

Minutes of EFC Meeting

The recently elected reconstituted EFC met Nov. 22nd. The members are: Tom Rietz (Chair), Tim Lowe, Forrest Nelson, Frank Schmidt, Rick Tubbs, and Chuck Whiteman.

If you have issues that you would like for the EFC to address, please contact any EFC member.

The purpose of the meeting was to determine terms of office and set the agenda for upcoming meetings. Term limits were decided by randomization, and are:

One year terms: T. Rietz, F. Schmidt, F. Nelson

Two year terms: R. Tubbs, C. Whiteman, T. Lowe

Elections to fill the three seats to be vacated by one-year term holders will be held in the spring.

The EFC needs faculty input in formulating its agenda, as noted above. The issues considered at the meeting fell into two broad classes: Faculty governance issues and teaching issues.

Faculty Governance Issues

1. The EFC will offer to consult with the Provost in the process of setting up the Provost's committee on faculty governance in the Tippie College. This committee was recommended last academic year by the Committee to Review the Dean. The Provost reported to the faculty on this in October.
2. The EFC will examine the question of which issues in the college should be brought to a faculty vote and which issues do not require a faculty vote. In some cases, this question is addressed in the written college policies and procedures, and the EFC will review these. But in the case of most issues, it is not clear. For example, procedures for faculty input into, and approval of, changes in the building policies are not well spelled out, and this led to consternation when the building manager proposed changes to the grade posting policy in 2001. The

EFC will make recommendations and attempt to get clarity on questions of this sort.

3. The EFC will obtain information on the progress of the accreditation process. How close is it to completion? What faculty input might yet be needed? (Some of this information is on the College website.)
4. The EFC will look at the question of whether the EFC By-laws should be revised and updated. If so, the EFC will bring a proposed revision to the faculty for a vote.

Teaching Issues

1. The issue of grade inflation and attempts to control this problem. The Finance department has adopted a set of guidelines for grade distributions. Other departments are considering adopting similar guidelines. Grade inflation is being actively studied in the Undergraduate Program Office, as it is in the School of Management. Question: What should the role of the EFC be in this area?
2. The issue of how the ACE form ratings should and should not be used. Research shows that student evaluation ratings can be enhanced by reducing student work-loads and course requirements. Student evaluations also depend on course size, with evaluations being higher in smaller courses. Some EFC members questioned the practice using ACE form evaluations to post the names of “top instructors” on TV monitors in the College.
3. Issues of academic integrity (plagiarism, student cheating on exams and class assignments). One issue is the meaning of “individual assignment”; some students do not comprehend that this does not mean a pooled effort. The Undergraduate Program Office has been examining this issue for some time, and the EFC will work with that office to provide faculty input. There is a Judicial Board at the undergraduate level for enforcing the honor code. Do we need a similar board at the MBA level?