

COUNCIL OF CHAIRS
Minutes
Wednesday, March 11, 2009
Action items are highlighted in red.

Present: E. Ahl, Provost Bernier, D. Beronä, N. Betchart, T. Boggess, B. Boschmans, P. Cantor, K. Chong, E. Cox, I. Cucina, P. Fedorchak, D. Haight, K. Hart, E. Hoffman, L. Levy, B. Lopez-Mayhew, R. Marshall, B. Middlekauff, C. Moniz, D. Moore, L. Reitsma, L. Sandy (for G. Mears), R. Sparks, W. Tomkiewicz, G. Tuthill, C. Vascak, D. Zehr

Absent: D. Mackey, G. Mears

Guests: Chris Williams – Office of Public Relations
Mary Cornish – Faculty Welfare Committee

Welcome from Chair Warren Tomkiewicz

Approval of draft minutes from February 25, 2009 -- ***Approved as submitted.***

1. C. Williams/OPR: **Encouraged the Chairs to share faculty and student stories with Barbra Alan** so that she can develop them into stories for *Plymouth Week*. He cited a few recent examples. He feels that these stories do a great job of defining the essence of PSU and help to let the rest of the world know about us. Small items, large items – you never know what might turn into a great story. In reply to the question about the PR policy of not publicizing faculty articles published in journals, he said that they have rescinded that policy. On March 12 (Thursday) at 3:00 p.m. in the HUB there will be an OPR presentation on highlighting student work. The Chairs were invited to attend and see what their departments could be doing to participate in this new effort.

2. Provost Bernier asked to move the topic of Faculty Workload up on the agenda so that Mary Cornish could be present for that discussion. *A 15-minute limit was put on this discussion so that the other topics on the agenda would have time for discussion.*

A draft of the faculty workload policy had been sent to the Chairs prior to this meeting for their review. The Provost shared that this policy is being created in an effort to recognize that many faculty are working very hard on their scholarship and/or service, and this policy is an effort to create flexibility within the workload expectations and accommodate their efforts. Discussion. The Provost did say that any reduction of teaching load to accommodate extra time and effort devoted to service or scholarship needs to have her approval. This policy is for tenure-track faculty, not contract faculty who have no scholarship expectation. This discussion was curtailed after 18 minutes, but resumed after the other agenda items had been discussed.

The final workload policy and form will be arrived at by continued back and forth discussion between the Provost, the departments, and Faculty Welfare. Since this is a Faculty Handbook policy, not a By-Law issue, it falls within the Provost's purview to determine and does not require a vote by the faculty for approval.

Related to this topic, the Tenure and Evaluation Advisory Council will be looking at workload and the tenure process to help detail and describe things like "minimum scholarship" and what constitutes a "unit."

3. L. Ahl: Bookstore issue.

She felt that there has been a real problem with the Bookstore not having enough books for students. She has not received much feedback from other Chairs on this issue and wondered if no other departments faced the same problem. Provost Bernier described what she feels leads to this problem: The PSU Bookstore has no way of knowing how many books they really need for each order because students purchase books online, they purchase books at the Town and Campus Bookstore, and all of the faculty don't use the PSU Bookstore to place their orders. This creates ambiguity for them. She acknowledged that it is a struggle for both the institution and the bookstore. Comments were made that the books are sold cheaper online. There was a short discussion on this item. Provost Bernier commented that she feels the current PSU bookstore manager does care about customer relations and satisfaction, and he is receptive to discussion about problems. His name is Steve Rheaume.

4. P. Fedorchak: Tape recording of lectures by students.
He has suggested to students that they may tape lectures to help them in their studies. Re-hearing a lecture will help with learning. Students sometimes feel that despite their coming to class, doing homework and studying, they are not successfully learning. But, he is hearing from students that other faculty have prohibited the taping of a class. He asked if this is legal.
Provost Bernier did not have an answer, but will check into it.
5. A discussion item was suggested: How to get unengaged and unproductive senior faculty to become re-engaged with their students, the department and the institution. Provost Bernier suggested that this would make a good topic for a future Chair retreat.

Announcements

1. P. Cantor: Each department that has gone through curriculum revision (and the Curriculum Committee process) resulting in a 120-credit degree program can apply in the Fall 2009 semester for a blanket approval so that all of their students affected by this change who have completed all of their general and program requirements don't have to do individual requests to have it apply to them.
2. I. Cucina: Distributed the CTE Newsletter.

The following topics have been tabled for discussion at the next meeting:

- Curriculum Revision Updates from Chairs – Provost Bernier
- Academic Reorganization Update – Provost Bernier

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Alice O'Connor, Scribe

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March 25th, 2009