

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
March 22, 2013

Members Attending: Joe Merola (Chair), Brad Klein, Connie Stovall, Jack Finney, Kay Hunnings (Rep. Rich Sorensen), John Massey, Eric Vance, and Matt Chan.

The Commission on Faculty Affairs (CFA) meeting was called to order by Joe Merola, Chair, who distributed the agenda with five items.

1. Approval of minutes from the last meeting.
2. Discussion/possible endorsement of Policy 13000 on Intellectual Property.
3. Second visit by Nick Onopa on the Academic Integrity Statement.
4. CGS&P resolution on ethics training for Graduate Students.
5. Old business on Faculty Handbook changes.

1. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Joe Merola informed members that the CFA minutes of February 22, 2013 will be sent to them for their approval via email.

2. Discussion/possible endorsement of Policy 13000 on Intellectual Property

Joe Merola informed CFA members that Bill Knocke has continued to give presentations to various commissions on the proposed changes to policy 13000 on Intellectual Property. The discussions have mainly centered on the impact of the policy on students. Substantive changes have been made to remove certain statements deemed to have negative impact on students who may apply for intellectual property.

Joe will keep CFA members informed on the revisions made in subsequent CFA meetings.

3. Second visit by Nick Onopa on the Academic Integrity Statement

Joe Merola gave a brief report from Nick Onopa who was scheduled to attend today's meeting. Joe informed members that Onopa had made presentations to various committees and commissions on the proposed Academic Integrity Statement. It was noted that the intention of the statement was to have a unifying message concerning the honor system visible to students as a reminder of the values of academic integrity cherished at Virginia Tech. However after much discussion and feedback from the university community, the proposal is no longer viable. However, according to Onopa, discussion on the academic integrity statement will still continue, with the intention of coming up with ways of reinforcing the importance of the Honor System.

4. CGS&P resolution on Ethics Training for Graduate Students

Joe Merola reported to CFA that the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies is planning to table in University Council a resolution requiring all graduate students to complete an ethics training that would be shown on the student's transcript. The implementation of the policy would be left to academic departments. Joe further informed members that queries have been made concerning the practical implementation of the proposed training, as a number of departments already have ethics training embedded in their courses.

Joe will keep members informed on the progress of the proposal in the coming meetings.

5. Old business on Faculty Handbook changes

a. Resolution 2012-2013A on Professor of Practice Chairing Graduate Committees

Jack Finney presented a revised resolution regarding professors of practice chairing graduate committees. CFA members were briefed on the reasons leading to the proposed changes following consultations with Dean Karen DePauw and the Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies.

A motion was made and seconded to support the resolution to approve the new wordings and changes to section 5.1.4 of the Faculty Handbook. The commission voted 6 in favor, 1 opposed for the motion.

6. Briefings on relevant Commission or Committee Agendas

Joe Merola informed members of discussion currently ongoing in the higher education publications about the status of library faculty. Some institutions are now reclassifying library faculty as staff or professional employees as roles are redefined. Virginia Tech does not have plans to make changes in the status of the library faculty. The national discussion is ongoing and members were encouraged to keep abreast of the discussions.

Joe also informed members that Provost Mark McNamee made a presentation about distance education and invited input into the planning efforts. Randy Collins, who is an American Council on Education Fellow, briefly discussed various models of distance education and its relevance to Virginia Tech. Jack Finney also attended the meeting. Discussion of the role of MOOCs, the potential strategies that can be used for online courses, and potential benefits for Virginia Tech students were also discussed. Joe informed members that the Provost supported the quality of education at Virginia Tech.

Joe also informed members about discussions with department heads on the salary merit plan that is being implemented and asked whether the current fiscal sequester by Congress would affect the merit plan. Jack Finney reported that implementation was moving forward and there were no current implications of the sequester.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Recorder, Maxwell Awando