

Minutes from the General Faculty Council Meeting
Wednesday, September 12, 2007
Newcomb 481

Present

Dawn Anderson, Otilie Austin, Jean Collier, Dahlia French, David Glover, James Groves, Beth Blanton-Kent, Robin Kuzen, Teresa Lockard, Pam MacIntyre, Barbara Millar (also representing Marsh Pattie), Jennie Moody, Peter Norton, Ricky Patterson, Ellen Ramsey, Heather Russell (for Kevin King), Lynda White (for Phil Gates), David Wolcott

Absent

Virginia Carter, Phil Gates, Kevin King, Aaron Laushway, Marshall Pattie

Visitors

Susan Carkeek

1. 12:00 **Gathering of Members**
2. 12:10 **Call to Order and Chair's Report**
 - Peter Norton called the meeting to order.
 - Members introduced themselves.
 - Since most GFC Committees had not yet been able to meet, the agenda was changed. Rather than having Committee reports, the end of the meeting would be reserved for Committees to gather and plan their next meeting.
 - Peter noted that he was particularly interested in getting the Joint General Faculty Council/Faculty Senate Committee going since the Chair of the Faculty Senate, Ricardo Padron was so interested in working closely with the Council.

New Business

3. 12:15 **Welcome to Susan Carkeek, Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer at University Human Resources, with comments and discussion**
 - Susan Carkeek contacted Peter and asked to meet with the Council because she felt there were a number of issues of interest to employees around grounds.
 - One such issue was benefits. Recently a number of surveys signaled a heightened interest in benefits: the Health System Foundation's survey on life issues, the Faculty Senate Committee on Retention and the Child Care Survey.
 - Other issues she identified were compensation and professional development.
 - Most of the time was focused on a discussion of general faculty issues and what we could do together.
 - Barbara Millar, Chair of the Communication Committee, told Susan about her professional development program sponsored by the GFC last spring. The Communications Committee is planning two more programs in 2007-08. Barbara asked Susan if Human Resources would be interested in partnering with us. Susan stated that during the last budget cuts, this was an area that was hit hard. However it is a high priority of hers and she expressed interest in partnering with the GFC.
 - The Council offered kudos to Susan for bringing Jobs@UVa on line. The project took just nine months to implement. Over 200 applications were

received on the first day without any advertising. This initiative was designed to put those hiring in touch with applicants and allow recruiters to recruit. Last year there were over 35,000 job applicants and more than 1,000 staff jobs filled.

- Susan stated that she has other technology initiatives in mind.
- Susan discussed her critical functions. She identified five, but had to select two to highlight and they are; restructuring and bringing together University employee development efforts.
- Professional Development: HR has implemented a new employee orientation program. The old orientation was much like a vendor fair, but didn't include information about U.Va. The new program begins with U.Va. including acronyms and fun stuff. Orientation starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. and includes lunch and a tour of the Rotunda. Employees can leave at noon. At orientation, new employees get their id cards and parking. In response to the living wage concerns, HR has rolled out a program (Essential Skills Program) to develop the skills of front-line staff so that they don't stagnate, but rather it creates a career path. Participation in the program results in a pay raise. There were 250 nominations for 20 spots in the new program. Another initiative underway in the area of professional development is management development training. Currently there is no coherent vision for professional development and the various programs around grounds need to be brought together. Jennie Moody pointed out the uniqueness of general faculty and how we tend to be forgotten. General faculty come to the University with the hope of building a career, but the University has no programs for recruitment and retention of general faculty. There are issues specific to general faculty that go unaddressed such as: paid leave for temporary disability from grant funding and benefits during gaps in funding. Robin Kuzen also pointed out that often people don't know what kind of position they are in and what that means. Barbara further detailed how general faculty is a hybrid with those doing administrative functions and others who are functioning just like tenure-track faculty but without the career ladder.
- Restructuring: Last fall, the University conducted focus groups to identify issues and then used that data to create a survey. The survey, which was narrowly focused to what can be changed under restructuring, had a 49 percent response rate. Those things that cannot be changed include the grievance procedure, retirement and health benefits. Susan is preparing to hold town halls to go over the results of the survey. From the survey, 88 percent felt that this was a good place to work. The survey revealed that the most important reason for staying in a position is the relationship with your supervisor. Retirement and health benefits also ranked high. One thing Susan identified as wanting to restructure was the performance/evaluation process. She would like to design a system around career development; a system that is staff –centric. Ideally the system would have career paths and be more like the faculty process with ranks. We are at least a year away from the details of restructuring. The council pointed out that not all faculty have career paths – the tenure-track faculty do, but not the general faculty. Barbara stated that the general faculty would also like to be recognized, rewarded and have a system with career paths. Susan indicated that she was willing to work with us on this.

4. 12:50 **Suggestions for priorities for the coming academic year**

- The GFC identified the following as priorities in the coming year:
 1. The faculty title issue is a given

2. Redoing the Council brochure
 3. The December and spring professional development programs
 4. To follow restructuring – Pam MacIntyre and Robin Kuzen volunteered to take this on.
 5. To reach out to general faculty with a letter from their representative on the Council
5. 1:00 **This summer's diversity meetings – Jean Collier**
- The second symposium has been scheduled and we should have received an e-mail about it.
 - The Diversity Office has a new e-newsletter and if you have anything going on to put in the newsletter, let them know.
6. 1:10 **Parking Update – Ricky Patterson:**
- There has been one meeting of the Parking and Transportation Committee of the Employee Council that included Rich Kovatch and Becca White. P&T is doing their own survey and has offered to include questions from the Committee.
 - Finding ways for the University to pay for parking is not realistic. It really is a fairness issue.
 - The Committee is planning to meet with the Faculty Senate soon.
7. 1:20 **Committee Reports**
- Most Committees had not had an opportunity to meet so the Council broke into committees to plan future meetings and next steps.
 - The Elections Committee provided a written report to the Secretary for inclusion in the minutes. Elections Committee Report: The committee met and focused on three possible ways to improve participation in the annual General Faculty Council elections and one way to improve the elections process:
 1. Distribute an announcement about the upcoming elections after the Communications Committee's program this fall. The announcement would outline the process and the issues the GFC is working on. A list of those attending the fall program could be a useful source of possible candidates.
 2. Discuss with Council holding at least one or two meetings around grounds. This was done a couple of years ago and the meetings attracted more visitors.
 3. Try to hold the elections a bit earlier this academic year in order to avoid spring break. We would try to announce the GFC vacancies and attract candidates in late January.
 4. Inquire as to whether the software used for Student Council elections could be used for GFC elections. That software was developed by ITC, so Terry Lockard will inquire about using it.
8. 1:30 **Adjournment**