Minutes from Sept 11 meeting of the Faculty Life committee

Present at the meeting were Paul Wojick (Chair), Carol Holly, Karen Achberger, Meg Ojala, Alan Norton (Treasurer), Marci Sortor (Provost), Phyllis Larson (Assistant Provost), Gary Gisselman, Laura Listenberger, Grace Cho, and John Schade

Meeting opened by the Chair at 3:30

Began by discussing responsibilities of the committee related to faculty development grants, nominations for future Melby lectures, advertising Faculty Research Forums, and announcing the fall Melby lecture.

Discussed developing a process for soliciting nominees for honorary degrees and choosing honorees.

Discussed scheduling and sequence of events for pre-tenure reviews.

The bulk of the meeting was spent in a discussion of faculty compensation, focused on the process by which decisions are made.

Discussed how to determine the proper set of peer institutions for salary comparisons

The Provost asked for some discussion about the role of the faculty life committee as an advisory board.

Meeting adjourned at 4:47.
Minutes of Faculty Life Meeting
September 25, 2012

Present: Karen Achberger, Richard Allen, Sylvia Carullo, Grace Cho, Carol Holly, Phyllis Larson, Laura Listenberger, Meg Ojala, John Shade, Paul Wojick

Invited Guest: Susan Cannon
Visitor: Time Howe

1. Minutes of previous meeting approved.
2. Committee members can apply for FL faculty development funds.
3. Discussion of Faculty Salaries, especially as related to information provided by Susan Cannon on the spreadsheet of the St. Olaf Peer Group: This sheet is a little dated and an update is to appear in the next few weeks. The peer group was organized by Paul Roback in 2003 using data from 120 institutions and based on variables contained in an email sent to the Committee by Paul. The list of 120 was distilled down to a list of the top 30 institutions like us. At present there are 24 institutions in the group and this group was set in 2004. Paul W. asked if we wanted to use this peer group in our discussions of faculty salaries, work load, faculty development money, etc. Or use something like the AAUP 2 comparison group.

A question was given to Susan: Where are we now with respect to the 2003 data?

Carol asked what is the advantage of this group of 24 over the ACM colleges? Some are not like us.

We did decide to adopt this group of 24. Some issues brought up for which we would ideally like some information are: (a) student/faculty ratio; (b) what is the average class size; (c) how many class of size 50+; (d) what is the average number of classes taught by faculty in each institution; number of outside grants received by faculty at each institution.

Susan noted that St. Olaf is the third largest institution in the group.

Some feel that the issue is not so much the amount of salary but, rather, having more time to get our work done. For example, our having a 5 course teaching load. The allocation of resources is also an issue that some feel our Committee should look into. In general, should we at St. Olaf be expected to achieve at the level of this Peer Group?

Here are three items of information that the Committee asked Susan to get:
- Full time teaching loads in the Peer Group
- Advising loads in the group
- Amount of grants received
The Committee was encouraged to make a recommendation that is comprehensive and includes salary recommendation, work load, grant activity, direct and indirect support for faculty work. The recommendation should be forward looking. It was noted that the individual faculty reports to the Dean at the end of each AY contain a great deal of information that provide data for the issues raised. Perhaps, the focus should be salary vs time and work load. As far as reallocating resources, we would need to give a very compelling argument.

It was pointed out that last year the FL Committee did a survey on time, budgets, salary.

4. First Melby Lecture is Oct 9th
5. Next meeting is in two weeks on Oct 9th.

Submitted by Rich Allen
Faculty Life Committee
Minutes for the meeting of October 9, 2012

Present: Phyllis Larson, Marci Sartor, Karen Achberger, Brian Finks, Grace Cho, John Schade, Sylvia Carrulo, Gary Gissleman, Paul Wojick (chair), Laura Listenberger, Alan Norton, Susan Canon

The meeting was convened at 3:30 PM.
Minutes from the September 25th meeting were approved as amended.

Brian Finks was introduced. Brian, a senior studio art and economics major, is the new student representative on the Faculty Life Committee.

It was decided that two sub-committees will meet on October 23rd.

One sub-committee comprised of Laura Listenberger, Meg Ojala, Gary Gisselmann, Paul Wojick, Richard Allen, and Brian Finks will work on a draft of the committee’s recommendation on the wage pool for faculty salary to the Board of Regents.

The second sub-committee, Carol Holly, Sylvia Carrulo, Karen Achberger, Grace Cho, and John Schade, will review faculty development proposals.

The whole committee will meet on October 30 to make final decisions on grants based on sub-committee recommendations and discuss the draft of the salary recommendation if time allows.

Susan Canon gave a presentation on how we compare with a group of 24 peer institutions on various measures.

A discussion followed on faculty compensation. The committee considered many factors including how faculty compensation at St. Olaf compares with peer institutions, the effect of the strategic plan and high impact practices on faculty work. The committee would like to make a recommendation that reflects reasonable goals given the constraints on revenue but also increase faculty compensation to raise our ranking among peer institutions. The salary sub-committee will work on the specifics of a recommendation.

The full committee will meet again on October 30.
The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Ojala
October 29, 2012
Faculty Life Committee
Minutes for the meeting of November 27, 2012

Present: Paul Wojick (chair), Meg Ojala, Rich Allen, Grace Cho, John Schade, Carol Holly, Gary Gissleman, Phyllis Larson, Marci Sortor, Karen Achberger, Alan Norton, and student observer Brian Finks
Missing: Laura Listenberger and Sylvia Carullo

The meeting was convened at 3:30 PM.

