

CFR Meeting Minutes – Fall Faculty Assembly Meeting
27 September 2024
VDEN 129 & Zoom
9:15 – 10:45AM

Representatives Attending:

Bonamy, Drapela, Fortin, Grigar (Chair), He, Olson, Pascoe, Reisz, Schimelpfenig, Whelchel

Ex-officio members in attendance:

Dimitrov (Senator, TT)

Ex-officio members absent: Praveen Sekhar (Outgoing Chair, CFR)

Guest: T. Chris Riley-Tillman (Provost)

Recording Secretary: Paul Bonamy

Recorder's note: This is the Fall meeting of the Faculty Assembly (FA), and as such was open to all FA members who wished to attend. FA, and CFR, members attended both via Zoom and in person.

The Assembly *began with a brief discussion with T. Chris Riley-Tillman*, the new Provost, during which he addressed a range of topics.

- *The Provost strongly supports regular review of administrators.* He especially prefers annual reviews, which allows issues to be addressed quickly without a chance to linger.
- Regarding selecting a WSUV Chancellor, *the Provost believes that it is critical to think about core desires and to recognize that no candidate will meet all of them.* Most especially, we need to be careful not to lock onto a set of parameters that can arbitrarily invalidate an otherwise excellent candidate.
- *Many students post-pandemic want to be able to be in person without being forced into always being in person.* The University is not accounting for this preferred flexibility, which will cause students to go elsewhere. The Provost notes that this and other issues are often met with 'we can't do that' when we could do it, so he encourages an open-minded approach instead.
- *Academic Affairs Program Optimization is intended to be a data-gathering process.* Right now, we lack any systematic way to see what is being done or why. The goal is to identify a manageable number of core questions and ask them about everything, annually. This way we can make small adjustments as needed, rather than

infrequent, large program reviews. Whether the forthcoming AAPO will lead to system wide program review is up to the incoming President.

- *The Provost notes a surprising lack of a University workload policy.* He expects that most people are probably doing just fine. There are, inevitably, some people with very low workload compared to their peers and notional responsibilities. At the same time, people can use a formal policy to show that they are contributing at or above the level of their peers.

Following the discussion with the Provost, *a general introduction to the CFR* was held. This included a description of our role, a call to vote in forthcoming FacSen elections, and the announcement of the new Faculty space and the laptop lunch series to be hosted there.

The remainder of the meeting including discussion of a variety of concerns:

- *The Event Planning Guide is still a source of concern.* FA members are troubled by the lack of faculty involvement in creating the guide, along with the concentration of power between campus security and events coordination staff. Especially worrying are the authority to veto faculty events and the possibility of retaliation using that authority.
- *Information about the Chancellor's search was provided.* Primary concerns raised during the Listening Session included a desire for research experience, concerns about present lack of transparency in operations, and a desire for willingness to do evaluations and be evaluated. FA members expressed concern at a possible conflict of interest if the people who nominated search committee members can also apply for the position.
- *It appears that the University is only considering grant funding and publications covered by Web of Science.* This necessarily removes consideration of non-monetary products (e.g. books) as well as research output in the Arts.
- *A question was raised regarding a 'modernization fee' that appeared in a unit's goods and services budget.* Bonamy reported that his understanding is adopting Workday included both an up-front cost and an ongoing fee. The WSUV share of the latter was absorbed by the overall campus budget initially before being distributed among the units in the last two years or so. If he recalls correctly, the fee each unit pays is based on their payroll expenses.
- *Library subscription cuts were briefly discussed.* The current set of cuts were based on three criteria: whether the subscription could be canceled individually, download counts, and feedback from faculty during the previous round of cuts. A larger cut is

being planned for next year, and additional faculty input will be sought as part of that.

- Discussion found that *policies around travel and professional development funds are inconsistent* across units. Differences include not only whether funds are provided each year but whether, and to what extent, funds may carry over. This should be made more consistent and transparent.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Bonamy, Recording Secretary