Agenda Committee Minutes
Friday, November 11, 2005

The meeting began at 2:15 PM, in Dean White’s office.
Present: Harrington, Blomquist, Sutton, White, Wittberg

The Agenda was approved.

The minutes were approved.

Committee Updates:

Academic Affairs: No agenda items will be brought forward for the November meeting. Dean White stated that a report on Administrative Withdrawal will be circulated to the committee. He will also send it to the Academic Affairs Committee. Susanmarie Harrington will ask the AAC to share their thoughts on petitions to change Fs to Ws.

Academic Standards and Policies: (Blomquist). Academic Standards and Policies has been asked to approve the addition of Introduction to International Studies (I100) to the Comparative World Cultures list. This will come forward as a recommendation from the ASP Committee to the Faculty Assembly. Bloomquist will ask Scott to provide an I100 syllabus and a paragraph outlining the rationale for including it in the Comparative World Cultures List. Harrington noted that Dean Souch had raised the question of the approval policy for Integrator courses: A new Integrator course would go first to the Curriculum Committee and then to the ASP. Proposals to make an existing course into an Integrator course would go straight to the ASP. Bloomquist said that the ASP may also have a recommendation for changing /simplifying the Bulletin language with respect to electives. Harrington said that, if so, the Bulletin must be clear when the new language would begin to apply.

Faculty Affairs (Sutton): The SLA faculty salary policy will come up for a vote. Harrington stated that we need to appoint a new member to the FA committee to replace Sue Steinmetz. After discussion, it was decided to ask Wan-Ning Bao to serve on this committee. Sutton stated that FA would look at promotion and tenure next, especially the balanced case material. Bob Sandy had written to Susanmarie Harrington in September expressing his concern with the vagueness of the sample letter guidelines for Promotion and Tenure letters. It was decided to ask the FA committee also to consider the wording of the sample letter when they looked at the promotion and tenure guidelines.

Graduate Curriculum (Blomquist): The committee hasn’t met since the last meeting. the only thing pending is the proposal for a joint MA/Md Philosophy and Medicine left over from the last time.
Library Committee (Sutton): The library committee met and elected Peter J. Thuesen as their chair. They are considering whether to dissolve the committee.

Nominating Committee: The electronic election is up. Bill Stuckey, Larbi Oukada, and Patricia Wittberg will figure out a timetable for the spring elections, working backwards from the April date.

Promotion and Tenure: Harrington stated that this year the PT committee has taken up the question of whether guidelines should address the promotion of chairs from associate to full.

Resources and Planning: RP is sending a strategic plan forward to the Faculty Assembly for their endorsement.

Committee on Teaching and Advising: TA will have a 30-minute program at the Nov.18 Faculty Assembly meeting.

Technical Services (Sutton): TS has finally submitted their end-of-the-year report from last year. They are now considering whether they will propose in January a bylaw amendment establishing a subcommittee to co-ordinate lab policies.

Undergraduate Curriculum: UC will submit syllabi guidelines for faculty discussion and endorsement.

Correspondence from Gabrielle Bersier:
Dr. Bersier raised two issues:
1.) lecturers chairing the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. The Agenda Council discussed this and did not feel that the policy needed to be changed. Service is a significant percentage of lecturers’ responsibilities, and they must be encouraged to serve on committees. If it is not appropriate for a lecturer to serve as chair of a committee, it is the committee that should make that decision.
2.) “ghost” committee members. It is politically difficult for committee chairs either to announce at Faculty Assembly meetings that the committee couldn’t do its work because Professor X was chronically absent, or to write letters to Professor X’s chair complaining of substandard service. Harrington will urge in her remarks at the next Faculty Assembly that all take their committee responsibilities seriously.

Harrington will also write to Dr. Bersier, informing her of the Agenda Council’s decision regarding these two issues. If she still feels strongly, she could submit her concerns to the Faculty Affairs Committee if she wishes. She will note that the Undergraduate Committee is currently discussing and reconsidering its role.

Dean’s Update on the assessment of research/teaching:
There are several assessment initiatives in process. Dean White would like to come up with a template for external review that could also be used for the Strategic Plan and other assessment reports. This would allow external reviewers to have some basis for comparative assessment. There is a need to consider how we measure (e.g.) quality of research. He would ask each department and program to come up with two or three empirical measures for “quality of research” within that department’s/program’s discipline, and then to use it in assessment each year. These measures would be cleared with the Research Advisory Committee and/or Retention and Assessments. Then the same could be done for teaching and for service. In this way, each department would be helping in developing assessment tools, so that we can keep track of increases in productivity and quality. As a side benefit, the chairs will have something to use in their annual reviews of faculty. Dean White will start a conversation on this, drawing on the chairs and on the Research Advisory Committee, and he will emphasize this in his conversations with department chairs.

**Possible New Faculty Committee on Retention and Assessment:**

Susanmarie Harrington wondered whether there are areas of faculty life and work not currently covered by our present committee structure. She suggested issues of retention and the assessment of student learning. Do we need a new faculty committee on this? Or can it be added to the responsibilities of the Teaching and Advising Committee? Or should there be one large Education Committee with four subcommittees – in charge, respectively, of teaching, advising, assessment, and curriculum? Harrington will consult with Deans Souch and Ward on this, and will talk to Michael Snodgrass regarding the Teaching and Advising Committee. Dean White prefers to have a committee of the faculty that he can consult on these issues rather than to decide on his own.