

Minutes for Faculty Welfare Committee Meeting

October 14, 2011

Present: John Kulig, Burrett McBee , Daniel Lee, Nick Sevigney(chair), Evelyn Stiller(scribe), Mark Fischler, James Whiting. Guest: Julie Bernier

1. Questions presented to Julie Bernier:
 - a. The Committee asked Julie about a rubric for course release time. Julie indicated that there was no rubric and that the work plan and chair's response were used to evaluate workload. Chairs send a workload report to the administration which includes credits taught by each faculty. This information is then complemented by banner information. The Provost can provide to the Committee the validated (via banner)chairs report which shows release time.
 - b. The Committee asked Julie about professional development funds. No rubric for awarding development funds exists. We explored across-the-board funding from Provost's development fund, and suggested increasing the current \$400 individual award. Some departments use other funds to increase travel funds. The goal is to increase transparency in the awards made by the Provost's office. Julie seemed agreeable to providing the Committee with a report that included person, date, award, and destination. This funding will be shifted to the colleges. In the future.
 - c. We questioned the financial awards that were made this fiscal year. Julie indicated that the awards were made to compensate individuals for increases in rank minimums and for promotion increments. Faculty were ordered in a list by rank and salary to insure individuals who were in rank longer were not paid less than those recently promoted. Julie wishes to develop a plan for making strategic salary adjustments with this Committee with the goal to catch up to the mean of our comparator institutions. The resources needed to make these financial adjustments will not be taken from the 2% allocated for faculty salary increases. Julie voiced her intention to increase salaries in Business and Computer Science more than other disciplines in order to be competitive in those fields.
 - d. When asked about a tuition benefit for dependents, Julie indicated that this a financial burden to PSU, as a significant transfer of money is involved when dependents attend institutions other than PSU
2. Parking proposal: We need to distribute the proposal to faculty. Nick will address the parking proposal, and express the Committee's opposition to proposal. The proposal does not consider adjuncts. There appears to be no real reason for charging, other than needing money. Need to ask where the money is going. No mass transit exists, so few alternatives are available to parking on campus. This does not seem equitable, because the same fee is charged independent of earnings. . Question: What are our comparators doing?
3. Dan reported on SPPC meeting and the tuition benefit plan. The Board of Trustees (BOT) is considering modifying tuition benefit plan for cost reduction. BOT is looking for input from the

SPPC. Dan wants a suggestion from the Committee to bring to SPPC. We currently have a 50% dependent benefit with a 5 course limit/academic year. Should we look at courses or credits? Possible suggestion: have a pool of benefits to allow individuals to draw from this pool. Look at awarding benefit for other universities. This is a top issue for recruiting faculty. Dan wishes to discuss further at next meeting. Benefit is system wide, so PSU cannot act unilaterally.

4. Dan reported on the SPPC salary issue. PSU is way behind its comparator institutions. A graph in a USNH report (<http://www.usnh.edu/hr/pdf/2011HRRReport.pdf>) shows extreme inequity for PSU with its sister institutions. Dan wishes this to be presented to the BOT. The administration shows a desire to close salary gap.
5. James brought up the issue that the USNH health benefits are taxed for same-sex couples. Some companies allocate money to offset financial burden. BOT said “no” to this in the past. We wish to add this to our agenda, and put this forward to SPPC.
6. We received a series of questions from Liz Ahl. Liz’s questions will be sent to Terry Dautcher in her capacity as a PBLG member, because we are not the appropriate recipient. We will also send to Provost. Nick will ask Liz if we can put these questions forward.