

Minutes - Faculty Senate
February 19, 1999
2 PM – Gallatin Room - SUB

Attendees: Chairman Don Stierle, Courtney Young, Larry Smith, Curtis Link, John Evans, Doug Cameron, Celia Schahczenski, Mary MacLaughlin
Visitors: VCAA/R Dan Bradley, Collegial Evaluation Committee representative Bill Macgregor
Recorder: Mary MacLaughlin

Minutes of Faculty Senate meetings held on 2/5/99 and 2/12/99 were approved.

Chairman Stierle will post the Faculty Senate's letters to the Chancellor and VCAA/R regarding the new administrative position in the shared folders. He will also post a copy of the Board of Regents' planning document/mission statement.

VCAA/R Bradley is concerned that Tech's current faculty/course evaluation policy does not satisfy Northwest accreditation standards. Self-evaluations of tenured professors do not "go anywhere." NW wants to see a process for identifying and remediating deficient performance.

(This is in reference to the Northwest Accreditation Handbook, Policy 4.1 on Faculty Evaluation:
"d. Where deficiencies in a faculty member's performance are identified, the faculty member is responsible for remediating the deficiencies, and the institution is expected to assist through development opportunities. Evaluation cannot be separated from remedial action.")

Evaluation is addressed in the Faculty Handbook, Section 207 Performance Evaluation: Instructional Faculty and Division Deans.

Discussion of this issue included the following points:

- We are lacking a reasonable and fair way to evaluate teaching. To satisfy NW, we need a rigorous review process, with remediation.
- Do we need a new policy, or enforce the current one?
- The administration is responsible for making sure that the existing policy is being applied fairly.
- The student evaluation process is not fair to all faculty.
- Peer review is the way to go, but we can't burden the department heads.
- Does the existing policy do what we want it to do? The objective is to insure the quality and integrity of the faculty (and satisfy NW).

- The Faculty Handbook has a policy regarding tenure and promotion, but it is not clear. This leads to inconsistency in portfolios. Convincing supporting documentation regarding quality of teaching is not present in a tenure/promotion packages.
- Evidence of teaching quality is the biggest problem, but research is also a problem: What is a "regional reputation?" (self-defined)
- The U of M President must be mentioned in the Handbook in order for his/her role to be defined. It appears that the current President's view is that a faculty member must be "making a substantial contribution to his/her field" in order to be granted tenure, which is defined in very broad terms.
- Is this written anywhere? Our policies should be parallel to those of UM and Western.
- It is quite possible for an untenured faculty member to receive positive feedback at all levels of evaluation, and have the President deny tenure.
- The Collegial Evaluation Committee will be asked to make a list of appropriate exhibits for a tenure/promotion portfolio.
- The policies must be clear so the faculty know what is expected of them.

- In order to satisfy NW, we are not required to have student evaluation of teaching as part of the process, as long as we have multiple measures of performance evaluation.
- Multiple measures of performance are better than one.
- Is there a single set of measures that can identify deficient performance?
- Student evaluation of courses is definitely important, both to improve the course and improve teaching.
- Faculty performance involves more than just teaching – also research and service (& terminal degree).
- Is it good for our institution to change its policies to satisfy NW standards?
- It's NOT good to change things that are working just to satisfy other entities, but it IS good to fix things that aren't working.

- The Instructional Improvement Committee is an ideal venue for workshops on student evaluation of teaching. The *quality* of the teaching evaluation data is much more important than the *quantity*.
- Some ideas for student evaluation of teaching:
 - Have some questions in common on all evaluation forms.
 - Collect and compare forms currently in use.
 - Ask the students if the course objectives were met.
 - SGID (small group instructional diagnosis). This process may potentially be prescribed as part of a deficiency remediation plan.
- What should the student evaluations be used for?
 - Improving the course
 - Identifying “deficiencies” (the institution needs to support “remediation” of deficiencies)
- How are they to be used?
 - Needs to be done “blind,” ie, names removed until deficiency is identified.
 - Deficiency should not be one set of poor marks.
 - Results should go to dept head, dean, administration.
 - Teaching is only one facet of performance (albeit an important one).
- Where do we want to go with this?
 - Meet with Faculty Senate chairs from UM and Western to discuss their policies.
 - Eventually, form a subcommittee to rewrite the Handbook which may include faculty not currently serving on the Senate.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Friday, February 26, 1999, at 2pm in the Madison Room of the SUB. Regent Margie Thompson will attend the meeting. The Board of Regents' planning document will be discussed.

Meeting adjourned: 3:45 PM.