

Elected Faculty Council

Minutes – Meeting of May 6, 2003, 11:30-1:00

Present: 2002-03 EFC members Tom Rietz (chair), Tim Lowe, Forrest Nelson (Secretary of the day), Frank Schmidt, Rick Tubbs, and Chuck Whiteman; incoming members Gary Russell, John Spitzer and Jay Christensen-Szalanski,

Item 1. Academic integrity. The final draft of the document “Clarification of Expectations of Academic Conduct” was discussed and approved. It will be posted on the EFC web site, <http://www.biz.uiowa.edu/efc/>

Item 2. Salary Issues. In response to a request from the Dean, the EFC debated the issue that, with the low rate of increase in the salary pool and the high rate of increase in health insurance premiums, some faculty and staff may end up with less take-home pay even if they receive the average wage increase.

Several possible responses were considered and received varying degrees of support from EFC members. These included:

1. Make merit the sole criterion for allocation of raises.
2. Allocate sufficient money to raises to, first, insure that no one will have a decrease in take-home pay as a result of health insurance increases and, second, to distribute the remaining raise pool based on merit.
3. At the University level, provide for increase in flex credits to cover increases in health insurance costs, recognizing that this may mean some reduction in the wage pool increase. Colleges would be allowed to distribute the resulting wage pool increase according to merit.

The third alternative garnered the most support from EFC members. While this alternative entails a little less flexibility in allocating merit raises, it was regarded as worth considering because of the preferential tax treatment of health insurance premiums. Each dollar spent by the University on health insurance premiums (which is not taxed) is generally worth more to employees than a dollar spent on salary (which is taxed).

In the interest of promoting goodwill among colleagues, one EFC member offered the idea that he, and possibly some others in the school, may be willing to forego raises if that money could be distributed in a manner to promote equity. Another agreed citing a precedent in his department that senior faculty had done this in the past to address issues of salary inversions and may be willing to behave similarly with respect to this issue.

The committee felt that avenues to allow faculty to voluntarily forego raises may be in order, but that such avenues should not in any way create pressure or an expectation for faculty members to do so.

Item 3. Faculty Governance The plan for dealing with faculty governance issues as formulated at the previous meeting was discussed with the incoming members of the committee. It was reaffirmed by consensus that the EFC will take on the task of faculty governance review and that the three outgoing members (Nelson, Rietz and Schmidt) will serve as advisers to the EFC on this issue. The review will include an investigation of the role of the faculty in the governance of the college, formulation of proposals for modification of that role, and efforts aimed at implementation of those proposals as permanent components of the policies and procedures of the college. Among the options to be considered is an expansion of the role of the EFC to include, first, that of an advisory body to the Dean's office, and, second, a more active, central and coordinating role in college governance issues.

Item 4. Membership transition Control of the meeting was turned over to the continuing and incoming EFC members. Chuck Whiteman was selected as chairperson for the 2003-04 EFC.

Item 5. Next meeting Tuesday, May 27, 10:45 am was set as the date and time of the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm.