Academic Senate
Meeting of December 11, 2013
University Club, Scriptorium Room

MINUTES


Guests: C. Daley, M. Levine, B. Meyerowitz, C. Zachary

President Chuck Gomer called the meeting to order at 2:03pm:

1. Dialogue with Beth Meyerowitz, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

We have made two changes based upon recommendations from the Academic Senate:

1) We are now publishing the names of people who sit on UCAPT panels at the end of every academic year with a memo thanking people who served for the past two years.

2) We have tried to make parts of the UCAPT manual more transparent, but essentially the rules are the same as they’ve always been. Thanks to Marty for being involved in this.

We have begun holding a series of monthly meeting for various groups of professors and mentors. The goal is that people aren’t surprised at the result of a promotion decision. We want people who aren’t going to succeed to see it coming.

We have formalized the mid-probation process in the 3rd or 4th year by providing written feedback from the deans. The dossiers come to my office where it is read by Beth and the chair of UCAPT. If anything is not consistent, we will give it back.

Q: Is there any information regarding the average percentage of successful tenure cases?
A: This past year it was circa 70%. Whether or not this is trend, I don’t know.

Q: We are seeing fewer and fewer tenure-track faculty – is that a trend?
A: No

We have seen a significant downturn in funding by the NIH – expectations have changed. Candidates need to be at the top of their peer comparison group.

Q: What about people claiming ethical or gender issues for tenure denial? During the review period, can we mitigate against that happening? What questions should be asked to anticipate that there may be a problem?
A: Our data doesn’t support any tenure denial based on gender or racial bias.
Comment from Marty Levine: UCAPT committees are diverse by both gender and ethnicity.

We have a newfaculty.usc.edu website – designed for any faculty with instructional duties. We are also working on a new faculty gateway website.

Q: newfaculty.usc.edu website – is that for part-time faculty as well?
A: yes

Advancing Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences – there are three different types of grants.

1. TT faculty – writing grants for foundations
2. Research and Creative grants – now with our office (previously through Zumberge).
   Language is not inclusive of artists of all sorts – not just research. 16 of 49 were funded – two to NTT faculty
3. Early sabbatical for TT faculty (after 3 years instead of 6) and NTT in area in which doing work at USC. We have had 20 applications with 11 funded; 6 were for NTT

We are looking at how faculty self-nominate for committees and thinking through the process. We typically receive 300-350 self-nominations. Those go to Senate and usually 5% end up getting appointed to the committee of their choice. John, Chuck and I are talking about a way to improve this process.

Chuck: We want to have individual faculty councils take a leadership role in suggesting people. Also we are thinking about moving up the time frame so we have more time to do a thorough selection. We did change rotations to shorten them in order to include more people.

2. Approval of November 20, 2013 meeting minutes – Lucinda Carver

Approve: 36
Disapprove: 0
Abstain: 3

3. Update on the Faculty Evaluation White Paper – Sandeep Gupta

We did not focus on things to do with scholarship, creative work but rather focused on how evaluation should be done. We felt that there is a need on the teaching side - weaker and required attention.

Concerns have been raised in various schools. The general consensus is that a performance evaluation conveyed by a numeric score is not adequate – the outcome should be conveyed in words, not a quantitative score.

There should be a substantive conversation about this in meeting with a chair and faculty member (or dean if a small school). How did the faculty member do and how does the faculty member feel they did?

We are also questioning the timing of the evaluation process- a shallow evaluation every year is not optimal; better to have a deeper and more thorough evaluation every other year.

Of course new faculty need evaluate every year for feedback. Both parties can request an evaluation in any particular year and it is better to do just before raises rather than just after.
Everyone agrees that just based on student evaluations is inadequate, but anything beyond that is full of problems. We have tried to take a graduated approach.

Q: Is mentoring a part of this?
A: It is generally considered part of service
C: This could be a particularly effective added metric

We are asking for a full vetting of the parameters - what is acceptable to evaluate someone on?
What are appropriate measures of success?

C: Chuck - this is separate from tenure or promotion decisions; it has more to do with annual evaluations. Tenure decisions are focused on impact while the APR is focused on activity.

Q: For units doing multi year evaluations, are there strategies for handling salary increases?
A: (Marty) Some schools keep evaluations untouched; there could be some sort of brief annual update, but scores remain stable for 3 years.

