

Council of Faculty Representatives

Approved Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 29, 2023

Present: Dene Grigar (vice chair), Praveen Sekhar (chair), Paul Bonamy, Laurie Drapela, Susan He, Kristin Lesseig, Kelsey Pascoe, Samantha Reisz, Aaron Whelchel.

Recorder: Lohmann

Guests: Career-track faculty members (seven in attendance).

Discussion Items

1. Committee reports
 - a. Campus Advisory Council (Sekhar)
 - i. Results of Campus Climate Survey and Employee Engagement Survey were discussed including low faculty morale and possible solutions.
 - ii. Discussion of cafeteria options. Chancellor Netzhammer stated that a full-service cafeteria would be at least two years out. VCFO Chambers-Taube is looking at possibility of a coffee stand in the near future.
 - iii. Discussion of Electric Vehicle charging stations. Chambers-Taube is looking into the matter.
 - iv. Netzhammer stated that salaries are the highest legislative priority.
 - b. Research Advisory Council (Lesseig) - first meeting is upcoming.
 - c. Chancellor's Advisory Council (Lesseig) - met Sept. 19. Meeting focused on updating council members on WSU happenings. Sharon Kruse was invited to share information on COE partnerships and connections to the strategic plan.
 - d. Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) Institutional Subcommittee will meet next week (Drapela). PCSW has a general meeting on Friday, 06 October @ 9am. The IC subcommittee has a meeting on Thursday, 12 October @ 11am.
 - e. CSW Salary Subcommittee is looking at options such as salary steps or other ways to mitigate salary compression (Drapela). The Faculty Senate convened an ad-hoc committee on a salary step system (21 September). Drapela is serving on that committee. The first meeting is 17 October 2023.
2. Discussion of drop-in sessions planned by Vice Chancellors. CFR Chair plans to collect questions and concerns from faculty and pass them along anonymously to drop-in sessions.
3. Career Track (CT) Faculty Discussion. Concerns and questions to be passed on to administrators in drop-in session are listed in addendum below.
 - a. Questions about promotion and merit raises for career-track faculty (e.g. "Scholarly Full Professor" title). This may need to be standardized at the system level.

- b. Discussion of transitions from CT to tenure-track (TT). A few individuals have transitioned in this way when there was an “open” tenure-track faculty line.
 - c. Discussion of how percentages are assigned for research, teaching, and service for CT positions.
 - d. Discussion of course buyouts using grant funding. Policies for this may depend on the department, and academic directors have discretion.
 - e. Chair has requested Christine Portfors about the possibility or feasibility of minigrants specifically for CT faculty.
 - f. Discussion of minimum or base salary for CT faculty, and effects of compression and inflation.
 - g. Concern about unequal allocation of CT and TT lines among campuses, with one dean reportedly having stated an intention to hire only CT faculty at non-Pullman campuses.
 - h. Discussion of areas where CT faculty feel devalued. These include salary, promotion process, job security, and perception of rank or status.
 - i. Faculty Status Committee may be looking at options related to professional leave/sabbatical for CT faculty. Judy McDonald brought this up in the Steering Committee meeting.
 - j. Discussion of the limitations at a Research-1 institution, where TT faculty are typically given tenure based on research excellence and not teaching.
 - k. Discussion of status and support for pedagogical research. CT faculty with higher teaching loads might be able to do pedagogical research with more support. There is concern that pedagogical research is undervalued despite a purported emphasis on student success.
 - l. Discussion on CT faculty teaching lower-level courses with high enrollments while TT faculty opting for junior/senior level courses, graduate level courses, and capstone course sequences creating unbalanced load distribution.
4. Bylaw Subcommittee Progress and Deadline, 10:30 to 10:45 am
- a. Grigar is joining this subcommittee. Bylaw discussion will be first agenda item for next CFR meeting.
 - b. Chair hopes that the proposed document will be publicly available for faculty to review by December 1.
5. Updates:
- a. A constituents concern regarding COACHE survey results will be discussed at next meeting.
 - b. Scholarship Dinner was September 28th, with high participation. About 161 students are receiving scholarships.

Addendum: Questions for drop-in sessions with administrators

(Response During the Drop in Discussion Session, Nov 15, Zoom):

1. What is the process and what are the guidelines if a CT faculty member wants to transition to tenure track?
2. Can you adjust your percentages for research and teaching as a CT faculty member? Is it always contingent on grant funding?
3. Can CT faculty “buy out” course teaching for a semester with grant funding?
4. Is there a base salary that has been set for CT faculty or is it different for specific tracks/disciplines?
5. How can CT be better supported for professional development, sabbatical, and grant support, in a way that is equivalent to TT?
6. Can we stop using distinguishing titles externally (e.g., noting whether someone in CT or TT in the campus directory)? Use generic titles such Assistant, Associate or Full Professor in general?
7. What support is available for pedagogical research? Are pedagogical research publications counted towards promotion for CT faculty?

Action item for chair:

Contact Scott Fraser in IT about the possibility of recording in-person drop-in sessions.