FACULTY COUNCIL
Minutes
Wednesday, October 23, 2013
3:00-5:00 PM – CLC 306, WTC

Members Present: Battaglia, G.; Boller, H.; Bowen, R.; Classen, T.; Fine, J.; Friend, P.; Graham, D.; Gupta, G.; Jay, W.; Jellish, S.; Knight, A.; Lash, N.; Miller, H.; Ramsey, G.; Ryan, J.; Schoenberger, A.; Singh, S.; Solari-Twadell, A.; Udo, M. *Guest:* Sobe, N.

1. Meeting was called to order at 3:11pm by Gordon Ramsey. Invocation – Janis Fine.

2. Approval of September minutes, amended as per G. Battaglia & J. McNulty. Moved: Jay; Friend seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Chair's Report

   o Council still has two vacancies, in CAS Humanities and Social Sciences. I have not yet been able to fill them. Please give me some suggestions, lest we have to leave them vacant.

   o Council's meetings for November and December will be in this room, CLC 306.

      ▪ Discussion of the possibility of teleconferencing for HSD representatives. GR: in the past there have been numerous technical issues, including the availability of properly equipped rooms both at Water Tower and the other campuses. But I will continue to explore the possibility with IT.

   o The discussion today and meeting will be information-gathering about the proposed Faculty Assessment System (FAS). Dean Andress will be here at about 4:00 PM.

   o Committee charges: updated. Please see the document circulated for the meeting.

      ▪ Question: Is there a new "rainbow chart" out? GR: Yes, but it contains errors. I will follow this up with the Provost.

   o The long form for the IDEA student assessment is out. Please read and prepare comments on it, in consultation with your constituency. We will need to discuss it further.

      ▪ Comment: In the School of Education, our experience with the tool is now in year two. There's been high compliance by students—about 75%. Comments to come in, including text/narrative ones.

4. SSOM/HSD: JMcN & GB

- o The Dean's Council of the school met Monday. It was concerned principally with a discussion of issues with the medical students.

5. University Senate report (TC)

   - o We met last Friday, October 18, when LUC CFO Bill Laird made a presentation to the Senate on the status of University budgets. Takeaways:
     - We are at capacity, which is 16,000 total students.
     - The delay in salary increases in Fall 2013 was driven by students completing their degrees more quickly than expected following the reduction in credit hours required from 128 to 120. Fewer fifth and sixth year students reduced numbers by about 300 students.
     - This coincided with a change in the timing of evaluation to the fall, and in raises to January, each year, so they can be based on actual enrollments in September.
     - Raises over the last five years of economic turmoil and averaged more than inflation and we've done especially well compared to other universities in being able to offer raises during this time.
     - The average salary increase in January 2014 will be 2.5%, with a projected/budgeted level of 3% the following year. Salaries make up $234 million with fringe benefit costs of $61 million (generous health insurance + change to 403b to 5%/5% match).
     - We have generally been fiscally conservative in budgeting for capital investment projects (mostly at LSC). Improvements to the physical campus position us well to compete for a smaller pool of students in the future.
     - Higher tuition increases for incoming students (5%) versus continuing students (2.5%), since new students receive more benefit from capital investments.
     - The recovery of LUC's budget over the last decade since early 2000's debacle has been impressive.
       - Remark: This is the first time there has been any mention of a connection between the delay in salary increases and the loss of students by any administrator.

6. Discussion of FAS (preliminary)

   - o Why do we need this new assessment system?
     - Post-tenure review?
     - Over-reliance on online student evaluations (IDEA)?
     - Issues of quality: possibly stifling innovation by incentivizing instructors to teach to the evaluation?

