

MINUTES
Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting
December 2, 2008

Attending: Jim Nechols, Jennifer Askey, Ellen Urton, Amy Schultz, Donita Whitney-Bammerlin, Judy Hughey, Stacey Warner, Clyde Howard, Kaleen Knopp, Mark Haub, Dick Hoag, Bill Hsu
Visiting: Andrea Blair (DSS)

1. The agenda was modified to include a report from Frank Spikes on the status of Appendix G.
2. The minutes from the Nov. 4, 2008 FAC meeting were approved without revision.
3. Frank Spikes, update on University Handbook, Appendix G (see attached)
 - would like to have this revision approved by Fac Senate by March 2009
 - ideal scenario might be to rewrite the appendix from scratch, to recreate the grievance process in its entirety
 - FAC members should read through the recommendations (and the accompanying summary sheet) and come back to Frank w/comments and concerns, so that the March 2009 timeline is reasonable
 - revision scenario for Appendix G reveals the problems in following the UH rules in showing/documenting language changes as revision goes forth (striking through deletions, etc., are problematic with such sweeping changes)
 - FAC will act on this on Dec 16, 2008
4. Disability Support (Andrea Blair visiting)
 - charge at the University is to provide equal access to all students at KSU, regardless of disability (academics, housing, library, facilities, iTAC)
 - students' responsibility to provide documentation of disability and the impact of same, for a thorough discussion of reasonable accommodation in the DSS office
 - learning disabilities lead in terms of numbers, but the office works with all manner of learning and physical disabilities, chronic illnesses, etc.
 - Judy Hughey spoke with DSS about providing professors with student documentation of a disability. Andrea Blair is reluctant to provide sensitive, personal student information to "others". The letter of accommodation that goes out just states that the student has a disability, but does not specify what it is. (ADA and section 504 are the federal regulations under which the office operates)
 - Judy Hughey feels that letters that merely state the student has a disability don't provide the instructors with enough information to meet the needs of that student, if the letter doesn't state what kind of disability is in play.
 - is there a possibility for more cooperation between DSS and the instructors to strategize accommodation?
 - Andrea Blair: her charge is to secure equal access, not to enhance curriculum/instruction. If you have that level of concern for your students and want to accommodate them, you should speak with the student.
 - FAC member concerns regarding the role of DSS—should they not be the intermediary between the student and the professor, in order to talk about necessary accommodations for each student: a packet of info: this is what you should do with a student with this kind of disability? (to lessen the onus on the student, and/or lessen the awkwardness or manipulative potential of the discussion)

- (Summary of issues) general faculty training in dealing w/common disabilities in the classroom, so that accommodation is easier would be nice; second issue is the line of communication between student—DSS—instructor
- Clyde Howard noted that syllabus statements do constitute, to a small degree, a legal agreement
- He also noted that students will reveal only what they wish to reveal, and coercion and intimidation cannot play a role in securing the sharing of that information
- Office of Civil Rights views us all as parts of the university, not as individual instructors
- Query to DSS—can communication be improved, or information sharing be improved
- Three broad areas for further discussion/ resolution are: (1) sufficient information for faculty to be able to adequately provide accommodation of student disabilities; (2) adequate advance notice to faculty so that reasonable accommodations can be made (including acquisition of equipment, software, training, etc.); (3) occasional issues related to who bears cost of expensive equipment and/or software?