

GFC meeting. Minutes 9/7/2022

Discussion of teaching awards, with Maite Brandt-Pearce.

- Last year we discussed equity in teaching awards and other university grants. Concerns: teaching awards tended to favor tenure-eligible faculty (<https://provost.virginia.edu/subsite/awards/teaching-awards>); lack of transparency in process.
- Maite Brandt-Pearce: Has made numerous changes to teaching awards: committee term limits; revamped website with more information; new rubric for committee (no rubric before - so no real sense of how people were evaluated); revised criteria (incl. removal of questions regarding research, not relevant for teaching awards). Re: composition of committee: currently asks deans to make recommendations. Regarding advertising of program: provost's office discouraged from sending emails to all faculty. Instead, reach out to deans, ask them to forward, seek nominations. **Anyone** can nominate a faculty member to these awards. Obviously that message not getting to community, because tends to be the same nominators every year. Paying increased attention to equity issues: who is getting the awards. One award is restricted to tenure-eligible faculty: Alumni Teaching Award. Has specific goal: provides a year off from teaching so that faculty can pay attention to teaching without compromising their tenure.
 - o Discussion:
 - Perhaps GFC could approach Alumni Association and ask for similar award for AGF. Semester leave would be very helpful for GF's faculty preparing for promotion.
 - GFC members need to spread the word that anyone can nominate. Currently some evidence of parity, but data show that most GF recipients come from small number of schools or departments: ED, CS, ENGR. Other schools, incl. Law, Comm, Darden – have no recipients.
 - Communication is difficult in the big schools. Few emails sent to faculty by deans; rely on department chairs. A successful packet is a departmental effort. Chairs tend to look first at their PT faculty. However, packet now doesn't require a nomination letter from chair or dean, so nominations can come from anywhere.
 - Consider blind nominations. Otherwise, status of nominator will come into play.
 - Problem: lack of understanding about process, especially by chairs. Again: GFC members can help with communication.
 - Although there is no limit on the number of faculty per dept that can be nominated, the committee aims for an even distribution across schools.
 - Committee has made many changes; we should review the website. Process not as onerous or burdensome as before.
 - It would help to have examples of successful applications, perhaps posted on website.
 - Student services, especially on the health side, does a lot of vital research, but is excluded from these grants (including 3-Cav) b/c it's not a school;

researchers must team up with faculty from schools. Unfair. Should be eligible for funding.

Discussion with Ian Baucom:

- Affirms value to the University of general faculty. Wants feedback on: Where are we failing, where succeeding? Do general faculty have the same sense of belonging as tenure-eligible faculty?
- Priorities and other important issues:
 - o His priorities:
 - Supporting the new deans: Ed, CPS, Nursing, College. Recently held retreat with all deans.
 - Research mission. Have underinvested. This year's grand challenges: digital tech & society, precision med/health. Overall infrastructure needs attention, including high-performance computing, analytics. Group of faculty will look at infrastructure investments this year.
 - Expand in NOVA. Wants UVA to serve entire Commonwealth. Currently have Rosslyn (UVA/Darden), also property in Fairfax, currently under renovation, to serve as anchor for NOVA activities. Deans: what should we be doing at NOVA? Loan program for deans will encourage development of off-grounds academic ideas.
 - Graduate education. Have underinvested. Providing funding to help schools improve graduate funding, incl. fellowships, more diverse cohort.
 - Free speech. Affirm that University education grounded in free speech, free expression. President ordered statement on free expression, BOV endorsed. Need now to infuse principles in free speech and free expression in academic life.
 - Enhance diversity of faculty.
 - Undergraduate advising. We advise well, but not evenly, e.g., with transfer students. Many advising groups across University, need to pull them together. Also, need to focus on what's happening with students in STEM. Many students enter wanting a stem major, but don't sustain this interest. Marked decrease by ethnicity, gender, financial state. Large intro stem courses function as weed courses, needs to be examined.
 - Major investment in biotechnology. Will tie together health, academic, with state and private support.
 - Long-term enrollment strategy. Examine who we are, what is normative, how to broaden our educational mission, how to reach the many Virginians with some college, but no degree.
 - Discussion of how to be both Great and Good: we are both TJ's and Sally Heming's university. "WE" is the salient point for a public university.
 - o Discussion:
 - The percentages of GFs to total faculty very different, school to school. Provost doesn't anticipate big changes in overall percentage. Increased investment in research not intended to minimize teaching.

- What about general faculty research? Research funds in College – GFs not considered until tenure-eligible faculty evaluated. Research should be endorsed for GFs; knowledge production shouldn't be divorced from teaching.
- Even when door is open for GFs to do research, is challenging (if not on research track): few rewards, incentives, allowances (including research leave). Even when brass ring dangled, can't take advantage.
 - Baucom: Research required for tenure-eligible by the terms of their employment. Discussion of sabbaticals: Some schools already do offer them – school level decision. (PROV-004 has promoted this as an option.)
- Discussion of COVID classroom protocols: faculty now cannot even notify students about a positive case in class (anonymously), denying students information to aid their own decision-making. Strong objection to this.
 - Provost: hands tied due to political situation. Maite, however, said that she would investigate this reasonable request.
- Baucom urged us faculty to contact him with questions or concerns. Even if they make him uncomfortable. "Educate me."

Final discussion (without Baucom or Brandt-Pearce):

- Joe: thought the Prov-004 process was effective – we significantly improved the state of the general faculty. Recommends constructive conversation with administration. Suggests we do background work, make specific, not amorphous suggestions. More likely to get what we want.
- Issues of interest, going forward:
 - Give general faculty the resources and tools to be successful knowledge producers.
 - Belongingness: do general faculty feel like they belong? Need some security to do free-wheeling work. Relates to terms of contracts.
 - Important equity issue. Need to have an equitable balance of practices, expectations. Currently GFs face impedances, including inequitable access to grant funding.
 - A lot of variety by school. Schools currently revising their own school-specific policy for general faculty in response to changes in 004, deadline of October 15. GFC members are encouraged to participate, to find out what their schools are doing. Are general faculty being sufficiently consulted in the drafting process? PROV-004 did stipulate that schools must include general faculty in decision-making that affects them. Some schools exclude GFs from the process with no rationale. No expectation of parity – no equal treatment of general faculty. Will provost review new school policies on the GFs? No, but might push back on egregious violations.
 - And don't forget about HRM-003 (A&P faculty), which will be revised next. Perhaps subcommittee to start looking at HRM-003.

