

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Emporia State University
Sep. 9, 2008
Xi Phi Room, Memorial Union, 3:30 pm

I. Call to order: Chair Michael Morales called the meeting to order.

II. Attendance: Members absent: Chuck Pheatt and Mohammad Chowdhury. No substitutions, guests, or observers.

III. Approval of minutes of previous meeting (Mike Butler moves to approve / Gary Holcomb seconds / all "ayes").

IV. Announcements by Chair Morales.

* Office Hours. The question had been raised, What are the requirements for office hours? Provost/VP for Academic Affairs Dr. Teresa Mehring was asked about the policy and her response was that presently the amount of office hours required of a faculty member is determined by their department. (The possibility of formalizing office hours through the Faculty Senate was discussed, as was the unresolved question of those faculty who teach on-line courses. Another suggested possibility was that departments all post their office hours policies on their web sites to make the office hours policy transparent.)

* Teaching Credit Hours. According to Provost/VP for Academic Affairs Dr. Teresa Mehring present policy is that the number of credit hours (to be distinguished from teaching load) required of each faculty member is up to each department. Depending on the department, it varies from 9 to 12 credit hours per semester .

* Weapons Policy. The weapons policy still needs to be formalized. Most of the guidelines can probably be kept, but some questions that need to be resolved include the question of weapons which however form part of class materials or tools, e.g., in a martial arts class.

V. Old Business.

* Evaluation of Teaching at ESU. Though many attempts have been made to confront questions surrounding student evaluation of teaching for over ten years (since c. 1995), nothing conclusive has resulted . A recent ad hoc committee which appeared to be an attempt to side-step Faculty Affairs has been disbanded. Responding to questions from FAC Chair Michael Morales, ESU President Lane responded that he agreed that Faculty Affairs was a proper channel for addressing the issue of student evaluation of faculty, made clear that it is acceptable to him if different departments use different instruments to measure student evaluations as long as they are in compliance with any university-wide requirements, and suggested that he might provide budgetary rewards to departments which do comply with university-wide requirements. President Lane's charge to the FAC is to come up with recommendations for the Faculty Senate, which would then be passed by the Faculty Senate to President Lane in whatever form the Senate ultimately sees fit. In response to this charge, the FAC resolved a.) to review the documentation on previous attempts to address this issue; b.) to construct a timeline of the various actions, recommendations, and conclusions, and c.) to draw up summary recommendations based on their review. It was decided that the relevant documents would be collected and made available for review on the Faculty Senate web page in the FAC subsection. Related issues addressed during the ensuing discussion were university-wide norms (required questions or topics to be posed to students); consistency with ESU policy and

Regents' policy; the question of what different biases effect student evaluations; and how one could adjust for these biases when generating reports.

* Advising International Students. Under discussion was the need for the centralization of documents regarding international students (such as the assorted agreements between ESU and foreign universities) in order to eliminate problems for advising brought about by lacunae in information on international students' status and requirements. Additionally discussed was a need for a simple way for advisors to access international students' transcripts or to provide advisors with equivalents for transcripts in those cases where the originating institution does not keep or provide transcripts. One suggestion was to invite James Harter (Assistant Vice President for international Education) to a session of the FAC in order to find out more.

* Sabbatical Leave and Leave Without Pay. The concern here was with finding a consistent, transparent way of awarding sabbatical leave which would also be consistent with ESU policy. Nonetheless, the exact nature of the investigation required was not clear, and it was resolved that more information was needed in order to decide how to proceed.

VI. New Business (No New Business).

Adjournment at 4:55 pm. Recorded by C. E. Emmer.