

## Faculty Life Committee Report for April 18, 2024, Faculty Meeting

Submitted by Arthur Cunningham, Chair

April 11, 2024

Our recent meetings (March 19 and April 2) were devoted to reviewing and awarding Professional Development Grants (see below for the announcement of awarded grants).

Our primary task for the next couple of FLC meetings (April 23 and May 1) is making a recommendation for the distribution of the faculty salary increase pool. For the past few years FLC has recommended a flat percentage increase for all faculty; for example, last spring the amount budgeted for faculty salary increases for 2023-24 was 3% (+0.5% for promotions and adjustments), and FLC recommended that it be distributed uniformly, as a 3% salary increase for all faculty. This year a subcommittee has been studying the comparison data to look in particular for compression between ranks--places where the difference in average or median salary between two different categories of faculty positions (e.g. between Assistant and Associate Professor, or Associate and Full Professor) at St. Olaf may be smaller than at comparable institutions. That group will present their findings to us on April 23, and FLC will then aim to decide on a recommendation for the distribution of the faculty salary increase pool in time to announce it by the May faculty meeting. (We should learn shortly what the amount of the salary increase pool will be.)

Here are a handful of other items I expect to have on the agenda at one of our remaining FLC meetings this year. Faculty who would like to listen or contribute to our discussion of any of these items are certainly welcome to attend our FLC meetings. Keep an eye on the weekly committee meeting agendas. You can email me ([cunninga@stolaf.edu](mailto:cunninga@stolaf.edu)) if you have a particular interest in being present for a discussion of one of the items listed; I'll do my best to let you know when that item will be up for discussion.

- How to create more opportunities for communication with faculty during the budgeting process, especially about faculty salary increases
- A concern that faculty who do the work of scoring and processing language proficiency exams during the summer for incoming first-years should be compensated
- Concerns about the burdens on faculty associated with leading or participating in off-campus study programs
- Updating the Professional Development Grant application and guidelines

## A Reminder about Department Citizenship Statements

The Faculty Life Committee has respectfully requested that all departments on campus develop, revise, or reaffirm a department citizenship statement that outlines departmental expectations for faculty in your department. I mentioned this request in my March report to the faculty, and I formally sent this request to all department chairs on March 15. We are asking that each department approve a citizenship statement by May 31, 2024. (Ideally, the department would discuss and approve a statement by the end of the semester, at one of their regular meetings. We don't intend for this to be one more lonely task for the chair to do on their own at the end of the semester.)

To aid you in this task, we have developed [this template](#). It includes a list of suggested topics, which will be useful (we hope) as a starting point for your discussions of what to include. It also includes some suggested language that you can use or adapt as you see fit. We ask that you pay special attention to clarifying expectations for term and part-time faculty.

Even a brief document could do a lot to clarify expectations and practices in your department. And the work of drafting such a document will pay off in a few ways:

- A discussion of departmental expectations should be beneficial. Perhaps you will find and clear up areas of uncertainty or disagreement; perhaps you will decide that it's time to change some existing expectations. Almost certainly you will come away with a better shared awareness of your departmental expectations.
- The document you produce will be immensely useful the next time you have any new faculty colleagues joining the department.
- It will be useful next time you change department chairs, as a record of departmental practices.

Finally, we hope that this document will be something your department revisits periodically and continues to revise and reaffirm as your department and your circumstances change. The start-of-the-year departmental retreat or meetings would be a great time to revisit the document and discuss whether any items on it should be clarified or reconsidered.

We know that the crafting of such a document requires some of your valuable time and attention during the busy remaining weeks of the semester. We thank you for contributing to this important communal task. Please contact one of your elected FLC faculty representatives if you have questions.

## Announcements

### Professional Development Grant Recipients

- Kathryn Ananda-Owens - "Travel to the 2024 Medical Problems of Performing Artists Symposium"
- Laura Boehm Vock - "Writing in the Statistics and Data Science Major Curriculum Development Workshop"
- Doug Casson - "Creating PSCI 101: Introduction to Politics"
- Yann Chenn - "Youth Subcultures of East and West Germany after the Wall"
  - This award is funded in part by the Institute for Freedom and Community, and in part by the Virginia Ann Dekker Groot Endowment.
- Vivian Choi - "Disaster Nationalism: Tsunami and Civil War in Sri Lanka"
- Tracey Engleman - "Program Redesign for the Education of Today's Singing Artist"
- Steve Hahn - "William Rhett: Slavery, Piracy, and the Transformation of South Carolina"
- Sara Halpern - "Archival Research for *Saving the Unwanted*"
- Dan Hofrenning - "Book-Completion Grant: *The Promise—and Peril—of American Politics*"
  - This award is funded by the Institute for Freedom and Community.
- Rehanna Kheshgi - "Building Community Engagement Networks around Somali Music"
  - This award is funded in part by the Virginia Ann Dekker Groot Endowment.
- Sravya Kondrakunta - "Revamping the CS Curriculum: Aligning with Current ACM Guidelines"
- Karil Kucera - "Sacred Sites of Asia - Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong"
  - This award is funded in part by the Virginia Ann Dekker Groot Endowment.
- Amy Larsen - "Reimagining Introductory Physics for the 21st Century: an Inclusive, Quantum First Curriculum"
- Laura Listenberger and Lisa Bowers - "Imagining a First-Year Experience with a Biomolecular Science Theme"
- Will Matchett - "*C. Elegans* as a Model Organism for Genetic, Viral, and Immune Research"
- Justin Merritt - Album Recording
- Matthew Wright - "Mathematical Preparation for Science Workshop"

The Faculty Life Committee (FLC) meets most Tuesdays from 3:30-5:00 in TOH 300. Please contact the chair, Arthur Cunningham ([cunninga@stolaf.edu](mailto:cunninga@stolaf.edu)) or any other member of the committee with questions, comments or suggestions for the FLC. Comments, questions, or concerns may also be submitted to the FLC via the [Faculty Comment Form](#).

### **Current Membership of the Faculty Life Committee**

Elected Faculty Representatives

Arthur Cunningham (Chair), *Humanities*

Adam Berliner, *Natural Sciences & Mathematics*

Tracey Engleman, *Fine Arts*

Kristina Thalhammer, *Social Sciences*

Joanne Quimby, *Interdisciplinary & General Studies*

Marc David, *At-large*

Eric Cole, *At-large*

Dana Scopatz, *At-large*

Erica Kanewischer, *At-large*

Sravya Kondrakunta, *At-large*

Ex-Officio Members

Jason Engbrecht, *Associate Provost*

Mike Berthelsen, *Vice President and CFO*

Marci Sortor, *Provost and Dean of the College*

Susan Rundell Singer, *President*