

Faculty Handbook Committee

Meeting: 11/2/18

Minutes

Present: Jeff Johansen (Chair), Matt Berg, Brent Brossmann, Mark Waner, Sheri Young

Approved minutes with modification to note Kilbride was invited as Faculty Council chair.

Question was raised by Jerry Weinstein as to whether the faculty evaluation process is a Handbook issue. The Faculty Handbook Committee believes that this is a handbook issue.

The question was raised as to how this should be advanced.

The decision was that Faculty Council charged the Finance, Faculty Compensation and Work Related Policies Committee with examining the faculty self-evaluation process. The FHC determined that the appropriate path is for the Compensation committee to create a recommendation, have that recommendation sent to Faculty Council, and have Faculty Council advance it to the Faculty Handbook Committee. The FHC views its role as ensuring that the proposal is consistent with the FHB, and is willing to work with the Compensation Committee at every level to help ensure that compliance.

A question was raised as to the relative priority of the sharing of the survey data and the importance of getting the Handbook amendment proposals to the floor. A decision was made to present the data, move to the Elections Committee to help them in their efforts, and also to proceed with the Handbook proposals.

There was a general discussion about the indication of some level of distrust among the faculty. Responses, while varied, including some relevance to faculty distrust of administration, faculty leadership, and the faculty at large.

A question was raised with whether the lack of voting was about faculty apathy or faculty fear, especially among visiting or tenure track faculty. Discussion followed as to how to address general fears, especially about their voting being tracked. It was suggested that the Elections Committee determine how to demonstrate the confidentiality of the voting process.

We need to generate a report to send to the faculty as soon as possible. Jeff pointed out the responsibility to report, a need to correct misinterpretations, and hopefully generate some good will.

There was a lengthy discussion of whether this process could be a form of disenfranchisement. Sheri argued that a rather significant group of faculty felt disillusioned or frustrated at multiple levels, and that a proposal to change the voting procedure to a majority (or majority +) of those who vote, was a means of disenfranchising those who opted not to vote. The counter argument was made that those who opt not to vote, especially those who do not vote due to negligence or apathy, are effectively disenfranchising those who do vote by setting the bar too high. Sheri raised the question of what Faculty Handbook measures "which should have passed" did not due to voters not participating in the process. The question arose of whether an abstention option could find middle ground, but there was insufficient time to engage the issue. There was a clear desire to find ways to engage more faculty, to find ways to help more faculty feel empowered within the process.