous letter, we would fill justified in giving them an unsatisfactory the next year.

Professor Singley: Your SFSC has used a reasonable process. Someone who has been here for one semester obviously would have different expectations applied than a full professor or someone who is in a much higher research level.

Senator Bonnell: You've standardized the language, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. If a department doesn't use that language in our document right now, is there an expectation that we will be using only these two?

Professor Singley: Yes.

Dr. McGuire: You can use gradations and other things in your own document, but for the final statement, for salary purposes if for nothing else, we need a statement of who is satisfactory overall, because the people who are unsatisfactory overall don't get considered for across the board raises at the university level.

Professor Singley: It also feeds very heavily into your tenure process one would hope.

Senator Peterson: In Section E.2., is that also supposed to be written in terms of satisfactory and unsatisfactory?

Dr. McGuire: No.

Senator Peterson: What I am wondering is why that is placed as number 2 and not number 3 for cohesiveness and to kind of separate that aspect of it.

Dr. McGuire: It could be switched.

Senator Peterson: I guess the way I was looking at this is that I know departments will be putting that into the letter, but with the same respect as the questions earlier, if you are putting down without warning you are making unsatisfactory progress...I don't think that was the intent.

Senator Cox: The departments may continue issuing the gradations. I can see how that might be valuable if the department ranks the faculty in terms of the pay. At the university level, would it make a difference if we were to abandon or retain the ranking system?

Dr. McGuire: I don't see that that makes a difference at all. We are interested in the bottom line from a salary standpoint. That's important. We also think it's important that you evaluate each of the three areas each year, but as long as we have the bottom line, I don't see that it makes a bit of difference how you do it.

Senator Cox: Do you think that a faculty member should have access to their ranking score? Currently, we don't give that to faculty.

Professor Singley: I would want to look at that a little more, but I believe that is information that is normally available. Two weeks from Wednesday, I will know for sure.

Senator Kalter: Chuck, you may have been doing this for ten years, but certainly my department has not been doing the satisfactory for more than a year. When our department members got those letter this year for the first time saying satisfactory, a couple of them came to me and asked if they should be worried because they thought that it meant that they were mediocre. Do we want to have only two categories? I kind of agree with you that yes we do in certain way. I wonder if we can be a little more creative with the terminology. Could we say something like "making good progress"...something that does not imply mediocrity? Could we come up with a term that HR and legal would like but that also would not tell us that we are C+ students?

Dr. McGuire: Basically, we were trying to explain the system that has been in effect for the last ten years and whether departments were out of compliance or not is another issue. We are now doing, under Provost Everts, some counseling with chairs. On October 21, you are all invited, we are doing an ASPT review session for all chairs, deans, SFSCs and DFSCs for the second year, where I think that probably got the change going in your department. If the department wanted to do other language—your official statement is satisfactory, but that means in your case you did wonderfully.

Senator Van der Laan: In order to allay some of the fears we have heard, could you insert some language that this does not preclude departments from saying in their letters whether you were supercalifragilistic? It doesn't have to be that. Would that be possible or necessary?

Professor Singley: I think it's possible. I kind of like the orientation, again, with the chairs. It ought to be in the letter. We are supposed to providing people guidance.

Senator Van der Laan: It's in my letters in my department, but apparently not elsewhere.

Professor Singley: That's where the orientation and guidance comes in. We are supposed to be providing the long-term guidance and development.

Senator Ellerton: I see a sticking point here. In the third to last line of E, it reads the evaluation category of teaching, scholarly and creative productivity and service. It implies that it must be stated in what the department is doing in the letter as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. To me, that means if a department gives a report on those categories, then it has to use that terminology. Whereas, that was really, from the conversation, it's not intended.

Dr. McGuire: No, it doesn't say that. It says departments and schools may choose to provide separate assessments of faculty in each evaluation category. Where we are coming from there, some departments actually broke it into three categories and then gave satisfactory or unsatisfactory for each of the three, but never came to a final conclusion. What we wanted to do is say that you can continue to break that up for each of the three, but then please come to your bottom line.

Senator Ellerton: As it's worded, it implies—and I support that; the encouragement was that they must give an overall, but the way it reads, it's saying may choose to provide that as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. That implies that they are locked in to only to doing that, not with the elaboration. It would still read with the intent of the proposers. It would still read correctly without as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

Senator Holland: So you want to strike that and just say they may chose to provide separate assessments of faculty performance, but must provide an overall?

Professor Singley: You may use a number of different terms in your own documents to do these, but at the very end...

Senator Holland: You have got to decide.

Senator Ellerton: Would you delete satisfactory or unsatisfactory in that one place?

Senator Crowley: Is there an editing process still to be done or does it stand the way it is?

Professor Singley: The last time we brought this to the Faculty Caucus, we went back to the URC a couple of times and made changes. At other times, the caucus accepted something subject to the change. There are two ways it could be handled. There is a timing issue. I would not have a problem bringing back editing changes.

Senator Crowley: I see in the same paragraph it "shall" include and it "must" include and there are letters and numbers and all of that kind of thing. I would expect that if it "shall" include, why wouldn't you say "shall" provide an overall and "shall" develop? Be consistent rather than kind of being all over the place.

Senator Solberg: For the purity of the document to go forward for raises and whatnot, would it make more sense to say you are unsatisfactory in teaching, satisfactory in research, unsatisfactory in service?

Dr. McGuire: I would like to leave the local option to do that. To me, it makes some sense. One of the issues that we wrestled with and didn't answer was whether someone can be unsatisfactory in teaching and still be satisfactory overall.

Professor Singley: I remember in the old days that teaching had to be at least one percent more important than anything else.

Adjournment

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