

Elected Faculty Council

Minutes – Meeting of January 13, 2004, 11:30 AM to 1:10 PM

Members Present: Chuck Whiteman (chair, secretary of the day), Tim Lowe, Gary Russell, and Rick Tubbs; absent: Jay Christensen-Szalanski, John Spitzer

Also attending the meeting: DEOs Kurt Anstreicher, Cathy Cole, Beth Ingram, Mort Pincus, Sara Rynes, Jay Sa-Aadu

The purpose of the meeting was to gather views from DEOs regarding faculty governance issues and the draft governance structures.

Curriculum: Several DEOs raised an issue concerning the involvement of department in curriculum matters in the two draft structures. One attributes “final authority” to the faculty on all curriculum matters, the other does not. So, what is “final authority”? General discussion followed, and included a brief review of the EFC meeting with Associate Provost Lee Anna Clark, during which it became clear that literal final authority resting with the faculty is extremely rare and perhaps nonexistent at the University of Iowa. The notion embodied in both documents, however, is that there be a mechanism for faculty involvement in, and review of, major changes to curricula and other operations of the college. This might take the form of review by the EFC or the proposed faculty assembly, e.g., of proposals made by a standing committee. This would go beyond the current setup, where faculty representatives on standing committees take proposals directly to affected departments, which was generally regarded as unsatisfactory.

Changes: A related issue is: would a change to a departmental major be reviewed by the faculty assembly? – EFC members expressed the view that such changes would not generally be reviewed by the EFC or Assembly, but would be if there are major changes that might affect other collegiate units. Generally, the EFC can serve as a sounding board.

“The Senate”: Several suggestions were made to introduce “senate”-like features in to the documents, which are essentially “house”-like in structure. For example: in calling a faculty meeting – allow for a department to call a meeting even if it doesn’t have 10% of the College faculty.

Formal Role for DEOs: One of the documents (“the original”) involves a formal role in governance, while the other (“alternative”) does not. Why? The reasoning involved the distinction between governance and operations, and the view that DEOs are already involved in the operations of the College. While some participants in the meeting were comfortable with this reasoning, a general view was that there should be a greater role for a DEO council, a role akin to that envisaged for the Dean’s Advisory Committee—standing status, a meeting initiation process, and a general duty to review and discuss curricular, compensation, faculty and other matters. The view was expressed that such a role for DEOs in the governance structure might make the positions more attractive to faculty members.

Summary of Differences Between the Two Structures: What is the difference between the two drafts? – Quite a bit of structure in one, less in another. Discussion returned to the “final authority” language? The reasoning behind the “advisory” role of the “alternative” structure is that the authority vested in the EFC by its bylaws is that Dean must explain in writing reasoning for a decision contrary to faculty opinion.

Bringing Votes: A view was expressed that the structure needs to codify rules for major changes to be brought to a vote. Otherwise, there may be too much pressure on individuals in EFC or the Assembly.

Initiation of Action: That curriculum changes must come from relevant standing committee is in both draft structures. Both structures need to address cases in which changes are initiated elsewhere (e.g., by Deans).

Minor Points: 1) The title “PhD Committee” is a typo and should be “Graduate Committee” to reflect the actual role.

2) Note that Clinical faculty are eligible for faculty assembly.

3) Make off-campus program just one example of issues to be vetted by appropriate standing committees; include establishment or elimination of programs.

4) Include MACC committee in standing committees, or indicate that some programs are administered by departments and are covered by departmental bylaws.

The next meeting of the EFC is not yet scheduled as of 1/13/04.