

FACULTY HANDBOOK COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF FALL SEMESTER 2015 MEETING

The Faculty Handbook Committee (FHC) met October 22, 2015. Present were (alphabetically): Ruth Connell, Karen Gygli, Jeff Johansen, Doug Norris, Paul Lauritzen, Brenda Wirkus.

The first order of business was selection of officers for the committee. Ruth Connell and Jeff Johansen indicated willingness to serve as chair. After a closed ballot, Ruth was selected as chair. Jeff Johansen was chosen as secretary by affirmation.

The faculty had not raised formal concerns with the FHC at the time of the meeting. Some members of the committee were concerned by the recent proposal to initiate direct admission to the Boler School of Business, and possibly to other programs. The Boler School leadership recommends this as a means of improving recruitment of students to the university. Other departments may also consider this strategy. The concern centered around whether or not this represented a change in admission standards, and therefore a matter under the purview of the faculty. After discussion, the committee came to consensus that this was likely a matter that should be discussed in Faculty Council, and that at least for now was not our committee's responsibility.

Concern was also expressed regarding HR policies that affect staff and part-time faculty. The staff handbook has been replaced by HR policies on the university website. We felt that given the criticism of the Higher Learning Commission on shared governance at the university that these policies were not rolled out in a way that was best practice, and that the administration continues to lead by fiat rather than conversation. Part-time faculty in particular are considered to be vulnerable and under-served by the university.

Although the FHC did not make a determination that these concerns were violations of the Faculty Handbook, many felt these could be a source of future conflict with the handbook, and that developments should be monitored.