

**Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
February 18, 2011**

Members Attending: Debbie Smith (Chair), Jack Finney, Bruce Pencek, Sam Riley, Richard Sorensen, Brad Klein, and Allan Grant

Guests Attending: Bill Knocke (Associate Vice President for Research Programs), Roderick Hall (Associate Vice President for Research), William Huckle (Department of Veterinary Medicine), and Jason Thweatt (Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering)

The meeting was called to order by Debbie Smith, Chair, who distributed the meeting's agenda:

- (1) Review of policy 13005 and 3020 (Interdisciplinary Research Centers) by Bill Knocke, William Huckle, and Roderick Hall
- (2) Undergraduate Honor System by Jason Thweatt

The minutes of CFA meeting on January 21, 2011 were approved without changes by email prior to the meeting.

1. Review of Policy 13005 and 1320 (Interdisciplinary Research Centers)

Bill Knocke made a presentation on proposed changes for Policies 3020 and 13005 on interdisciplinary research for centers and university institutes. The Provost had charged the Vice President for Research's office to identify gaps in policy 13005 and 1320, as these policies addressed similar issues related to centers and institutes. Policy 3020 applies to all centers at Virginia Tech, whereas Policy 13005 applies to interdisciplinary research centers at departmental, college, university, and institute levels.

Dr. Knocke informed members that the university recognizes seven major research institutes, although there are other units that use the word institute in the title, but are not formally recognized by the Provost's Office. The same circumstance is present for the use of the word center in titles, with some academic programs labeled as centers (e.g., Center for Public Administration and Policy). The goal of the review was therefore to:

- a) Formally define policies and procedures relating to each center or institute.
- b) Have procedures that relate to administrative and financial oversight over centers and institutes.
- c) Establish procedures that address the establishment, continuation and discontinuation of centers and institutes after programmatic review.
- d) Eliminate "de facto" centers and have them formally chartered.
- e) Have performance reviews of directors of departments or college level centers every five years.

The new revised Policies 3020 and 13005 will be channeled through the normal governance system and the Commission on Research will be the host commission.

The CFA members resolved to discuss the review of policy 13005 and 3020 in the next CFA meeting. Debbie Smith will forward the necessary documentation on policy 13005 and 3020 to CFA members.

2. Undergraduate Honor System

Jason Thweatt briefed CFA members on proposed revisions of the Honor System being undertaken by the Honor System Review Board. The Honor System Review Board is in the process of proposing and forwarding a new revised constitution of the honor code through the university governance system. CFA members were informed of proposed changes in the academic offense and sanction sections. Faculty

needed to be aware of the proposed changes as they are stakeholders. Dr. Thweatt informed CFA members of the following specific changes:

- a. Since the honor system is concerned with academic matters, the Honor System Review Board was doing away with the sanction of meting out community service to violators.
- b. Changes have been proposed for the requirement where faculty members give grade reduction as a sanction for honor code violation.
- c. The proposal includes an increase in faculty representation in the Honor System Review Board.

Dr. Thweatt requested the CFA proposed revised language in the Faculty Handbook to better delineate that the faculty role in the honor system is an active one, rather than a passive one. In addition, the honor system's members are available to educate faculty and students whenever invited on honor code provisions and violations.

The CFA members were notified of major increase of reported cases of honor code violations during the 2009-2010 academic year. There was also a backlog of last year's cases brought forward to this year's 2011 spring semester. The CFA members were concerned that the provisions of section 9.8.3 (The Honor Pledge) in the faculty handbook were not being applied to all student assignments. However, it was noted that faculty often included the Honor Pledge in their syllabus and the Scholar site has a tab for students to click on and agree to abide with the honor system before submitting an assignment.

The CFA members requested that the Honor System Review Board forward proposed new language for the faculty handbook and CFA will review the recommendations and determine a course forward. In addition, it was noted that the faculty handbook should also reflect the honor system for graduate students and for the Corps of Cadets.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Recorder, Maxwell Awando