1. The committee chair began by reporting that all sabbatical application issues had been resolved, and 24 requests were approved.

2. We discussed issues concerning the Dekker Groot Release Time Grant:
   a. The deadline for applications had been extended until Dec. 1 because we had not received any applications by the original deadline. There are several applications anticipated, with two submitted thus far.
   b. A subcommittee was formed to review applications: Paul Wojick, Carol Holly, Meg Ojala, and John Schade. The applications will be available for review on Dec. 3, and discussed by email. Candidates will be notified by Dec. 10.
   c. Questions arose concerning whether research on ancient languages would be eligible. We agreed both modern and ancient languages should be included, and discussed a need for more detailed information to be posted on the web concerning the Dekker Groot Grants.

3. We discussed issues concerning Release Time Grants (RTGs) in general:
   a. We consulted with Alan Norton and Marci Sortor about the actual cost of RTGs. Are there trade-offs of counting .33 of a faculty salary to support 2 courses vs. the actual replacement cost per course or adjunct instructor?
   b. Would be possible to offer a greater number of smaller RTGs? Paul commented that it would keep replacement costs down by offering an RTG that had the option of a 1 course release rather than 2 courses.
   c. We discussed some factors, such as the size of departments, that may affect whether faculty pursue RTGs, with smaller departments less inclined to encourage faculty to apply for such grants because of program needs.
   d. A question was raised concerning whether faculty could be off-campus during their release time. It was determined that short trips up to a maximum of 2 weeks would be acceptable, and only if a good rationale was provided for the purpose of the trip, and that it was an essential part of the scholarly work. Moreover, any plans for off-campus work should be made in consultation with the department chair. The importance of faculty continuing their other duties on campus (e.g., advising students, department and committee work) during their release time was emphasized.

4. Spring Professional Development Grants
   a. We decided to move the deadline for Spring applications from April 19 to March 11. This was done in order to increase the amount of time available to grant recipients for planning and arrangements related to work over the summer months.
b. We discussed the late/incomplete applications that were turned during the fall round. We agreed that in the future, no late applications will be accepted.

5. We reviewed and discussed the Template for Departmental Expectations, drafted by Marci Sortor in response to discussions with the Academic Leadership council.
   a. This template was designed to serve as guidance for individual departments who will/should be creating their own documents on departmental expectations and policies.
   b. We discussed the importance of all faculty being present and available to students on campus – there is currently much disparity across faculty on how much time they are on- vs. off-campus. Posted office hours and involvement in non-teaching activities (that may occur after-hours/weekends) linked to the life of the department and college are important. Questions were raised about how these policies will be enforced.
   c. We agreed the template was a good length and that it should not be overly prescriptive but allow departments to tailor it to their needs. (For example, Meg commented in Art, studios are often off-campus, and therefore it is necessary for faculty to be off-campus to do their work.)
   d. Marci plans to revise this draft and then bring it to the leadership. Discussion concerning Departmental Expectations will continue at a later date.

6. The concern that the Board of Regents raised regarding our faculty resolution opposing the MN Marriage Amendment, i.e., faculty speaking for the college on sociopolitical beliefs/opinions, was briefly discussed.
   a. Marci recommended we discuss a policy about creating and invoking Disclaimer Statements. Where should this discussion begin?
   b. Paul suggested that this was a discussion for Faculty Governance because it was a policy-related issue.

7. The full committee will not meet again until February.
   a. Farewell and good luck to Rich Allen. This was his final FLC meeting, as he will take his sabbatical leave in the spring.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Cho
November 28, 2012
Faculty Life Committee
Minutes for the meeting of April 23, 2013

Present: Paul Wojick (chair), Meg Ojala, Grace Cho, John Schade, Carol Holly, Gary Gissleman, Marci Sortor, Gary Muir, Laura Listenberger, Alan Norton, Karen Achberger, Sylvia Carullo

The meeting was convened at 3:30 PM.

1. Paul Wojick asked for a volunteer from the FLC to join the Benefits Committee. After a brief discussion and in the absence of volunteers, it was decided to wait until after faculty elections and the meeting of the newly-elected FLC to secure said volunteer.

2. Paul announced that we have four nominations for next year’s Mellby lectures and two application for the NEH summer stipend. Carol Holly, Meg Ojala, and Sylvia Carullo volunteered to read the NEH applications; the entire committee will read the materials for the Mellby nominations.

3. Paul informed us that the Faculty Governance Committee would like us consider the responsibilities for and evaluation of non-tenure-track faculty. That discussion will be added to the agenda for next meeting.

4. The rest of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of faculty salary increases. After further examination of budget projections and other valuable information prepared by Alan Norton, the committee decided to recommend an overall 3% increase. We also discussed Paul Wojick’s letter to President Anderson, urging greater investment in human resources at the college. Revisions were suggested and approved. We then considered the distribution among the ranks of the 3% recommended raise and determined that efforts be made to give a preferential boost to the salaries of Assistant Professors. Dean Sortor expressed the wish that we consider the need to identify and make adjustments to the salaries of people who are being underpaid. She called our attention to the college’s ongoing efforts to correct inequities.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Holly
April 28, 2013