Q: What are the plans for task force paper?
A: It would be useful to have a motion to focus on certain recommendations. We can boil it down to 4-5 recommendations.

Q: Should we now develop a resolution?
A: (Marty) Sandeep will adjust the report to take account of excellent these recommendations, then have this submitted to Provost's office.

4. Update on Mellon Mentoring Awards and Nominations – Oliver Mayer
Nominations are due January 31st. There is probably in some process at each school for nominating candidates, but we request that you but go back to school and bring it up

Every school has yet to be represented - see where you are with relation to your exceptional faculty. One difference this year is that we are incorporating distance learning, so applicants can also include online faculty

Will have the Spring Mellon mentoring forum in early March. The date and topic are not yet set. If you have suggestions, please contact me or Varun Soni.

This would be final year of Mellon grant, but we have approached them and they have given us a no-cost extension to September 2014.

Is there any unfinished business we should address? We should continue to award our outstanding faculty without foundation grant even with no monetary award. We want to keep it going; as far as we know Provost's office does as well.

5. Faculty Council Updates – Thomas Lyon (Gould School of Law) and Clay Wang (Pharmacy)
Gould School of Law:
The Law Faculty Council has three responsibilities:
1) To meet with dean several times to discuss proposed budget, final budget and changes, We are seeing declining enrollment and pressures at the employment end. As a result we are having to deal with budget issues.
2) We look at the composition and performance of schools' administration. We do performance reviews and give substantial feedback. We also emphasize review of junior faculty.
3) We are an ad hoc group for the Dean but we also proactively do things.

Q: Is it true that everybody votes? Everybody runs?
A: That's right

In essence the most highly respected faculty win, and the council usually tends to be diverse. The only people ineligible are those with dean appointments. We include NTT.

Q: How many TT to NTT full time faculty?
A: 35-40 TT, 6 NTT (not counting joint appointments)

Q: What role do you play on budget?
A: It is advisory. The dean comes to us with tentative proposal. It is fairly transparent

Pharmacy
The president elect is one who attends Senate meetings.
Currently we have 70 full time faculty and 729 doctor of pharmacy students.
We enlarged classrooms to also accommodate 407 PhD and MS students and have 159 online students for working professionals.
The faculty council meets once per month. The council president meets with the dean and executive vice dean one week prior to the faculty council meeting.
Issues we are currently addressing are:
1) UCAR review
2) Requirements - we have the most stringent requirements; most of our students are from UC system.
3) We are primarily a NIH research unit and funding dropping.
Pharmacy schools are very popular. Many schools are building them. We face more competition and we are seeing the pressure.
Most of our students are from California. We need change mission requirement in order to increase the admission pool.
Faculty recruitment is an issue. It takes a long time for people to finish their training. They are often in their 40s starting first faculty job.
It is hard to find clinical chair since there are so many deanships out there. The majority are NTT. The line between clinical faculty and TT faculty is very blurred and tension between TT and NTT is being brought up in our UCAR review.

We have a total of 8 members on council

Q: Does the dean meet with the group?
A: Yes but dean has been told to go raise money.
Q: Do you make budgetary decisions?
A: No we are informed.

Q: What about underrepresentation of minorities?
A: We have a large Asian female population - more than ½. White males are in minority. We feel we have done a good job to get more minorities and the dean wants to raise more money for this.

Q: What about the issue of conflict of interest with drug companies? Do you get involved?
A: Not really. My department gets most of its funding from government. That has not come up as an issue. I don't know of any direct support from drug companies.

C: This was looked at two years ago in the Senate

6. Announcements
The Christmas party is tomorrow night. Our next meeting will be on 1/22. The joint Provost/Senate retreat will be at the Fairmont Hotel in Santa Monica. The topic is Globalization at USC - Where we are trying to go and what resources we need to stay at the cutting edge.

Several faculty have asked re Plan C. The Senate board met with Lisa Macchia and Mike Nichol. Several schools have had a number of complaints. We met with them again last week. In moving forward, to make sure that the senate hears the plans for the future year far enough ahead to have active input and conversation. There will be more changes when Obamacare is fully rolled out - it is very important that we get involved.

There is faculty representation on the Employee Benefits committee but they only meet once term.

7. New Business:
None.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lucinda Carver, D.M.A.
Secretary General of the Academic Senate