

Report: Faculty Governance
Faculty Meeting, May 18, 2011

The Faculty Executive Committee convened members of the CAPT, CEPP, CC, CAFR, IPPC, and the FDC on April 29th to discuss internal committee workings, inter-committee workings, and the relationship of faculty governance with the administrations. The FEC is required to report on issues raised in these discussions, and it will do so. However, issues arose in the meeting that require taking a broader temporal perspective. Therefore, this year's report on faculty governance will take a broader view. The FEC believes this is warranted by its charge.

On a routine level, all committees reported their working with administrators and their internal workings as satisfactory, although continuity of membership surfaced as a problem in two committees. Efforts will be made to make faculty expressing a willingness to serve mindful of the importance of planning to serve entire terms. Membership in committees was also identified as a concern by two committees: consultations with administrators can easily lead to 'permanent' or 'quasi-permanent guest administrators' at the committee table, leading to an imbalance of voices. Faculty efforts to reduce committee size was also reviewed, and it was noted that reducing administrative representation on some committees might be desirable, and if faculty reductions were to be possible, it might even be necessary. Where relevant, inter-committee collaboration went well. The "Transition and Transformation" (T&T) initiative occasioned some confusion about the faculty's appropriate involvement and some difficulties between CEPP and FEC, but the two committees met and were able to work things out.

FEC reported on its efforts to regularize and make transparent the system of administrative support for faculty governance. The 2006 report of the Course Reduction Task Force, available on the DOF's website, was distributed in lieu of a more recent document detailing support. FEC subsequently reeceeDscrbe mD-1.15ske tCmeet et et0.0004 Tc -0.00ncble

stone, but the Acting VPAA did agree that, if the administration wanted to formulate and advance an initiative that bore on faculty issues as did the T&T, that it would write a charge, including a purpose, scope and timetable, and consult with the FEC, as required by the *Faculty Handbook*. The FEC reported on this and on the open forum at the following faculty meeting.

Just before convening the Committee of Committees on April 29, the FEC learned about the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation grant the College had received in early 2011. One of the purposes of the grant is, as the Foundation website states, to “help launch a major initiative that doubles the number of courses in traditional liberal arts majors with a civic engagement component.” There are other major policy commitments and statements made in the proposal. The College was awarded \$250,000. The educational goals in this initiative were set without any faculty committee involvement; notably, CEPP was not consulted, nor did this policy initiative come before any other faculty committee, nor to the faculty floor. This grant, as well as the T&T, appeal to President’s Glotzbach’s “Strategic Renewal” for guidance and authorization, a document that promises educational and professional innovations but thus far has not been presented to the faculty for debate or endorsement.

If the T&T seemed to be flawed process, FEC viewed the AVD proposal as violating a basic principle of shared governance, namely, that the faculty determines educational policy. The FEC felt compelled to request a meeting with President Glotzbach, who was just returning from sabbatical, to express its concerns about the foundering of collaborative governance and of the faculty floor as the place for conducting faculty debate as well as the site where educational and professional policy needed to be brought for approval or declension.

The T&T initiative, the AVD grant, and the CRC were cited as examples of administrative initiatives that should have involved faculty governance in very

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already been committed to by the AVD grant proposal. He suggested it was necessary to revisit the documents involved and review how we got to this point.

He took responsibility for his administration's actions with a *mea culpa*. It is FEC's understanding that he expressed a commitment to 'stopping the train,' so to speak, on these initiatives and to go far enough back in the process that had generated these initiatives so as to start over and do things correctly. This includes bringing "Strategic Renewal" to appropriate faculty committees and the faculty as a whole for debate and, where appropriate, faculty action. President Glotzbach voiced his determination to convene a meeting with FEC and other committee chairs before the beginning of the fall semester to work on how the administration and faculty governance can work more collaboratively and successfully, and he sought advice for how to deal with the difficult circumstance the College finds itself in due to those who pursued the AVD grant application.

I would have to say that the meeting with President Glotzbach was an excellent moment in faculty governance, one in which the faculty floor was affirmed as the *terminus ad quem* of faculty governance. President Glotzbach exemplified real leadership in acknowledging that a failure had occurred, taking responsibility for it, and committing to 'make things right.' Good conversations are great, but follow through is better. FEC will remain interested in what is done