

**Minutes of the Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
Meeting of January 12, 2009**

Present: Joan Heminway (Chair), Max Cheng, Norman Magden, Julia Malia, Molly Royse, Steve Thomas and Yang Zhong

The meeting was held in the Faculty Lounge of the College of Law at 2:00 pm.

Unfinished Business

- a. Minutes of November 24, 2008 meeting were approved.
- b. Deferral of substantive discussion of Cumulative Performance Review to at least the February Committee meeting.
- c. Discussion of changes to annual review process. Steve Thomas offered comments on the revised provisions from the *Faculty Handbook* and *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, principally including fixes to cross-references to other provisions within the document. An extensive discussion of the new Faculty Annual Evaluation Report form followed. Joan Heminway reported to the Committee on her meeting with Sarah Gardial about the annual review process and the form. J. Heminway talked about a possible experiment (or pilot program) involving the implementation on the UTK campus of five new evaluation categories in lieu of the existing four. Campus Deans were positive about this move. Max Cheng asked if UTIA would be included in the pilot program. J. Heminway said she was not sure. Further discussion between J. Heminway and S. Gardial is needed on this issue.

A discussion followed regarding the labels for and language used in describing the five proposed evaluation categories. Norman Magden especially questioned the word “low” in describing Category 2 on the proposed Faculty Annual Evaluation Report form. Various faculty members also raised issues about the need for further guidance in describing each of the five categories. Members of the Committee felt that the existing descriptions lacked clarity and distinctness. Also, faculty members on the Committee were unclear about how the five performance evaluation categories relate to the four merit pay categories. J. Heminway said she would talk to S. Gardial about these issues as well..

Yang Zhong brought up the issue of “non-research teaching track” in his department. Concern was expressed that the guidance on the form with respect to annual reviews does not address this type of position at

all, and that the guidance in the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* also may not address how these faculty are to be evaluated as clearly as it should. J. Heminway said she also would discuss this matter with S. Gardial.

Max Cheng brought up the issue of quality vs. quantity in evaluating faculty's research. Other Committee members commented that each department should have its own standard when it comes to the assessment of a faculty member's performance in research / scholarship / creative activity (e.g., the quality of journals faculty members publish in). These types of metrics should be included in department and college bylaws and vetted by affected faculty.

At the end of the meeting, J. Heminway summarized what she would do in terms of drafting revisions and follow-up on issues discussed at this meeting and also advised Committee members of what she would expect from them at the Committee's February meeting.

The next meeting will be held at 2:00 pm., on Monday, February 16, in the Faculty Lounge of the College of Law.

Respectfully submitted,
Yang Zhong