

Faculty Assembly

March 19, 2013

Library Conference Room

Ralph Olliges, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order.

Announcements

Ralph reminded everyone that the Spring Institute is this Friday, March 22nd in the University Center beginning at 2:45 p.m.

Department Name Change – Tom Lang

The Department of Art would like to change the name of the Department to the Department of Art, Design, and Art History. It has been a two-year process to come up with a name that communicates more clearly what the Department does.

A motion was made and seconded to change the Department of Art's name to The Department of Art, Design, and Art History. With the exception of three abstentions, all were in favor; motion carried.

Salary and Fringe Benefits Update and Discussion

Jeffrey Carter shared the names of the other Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee members: Doug O'Bannon, Cheryl Breig-Allen, and Susan Seymour.

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee took the survey results from the fall and used them to frame a discussion with the administration. The proposal that has been given to the administration was shared below.

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee has requested the following:

- 1) an across the board increase of 5.5 percent equaling the COLA adjustment that faculty have fallen behind based on the last five years, plus 1.7 percent for 2013.
- 2) Move to a tiered chair stipend, plus a menu of add-ons for various Department Chair/Assoc, Program Directors, and others with administrative responsibilities.
- 3) Move TIAA-CREF faculty/university contributions to total salary rather than base salary.
- 4) Increase FT faculty lines by 5 percent, with searches to take place in 2013-2014. This means budgeting for approximately ten new faculty lines for the 2014-2015 school year.
- 5) Administration to provide evidence to satisfy faculty that gender equity has been achieved.
- 6) Administration to provide explanation of scope and implementation of Mercer plan, including timetable and initial capitalization amounts for Year 3.
- 7) Create super-adjunct position with appropriate salary and benefits.
- 8) Adjunct faculty salaries receive same 5.5 percent adjustment as full time.

Based on the above proposal, the following discussions took place:

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee was asked to characterize the conversations so far with the administration and it was stated that conversations have been very frank and candid. The

administration must answer to the Board of Trustees and are limited in what they can accomplish.

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee asked the Provost why so much money was spent on Vienna's new building. The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee was told that the funds came out of Vienna's budget and not St. Louis' budget.

Provost Schuster was also asked about the purchase of the \$350,000 home and the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee was told that the home is an investment and is being used to better Webster's relationship with the community.

When asked about the rapid increase in new administrative lines, the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee was reminded that we lost a chancellor as well as a secretary and that money has been reallocated.

The statement was made that faculty are glad that the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee is looking at department chairs that have not received a raise in ten years. It is hoped that we are looking at other faculty whose pay for additional responsibilities has not increased in ten years or longer as well.

It would be great to work in a conversation with administration about transparency and administrative base salaries, as well as the bonus structure and merit that the bonus structure is tied to. It is understood that there are bonuses tied to certain metrics for administration and it would be good to know that information. This question was asked at an Administrative Council meeting and the administration is working on this and should have this information available soon.

There is not currently a faculty representative on the budget committee for the University. If faculty do not have a say on the budget, things go awry from there.

A question was asked if the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee has been contacted on how the 2014-2015 budget will be affected in terms of salary for the health care mandate. The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee is looking at it and there is concern, but right now it is all hearsay.

It was stated that when Greg Gunderson addressed the faculty in the fall, he affirmed that the University had a surplus and that it was used to do things that needed to be done at Webster. There has never been a break down as to how that surplus was spent and there is concern given our current financial state.

President Obama's comment in his State of the Union address was brought up. He said that colleges are bloated and raising tuition is no longer an option. He would like to tie government loans to that so that tuition cannot be raised. There is concern as military tuition is one of Webster's major sources of revenue.

For many years, there was a joint committee that worked with the administration for gender equity. This joint committee has not been convened in about seven years. Are we now abandoning that formula? That is a question to ask Faculty Senate. More than a year ago, the Faculty Senate sent a recommended list to the administration of faculty representatives for a joint committee on gender equity and is waiting on a reply.

A discussion took place regarding the difference between teaching/non-teaching duties. Assessment and GCP are both considered under teaching duties. Assessment is about accreditation and it keeps the faculty on level with what is going on. A statement was made that responding to the many changes being made at the university takes up a great deal of time and requires a recognition that faculty are working harder. It is not known if everything that is being done toward assessment is required for HLC or just to satisfy thoroughness. Further discussion regarding assessment followed.

It is felt that much time and energy are spent not utilizing the skill sets that faculty have. Faculty expertise could be used much better than it is currently being used.

The question was asked, "What exactly are our responsibilities as faculty?" The University Policy Handbook is very vague in defining the faculty role and will vary quite a bit by department/discipline. Less value is placed on teaching instead of the extras that faculty do.

One important thing about being at a university is learning (attending presentations, etc.) and is really important to being a part of an intellectual community. It is feared that students are not getting the classroom experience that they were even ten years ago due to time constraints and being able to keep up with whatever field you teach in.

Those in attendance were asked to email or call Jeffrey Carter with any other information related to the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee presentation. The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee expects to hear back from the administration on their proposal within the next few weeks. They hope to bring that information back to the April Faculty Assembly.

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee was thanked for all of their hard work.

With no further business, the assembly adjourned at 4:01 p.m.