

**Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
November 13, 2009**

Members attending: Mike Ellerbrock (chair), Debbie Smith, Jack Finney (for Dean Chang), Sam Riley, Tami Watson, Bruce Pencek, Jon Tyler Wilson (for Sami Owens), Paul Winistorfer, Dennis Welch, Brad Klein, Carol Burger, Alysyn Dunn, and Patricia Hyer

Guests: Virginia Reilly, Director of University ADA Services; Maxine Lyons, Chair of Commission on Staff Policy and Affairs (CSPA); and Hal Irvin, Associate Vice President for Human Resources

Agenda for the meeting included four items: proposed revisions to policy 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities, university winter break closing policy, CFA leadership for spring 2010, and update on university committee to evaluate teaching.

The minutes of the CFA meeting on October 16, 2009, were approved without change.

Proposed Revisions to Policy 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities

Virginia Reilly briefed CFA members about the proposed changes to policy 4075. The policy has been updated to include both students and employees, to change office names and roles, and to separate detailed procedures from the policy. The Office of General Counsel and the ADA Executive Committee have both reviewed the policy changes, and the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity has endorsed the policy changes. CFA members unanimously endorsed the changes to policy 4075.

University Winter Break Closing Policy

Maxine Lyons and Hal Irvin reviewed CSPA's resolution to close the university during winter break. The resolution proposes to close the university from the state holiday preceding Christmas Day up to and including New Year's Day unless otherwise posted open. The policy allows for department heads to require the unit to remain open between state holidays. The resolution requires that employees individually manage leave balances throughout the year to accommodate the closure rather than to bank state holidays during the year. Some CFA members were concerned there may be extenuating circumstances when an employee does not have adequate leave balances to cover the closure. Hal Irvin noted that supervisors will be strongly encouraged to make special arrangements with each employee who does not have adequate leave accrued. Hyer noted that the cost savings gained by closing the university could be significant and reducing energy usage should be a priority given the recent adoption of the University Climate Action Commitment in spring 2009. CFA members unanimously endorsed the resolution subject to the following amendments: 1) emphasis on the flexibility to address business needs, other religious holidays, and specific personal circumstances; and 2) a statement noting winter break closing is consistent with other policies including leave and telecommuting.

CFA Leadership for Spring 2010

Mike Ellerbrock will be on sabbatical during spring 2010 and asked for volunteers to lead the CFA during his absence. The CFA chair works with Pat Hyer to draft an agenda,

invite guests, and address issues that are brought to the commission. Debbie Smith agreed to lead the CFA during spring 2010.

Update on University Committee on Evaluation of Teaching

Sam Riley updated CFA members on the ongoing work of the committee to evaluate teaching. The committee is considering using electronic evaluation forms and running means for all questions to replace the single overall rating item. The committee envisions using both overall rating and means for all questions for two years to test the reliability and functionality of the new method. In place of poor, fair, good, excellent, different rating options are being reviewed. CFA members suggested changing the textbook ratings to be more useful and using different questions for varying student academic levels. One CFA member suggested tying the current question about respect to the Virginia Tech Principles of Community. Riley mentioned that there will likely be a set of required questions and a bank of questions for the instructor or department to select from to customize the evaluation.

New Business to be Addressed at Future Meetings

- 1) Policy Language about Involuntary Calendar Year to Academic Year Conversions
- 2) Policy Regarding Faculty Parents Teaching Children
- 3) Policy Regarding Visiting Faculty Eligibility for Awards

Recorder, Cindy Wilkinson