

Minutes of the UTK Faculty Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
Meeting of August 29, 2008

Present: Max Cheng, Joan Heminway (Chair), Roxanne Hovland, Julia Malia, Molly Royse, Steve Thomas, Gary Ubben, Yang Zhong
Guests: Sarah Gardial, Wornie Reed, Scott Simmons

J. Heminway called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM. She welcomed new and returning committee members to this first meeting of the year. She also welcomed visitors to the meeting: Sarah Gardial (Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs), Wornie Reed (an at-large member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee), and Scott Simmons (the Faculty Senate's Graduate Assistant). A few moments were taken making introductions.

Unfinished Business

Draft minutes from the committee's meeting on April 14, 2008 had been distributed via e-mail in advance of this meeting. G. Ubben moved to approve the minutes provisionally, pending further review by J. Malia. The motion received a second and passed by voice vote.

J. Heminway asked S. Simmons to report on the Unit Bylaw Posting Project. He reported that links have been updated for all available bylaws. At the request of J. Heminway he is now beginning a review of the contents of these documents, seeking areas of common concern or patterns of noncompliance with the *Faculty Handbook*, especially with respect to promotion and tenure and cumulative performance review practices.

J. Malia reported on the progress of the search committee for the new campus Ombudsperson. She and Otis Stephens represent the faculty on this committee. Between fifty and sixty applications were received. Interviews by telephone are being held with the top ten candidates with the intention of bring a smaller group to campus for in-person interviews. The committee hopes to fill the position by the end of this semester.

Consideration of the sections of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* and *Faculty Handbook* concerning Cumulative Performance Review (CPR) was deferred until a latter meeting. There was general agreement that that it would be reasonable to first consider suggested revisions to the annual evaluation process which feeds into the CPR. In the case of the latter, differences in campus policy and Board of Trustee policy will need to be rectified. J. Heminway noted that S. Gardial would meet with the committee whenever possible and desired and would serve as a bridge to university administration as we seek to address these important concerns.

J. Malia asked that discussion of "partial retirement" options be added to the list of topics to be considered by the committee during this year. J. Heminway indicated that should be considered, time permitting. Other issues for possible action include educating faculty about the residence of tenure and the annual evaluation of Deans.

New Business

Options for dates and times for monthly meetings were discussed. The following dates were accepted for fall meetings at 2:00 PM in the Faculty Lounge on the second floor of the College of Law, with dates and times for next semester to be determined later: **September 29, 2008**; **October 27, 2008**; and **November 24, 2008**.

S. Gardial spoke briefly concerning issues related to the annual reviews and the reappointment of department heads, from the point of view of deans. Annual reviews are time consuming when done properly. The present model is too closely associated with merit pay issues rather than the feedback/coaching/development aspects that should be addressed during such a review process. Deans would like to see annual evaluations separated from merit consideration, with more than four choices available for rankings. Also, reviews should cover more than one year (e.g., the past three-years).

J. Heminway then opened discussion on the proposed revision to section 1.4.6 of the *Faculty Handbook* concerning Department Head Reappointment. The present wording of that section, a proposed revision, and reasons for the revision were distributed in advance of the meeting. J. Heminway offered minor changes so this section would now read as follows (with changes to the original proposal indicated using Word's track changes feature).

1.4.6 Reappointment of Department Heads

The final decision on the reappointment of a department head rests with the dean. Department heads may be reappointed for an additional five-year term after a reappointment review. The dean will base the review on the annual evaluations of the department faculty and the annual assessment of the dean (as provided for in Section 1.4.5) and on input from relevant constituencies. In particular, the dean will solicit input from all departmental groups, including students, staff, and faculty, and will consult extensively with tenured and tenure-track departmental faculty prior to making a decision on reappointment. Absent compelling circumstances, the dean will give great weight to the consensus views of the tenured and tenure-track departmental faculty in making reappointment decisions. The dean shall issue a ~~final~~-written report to the tenured and tenure-track faculty that states his or her final decision on the reappointment of the department head and the reasons for that decision, citing to support from the annual evaluations and other input.

During the term of office of the department head, he or she serves at the will of the dean. If a department head is not reappointed, the dean begins the process of selecting a new department head in accordance with Section 1.4.4.”

Following discussion, approval was given by common consent to present this revised text to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in the form of a resolution, with the intention of presenting that resolution to the Faculty Senate for first reading at the October meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Thomas