Faculty Welfare Committee

Calvin T. Ryan Library
University of Nebraska Kearney

Minutes
October 18, 2013 – 1:30 p.m.

Present: Kimberly A Carlson; Tommy Hansen; David K Palmer; Ronald L. Wirtz; Jeremy S Dillon
Absent: Ting-Lan Chen
On sabbatical: William Wozniak

Carlson opened the meeting and presented the charge to the committee. The current charge is to continue working on the Shared Governance Memorandum of Understanding with the Academic Affairs Committee.

Dillon agreed to stay on as Chair of the committee. Carlson asked for a volunteer to keep minutes for the Academic Affairs Committee. Wirtz agreed to serve as secretary.

Carlson noted that it would be necessary to get together with members of the Academic Affairs Committee to work on this together. She stated that she was not sure when the MOU is scheduled to be finished, and that not much has been done to this point because of changeover on committees.

In discussion, it was noted that (Rick) Miller is spearheading this work on the Academic Affairs Committee. The rationale for the MOU and the work of these committees is that a lot of decisions are being made by the administration without faculty buy-in. It is the customary right of the faculty to share governance of the university with administration. In order to do this, however, it is incumbent on the faculty to define what comprises shared governance.

An example of administrative decision-making is the setting aside of the “no overlap” rule between majors and minors. The Registrar reverted to the old rule that specified that only six hours could overlap between major and minor. The faculty had gone through channels to drop this requirement.

The Registrar was informed by (Scott) Darveau that this could not be done without the reversion of the old rule being approved by Faculty Senate. Minutes had been approved for everything but changing overlap rule. However, the Registrar changed retroactively to the old rule.

Another example was the disposition of the position of Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE). No one knew what would happen with that position due to the resignation of (Krista) Forrest. Beth Hinga was put into that position. There was no buy-in from faculty on what should have been done with the CTE position.

In discussion, it was suggested that Dillon should confer with Miller to see where Academic Affairs might be with their document. It was noted that (Ross) Taylor is the person who initiated the MOU project.

Dillon said he would like to have something prepared before going to see Miller. He noted that UNO had just gone through this process, but that the MOU was rejected by the Chancellor. However, the document was later amended and accepted. Dillon noted that (Ken) Trantham might have a copy of the approved document. Dillon feels that the difficult part may be coming up with a meaningful product, rather than a "feel good" document. The UNK administration is aware that something along this line may be forthcoming.
Dillon stated that the committees would need to avoid coming up with a laundry list of specific examples – the MOU must be general and open enough to cover whatever might come up in the future. There is currently no document governing shared governance. Dillon will send a copy of the approved UNO document and notes of the meeting with Miller to the Faculty Welfare Committee.

Palmer will talk with Taylor to get the history of this initiative at UNK.

It was noted that the Faculty Welfare Committee has been officially constituted.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Wirtz