- o Noah Sobe (chair of academic affairs committee, University Senate): discussion of these issues in the University Senate.
  - Post-tenure review: the administration *denies* that its new FAS policy contains what amounts to post-tenure review.
  - Rigidity and "dashboard approach" to assessment; it lends itself to quantitative, not qualitative methods of evaluation.
  - Numbers that come from IDEA evaluations take on the centrality that we should be aware/wary of. If that is the primary method of assessing teaching, what impact will that have on our overall assessment? (Example: faculty can upload information on the course, but our input is limited to 30 words. There is a general lack of ability on the part of faculty to enter narrative material. We need to resist the idea that quantitative input is a valid measure of quality. Frankly, the University has wasted money on bad software; we should refuse to use bad software.
    - Remark: Student evaluation data will not be uploaded by faculty members but by University staffers.
    - Remark: Statistical numbers in the QSB has become *central*, *critical* in annual evaluations. Also, evaluations arguably incentivize grade inflation.
    - Remark: We've been in the system at SSOM for 10 years now. Salaries are now dependent upon points earned; this is where the rest of the University campuses are headed.
    - Remark: The steering committee of the Law School reports that its administration has refused to use the new FAS, citing recruitment of new faculty: why come teach at LUC if post-tenure review is in place there?

7. Visit of Dean Andress (CAS)
  - o Thank you for the invitation to speak to you. It's good to be here. Perhaps I can give you some background on FAS from my perspective as CAS Dean. I joined the FAS committee shortly after I arrived at Loyola. The committee was chaired by Dean Getz. It had a fivefold purpose:
    - to review policies and procedures;
    - to confirm/reaffirm how LUC values teaching, research, and scholarship;
    - to create a more uniform system of faculty assessment across WTC and LSC (from the CAS perspective);
    - to make the system dovetail with new technology;

- to establish a higher level of accountability.
  - We started our work last fall. In March/April I took this draft to the College Leadership Committee, which consisted of departmental chairs and program directors. Feedback from them went into the draft, and the new draft was submitted to the Dean's Council in June. It was then revised and sent to the Provost; in August it was then sent to the University Senate and the deans. In December the final draft will go to the Provost.
    - Question: What is the timeline for implementation of the FAS? RA: Next fall, and thus beginning implementation next May (see timeline).
    - Question: What about the issue of post-tenure review? RA: The document does not indicate post-tenure review based solely on IDEA evaluations. *Many* factors feed into evaluations in any area. Even if a poor rating were achieved— an unlikely prospect— faculty handbook procedures would be engaged.
    - Question: The College is made up of disparate disciplines; how will the FAS achieve "uniformity"? RA: Schools/colleges/departments will have to work this out. The new FAS is not meant to interfere with this process. "Performance improvement" needs elaboration, in addition.
    - Question: There is a certain opaqueness involving the raise pool. Raises are competitive, so it might behoove colleagues to know what level of achievement is going on in one's department, and possibly in one's school or college. RA: In all schools, departments have their own slice of the raise pool to distribute at their discretion. There is no competition between departments or schools; you are evaluated for raises only with your departmental peers.
    - Question: Will verbatim/narrative comments appear anywhere in the FAS? RA: This is a valid concern. More room for narrative comments can be accommodated.
    - Question: What is the status of the confidentiality of FAS information? Will teaching evaluations be made public to students? RA: there is no plan to make teaching evaluations public to students.
    - Question: Concerning the "accountability" of faculty: what gave rise to this issue? RA: this had to do with a tiny percentage of faculty, and with a concern about how to help make these faculty become more productive and accountable. Question: If the percentage is tiny, why institute a blanket, general policy like this? If problems can be dealt with individually, why impose a policy on a whole school/college/university?
    - Question: Doesn't emphasis on IDEA dis-incentivize innovation, and/or punish experimentation? RA: Faculty can input narrative

data in evaluating their courses— this is important. I agree that quantitative numbers can get overused.

- Question: There is an issue of "micromanagement" faculty performance; such as point scales for faculty activities. RA: This is not the intention of FAS.

- Question: the new process will be massive, bulky, arguably requiring data input comparable to a new tenure review every year. What about the amount of narrative needed to contextualize faculty responses to student evaluations, for example?

- RA (final): We speak of the Jesuit ideal of students acquire knowledge, reflecting light, and using it to act upon. Why can't faculty do the same with their own knowledge and skills?

8. Motion to adjourn: Moved (Schoenberger); second (Miller). Meeting adjourned 5:03pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Hugh Miller, PhD, Secretary