

First Meeting of Administrators with Faculty Handbook Committee Members
Friday, December 9, 2005

Sally Wertheim introduced David LaGuardia to review the charge to the groups. He reported on the impetus for the group coming from a discussion that University President Robert Niehoff, SJ had with the Faculty Handbook Committee members on October 28, 2005. At that meeting Fr. Niehoff raised issues and concerns that he had about the Handbook. His conclusion was that it would be profitable to have the members of the Handbook Committee meet with a group of administrators to review the present handbook and examine places where changes might be considered. Subsequently, Fr. Niehoff appointed Sally Wertheim liaison between the administrative appointees and the Faculty Handbook Committee.

David remarked that some changes to the Handbook would be more easily approached than others, but he hoped that both groups would be able to think in ways beneficial to all parties. There are aspects in our present handbook which are excellent, but not in light of what could be in there. We should look to streamlining the document and anticipate issues that are not presently covered. He asked the groups to benchmark against other documents in similar institutions. Recommendations from the group should logically follow the channels and processes that are currently in place. Ultimately the groups will report to the faculty as well as to Fr. Niehoff through the AVP's office.

Bob reviewed the discussion that the Faculty Handbook Committee members had with Fr. Niehoff. At that meeting Fr. Niehoff suggested that parts of the Handbook were out of date and otherwise in need of change. Areas suggested as out of date were doctoral leave policies, retirement age, and use of the term Board of Trustees rather than Board of Directors. New issues to consider included: revising the contract date, clarifying the definition of visiting faculty, adding contract faculty, and answering questions about early tenure decisions and fringe benefits.

Sally suggested that both groups do a careful reading of the Handbook to come up with a list of editorial changes to the present document, and come prepared to suggest areas where more substantial changes might be needed. Bob offered to supply the version of the Handbook that is currently being edited by the Faculty Handbook Committee. It incorporates non-substantial textual revisions and an update to the University Tenure Procedures and Guidelines regarding the Library Director's role on the Library's tenure committee.

Notification will be given to the faculty about this work and eventually we will want to get faculty input. Bob cautioned that once any amendment would be proposed that it would commit the group to a lockstep process required by the Handbook in Part V.

Linda Eisenmann suggested that she and others might benefit from a review of the history and growth of the Handbook and the role of the appendices. Bob agreed to do that at the next meeting.

Sally asked that everyone bring calendars to the next meeting so that dates for future meetings could be set.

Marcy Milota
Recorder