

Faculty Assembly Meeting
Minutes for September 8, 2020
3:30-5:00 pm
Remotely via Zoom

Officers Present: David Armstrong (President), Mark Brush (Vice President), Chris Abelt (Secretary) and Tom Ward (Faculty Representative to the Board of Visitors)

Other Members Present: Tonya Boone, Josh Burk, Harmony Dalgleish, Marjy Friedrichs, Natoya Haskins, Catherine Levesque, Michelle Lelièvre, Alan Meese, Jennifer Mellor, Jim Olver, Christy Porter, Molly Swetnam-Burland, Anne Rasmussen, Nicole Santiago, and Evgenia Smirni

Members Absent: Adam Gershowitz

Others in Attendance: Peggy Agouris (Provost), Christopher Lee (Chief Human Resources Officer), Terry Meyers (Parliamentarian), Lisa Nickel (Swem Library)

1. Call to order

Mr. Armstrong called the meeting to order at 3:32 pm.

2. Approval of the minutes

Minutes for the May 14th meeting were approved without objection.

3. Provost's Report

No students has tested positive for COVID-19 since returning to campus. Today marks the opening of campus to all students. The Provost asked for questions. Masks must be worn when on campus. Some official sites may have allowed for exceptions. These sites will be updated. Title IX policies are being rewritten. An *ad hoc* committee of the FA will respond with suggestions to Pam Mason by December. The Provost asked faculty to be sensitive to students who are concerned about the return to in-person teaching. This is a transitional period, and flexibility is expected for the next week. There is no update from the General Assembly about the College's finances. The decision to terminate certain sports but not others was driven in part by how each engages school spirit, donors, alumni and BOV members.

4. Executive Committee Report

Four items were identified at the retreat for consideration for this year's Assembly:

- *Teaching evaluations.* Rowan Lockwood will report in October on the white paper created by the Academic Affairs subcommittee concerning teaching evaluations. Further actions will be deferred.
- *Faculty Survey.* Follow up action items arising from the Faculty Survey will be deferred.
- *Handbook revisions.* The Hardworking Handbook Committee will be formulated into a standing committee of the Executive Committee.
- *Personnel actions.* COPAR will take up planning for possible personnel actions.

Recent updates:

- Carrie Cooper (Dean of Libraries) will report in October. The Elsevier contract will be discussed.
- Names were given to Chon Glover for the university-wide Diversity and Inclusion committee
- Sophia Serghi has agreed to serve on the Ombuds search committee.

Formation of several *ad hoc* committees:

- *SSRL policy*. This committee will run in parallel with the Provost's working group, which currently has David Armstrong as the faculty representative. It was suggested that Suzanne Raitt and Tracy Cross replace David Armstrong and for them to be members of the parallel group so they could act as a conduit of information flow. The parallel group will gather data, brainstorm and discuss problems.
- *NTE policy*. This group will discuss rank, promotion and merit among other policies.
- *Faculty Hiring 3-year Pilot*.
- *Title IX definitions and policy*. The update was enacted as a provisional policy. Final input is due by December.
- *Handbook*. This committee will discuss updates to Section H, consensual amorous relations and others that may have arisen as a result of the pandemic.

These committees will be assigned separately from the standing committees. FA members submitted their preferences through Chat. The charges for some of these committees was discussed. Several groups (CCPD, American Studies) are formulating responses to the Faculty Hiring policy pilot. The question of whether action taken for NTE policy and Faculty Hiring infringed on policies of the individual schools was raised. However, it is the Assembly's responsibility to advise the President and Provost on all matters that affect the institution.

5. Standing Committees

The composition of the three standing committees (Faculty Affairs, Academic Affairs and COPAR) were approved by unanimous vote.

6. New Business

The November meeting will be moved from November 10th to the 17th in response to A&S moving its meeting from the 3rd (election day) to the 10th.

Discussion continued on the SSRL policy. The 80% salary support for one-year is unusual in higher education. It helps with recruiting, but it is generous and it is not administered rigorously. The \$1.3M cost to backfill leaves might be better spent as salary increases. The SSRL committee needs to gather data to support and dispute assertions. SSRL's are useful for scholarship. They mean a lot to more junior faculty. When faculty are replaced, students get to experience new voices. The visiting position is useful for career advancement in the humanities.

The hiring plan pilot will impact few departments this year. However, those that are hiring are

fearful that it will make it impossible to hire.

The meeting was adjourned at 4: 57 pm

Prepared by Chris Abelt