

Report on General Faculty Meeting January 27th, 2021

Discussion about the Faculty Handbook Committee's Counter-Proposal of the Handbook Amendments.

Jeff Johansen: A small discrepancy was discovered last night between the language of the FHC amendment process proposal and that of the FHC budgetary hardship proposal. We decided to table our counter-proposal of the amendment process, because the budgetary hardship proposal is much more critical. Our fringe benefit counter-proposal is an improvement over the proposal of the board in the sense that it allows shared governance. Our budgetary hardship counter proposal protects tenure, unlike the proposal of the board. Therefore we recommend a favorable vote on our counter-proposals on both fringe benefits and budgetary hardship.

Dan Palmer: is there a plan to fix the discrepancy in the other proposal and resubmit it later?

Johansen: depends on what the board does. If they decide not to force their proposals through, we can collaborate with them to come up with a proposal that is mutually attractive. If they force their proposals through, we might propose something that doesn't have the clause that will force to amend the handbook during the summer, which was the main concern.

Brossmann: we sent out a letter to Donnelly, Trembl, Johnson, and Herbert about our disagreement over the interpretation of the three Jesuit schools' handbook in terms of budgetary hardship and tenure protection. We are committed as a faculty to find solutions to our financial difficulties which does not involve the elimination of tenure protection. We found significant differences between what were presented to us and what the three handbooks actually say, e.g. 2 of the 3 institutions use financial exigency as the bar instead of budgetary hardship. They were much more consistent with the language in our current handbook rather than that of the board proposal.

Question: What progress has been made on agreeable solutions? What is the status of the committee formed to formulate a solution?

Brossmann: We have offered suggestions to the board. The board responded that our proposals are more for the short-term and not structural. Johnson and Herbert indicated last week that they didn't see the need to eliminate tenured positions in the short-term, but they couldn't preclude such possibilities in the long-term. The argument we have made to Donnelly, both publicly and privately, is that the current problem is short-term, although there is a structural element in it, we can, through retirement and other mechanisms that we offered such as furloughs, buy time to get to the point where can we grow again. The goal is to save money between now and 2023, not eliminating positions forever. Donnelly has said that they will seriously consider our proposals, and Johnson and Herbert have pushed back on the narratives that the board hardship proposal is necessary right now.

Sheila McGinn moved to send the two FHC proposals (fringe benefits and budgetary hardship) to the full faculty for a vote.

Chris Sheil seconded the motion

Fringe benefits counter-proposal: 94 yes; 1 no

Budgetary hardship counter-proposal: 94 yes; 1 no