

Minutes of the General Faculty Council meeting held on April 11, 2006

Present: Jean Collier, Chair, Ellie Wilson, Lynda White for Lotta Löfgren, Nancy Gansneder, Bill Keene, Jenny Moody, Gary Davis, Mark Ross, Dawn Anderson, Barbara Millar, Dawn Rigney, John Wilson, Matthew Althoff, Pam MacIntire, Robin Kuzen, Kay Buchanan, Chris Elliott, Virginia Carter, Prue Thorner.

Guests: Angela Davis, Alan Cohn.

1. Jean Collier welcomed new members: Chris Elliott, representing Student Affairs; Matthew Althoff from Athletics; Barbara Millar representing the Professional Schools; Peter Norton from SEAS; Dawn Anderson from the Women's Center and Jenny Moody representing Arts & Sciences.
2. Jean reported on the newly formed Diversity Operations Council. The chair of the GFC will attend meetings of the Council, and all major units will have a seat on it. It will provide a forum for discussion for pro-active strategies to make U.Va. a more open and welcoming environment and will be chaired by Bill Harvey. Among the first tasks of the new Council will be to review the findings of the Diversity Commission Report.
3. Alan Cohn said that he is assembling a FAQ list about the effects of restructuring to go on the University's website. An article will also cover the topic in *Inside UVA*. The most significant change will be that employees hired after 7/1/06 will be tagged because different employment conditions will apply to them.
4. Chris Elliott presented a revised resolution urging the University to offer domestic partner benefits. Alan Cohn responded that until the Virginia legislature changes the law on domestic partner benefits the University will be legally prevented from offering domestic partner benefits. Council voted unanimously to support the motion presented by Chris.
5. Bill Keene reported on the status of items under consideration in the Faculty Senate/GFC joint committee. These include:
 - a. Endorsement of draft policies that were developed jointly by the GFC and the Vice President for Research and address current problems involving 1) temporary disability leave and 2) bridging health benefits for sponsor-supported employees during temporary lapses in external funding. These draft policies will be considered by the Faculty Senate's Executive Council at their next meeting.
 - b. Endorsement of the GFC resolutions that are posted on our web site. Due to the time demands of current restructuring efforts, action on the resolutions will probably be deferred until next year.
 - c. Request to revise the Faculty Senate's grievance policy to clarify that it covers all academic faculty (teaching and research, track and non-track). Recommended revisions are under consideration by the Chair of the Grievance Committee.

- d. Revision of the Senate's election procedures to eliminate current prohibition of full-time non-track academic faculty from participating in elections within some units.
 - e. Concern about lack of faculty review of proposed changes in policies, for example, the GFC has not had an opportunity to review or comment on the new policy on "Employment of Non-Tenure-Track Faculty" since summer, 2003. Jean reported that Yoke San Reynolds has acknowledged receiving our request for a comment period before implementing new policies. The Senate is considering a similar motion to request a 30-day public comment period on proposed changes in University policies.
6. Regarding the new policy on non-tenure-track faculty, Bill noted that although several concerns remain, the clarity of language has been improved. There is uncertainty about whether the new policy applies to all general faculty or just to new hires.
 7. Bill informed the GFC that the administration is considering a web-based procedure for offer letters and other contractual details relating to employment.
 8. Bill summarized differences between the former policies on the general faculty and the new employment policies. The policy committee will prepare a summary of these differences to be posted on the GFC web site for access by all faculty.
 9. Jenny Moody noted that some people have been asked to waive their right to ECE in order to be re-appointed or have been termination due to insufficient funding. She said that in the past the concept was always that a faculty appointment was separate from the presence of external funding.
 10. Bill Keene commented that the Provost should be distributing the new policies to all faculty. He stated that even a lapse in external funding for a single pay period is now sufficient cause for termination. Under the new policy, there are no provisions for how much notice an individual will receive in advance of termination. Finally, schools may make their own rules for non-track faculty. Such policies must be included in the offer letter made to new faculty. Members of the professional research staff are in a different employment category than general faculty: they cannot write grant applications or advise students. They are governed by different policies. Bill wants to develop an explanatory document to go on our website to inform our constituents. Apparently a change in the grievance procedure is pending but this has not been made public yet. The question was raised as to why policy review committee meetings are not open to employees to attend when this is a public institution?
 11. Jean turned over the chair position to Ellie Wilson.

The next meeting will be on May 9 at noon, Room 481 Newcomb Hall