

Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Council
August 26, 2009
Excerpts

Present: S. Andrews, V. Bentley-Condit, C. Lindgren, R. Osgood, M. Schneider, P. Smith, B. Trish, A. Vishevsky

The meeting came to order at 4:15 p.m. in the Nollen House conference room.

President's Remarks

The President thanked Council members for their willingness to serve.

He noted that last year Council had made recommendations to him regarding position requests. Due to financial resource issues he did not approve several of those recommendations at that time. He has since approved the request from the French Department for a tenure-track position in Arabic language and literature.

Dean's Remarks

The Dean informed Council of progress with the searches associated with those recommended by Council, and approved by the President, last spring.

The Dean informed Council that the Political Science and English Departments are going to undertake reviews this year, but Religious Studies has asked to delay their review.

She reminded Council of a few agenda items that carried over from last year, including tabled faculty minutes of April 20, 2009 and April 23, 2009, disposition of a proposed religious diversity policy, proposed changes to the Faculty Handbook which would establish regular, but part-time positions, and Council response to the Mathematics and Computer Science response to their external review.

Council Remarks

C. Lindgren mentioned concerns over the College's approach to a possible escalation of illness due to the H1N1 virus. There is a question about how much a faculty member should do to accommodate student illness. The Dean urged faculty to look at their syllabus to determine impact of missing class.

M. Schneider asked whether the possibility of deferring merit review should be considered in view of the fact that there was no merit increase available this year. The Dean suggested adding this item to a future Council agenda.

Election of Council Representatives

M. Schneider moved, A. Vishevsky seconded, the nomination of S. Andrews to the Faculty Budget Steering Committee. The motion was approved.

V. Bentley Condit moved, M. Schneider seconded, the nomination of B. Trish to continue as Council Representative to the Diversity Council. The motion was approved.

B. Trish moved, S. Andrews seconded, the nomination of C. Lindgren to the Interdisciplinary Advisory Board. The motion was approved.

Discussion of the Next Steps for Tabled Spring 2009 Faculty Minutes

M. Schneider led the discussion by saying he was not clear what role, if any, Council should have in this matter because the April 20th and 23rd meeting minutes in question belong to the faculty and not Council. B. Trish suggested that Schneider simply put the decision before the faculty for a vote. There was discussion of whether the tabled minutes would be archived in draft. It was decided that because there was a vote to approve the May 4th minutes, the act of archiving was already achieved. There was further discussion.

Update on Ad Hoc Ombuds Committee/Ad Hoc Faculty Governance Committee

M. Schneider noted that the Ad Hoc Faculty Governance Committee does exist, but the formation of an Ad Hoc Ombuds Committee has not occurred. The Dean asked for discussion of the intention of continuing this Committee. Schneider responded that it is not clear that it will continue. The Dean noted that the question of a slate for the Ombuds Committee should be on the Faculty Organization Committee agenda.

Proposed Religious Diversity Policy

Council continued a discussion begun last spring about a proposed religious diversity policy. The Dean noted that this most recent draft came to her from the Religious Life Council. The need for such a policy stems from a few situations last year where a student's request for accommodation to observe a religious holiday were denied by their teachers. There was discussion of the draft policy dated April 21, 2009. It was decided that after returning the revised language back to the Religious Life Council for comment before the next Council meeting, M. Schneider would take the proposed policy to the faculty on the recommendation of the Executive Council. The Religious Life Council will be asked to develop a memorandum which provides the context for the need for such a policy.

Call for 2009-2010 Agenda Items

The following items were suggested by Council members to be added to Council's agenda for this academic year:

- Merit review in times of financial downturn
- Options for completing the Expanding Knowledge Initiative this year
- Chair workload (salary reviews, interim reviews, department reviews)
- Faculty Staff Directory-cutting down on the number of copies printed

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Secretary
Karen Wiese