

**Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
March 19, 2010**

Members attending: Debbie Smith (acting chair), Jack Finney (for Dean Chang), Carol Burger, Tami Watson, Bruce Pencek, Paul Winistorfer, Sam Easterling, Drew Marrs, Dennis Welch, and Patricia Hyer

Guests: Matt Swift, Mechanical Engineering Department Administrator

Agenda for the meeting included three items: federal contract compliance, outside employment, and committee membership.

The minutes of the CFA meeting on February 26, 2010, were approved without change by email prior to the meeting.

Federal Contract Compliance

Patricia Hyer reported that she had broadly circulated changes to Policy 6200 and to Chapter 6 of the Faculty Handbook to gather comments. The response from the Department Heads Council was generally supportive, but they expressed concern about those research faculty funded 100% by sponsored projects. Several questions and concerns about the changes were submitted by department heads, faculty members, and departmental administrators. Matt Swift attended the meeting to share concerns of faculty members and administrators in Mechanical Engineering; a summary of those comments and concerns was distributed to CFA members.

The Budget Office was able to examine payroll data for summer 2009 to identify how many and which AY faculty members were likely to be concerned about having no vacation since they were receiving maximum wage payments for summer research effort. In summer 2009, 64 AY faculty members had received maximum summer earnings from wages; 45 were from College of Engineering and 9 were from the College of Science. About 80 faculty members are already on the research extended appointments, the majority are on 12-month appointments. If annual leave is reinstated for research extended appointments, summer vacation would not be an issue for this group.

Department administrators would like greater flexibility in timing of converting faculty members to research extended appointments and to include the possibility of using overhead as a backstop. In addition, University administrators are considering front loading annual leave to late conversions in order accommodate vacations the first summer of the appointment. The Budget Office committed to redirect fringe savings back to the departments to ease pressure on grants created by moving some summer funding to the academic year, thereby incurring a higher fringe charge. Thus it may be possible to address a number of the concerns and to incorporate some of the suggestions that have come forth to date.

Several CFA members expressed support in principle for the proposed changes but remain concerned about the culture change required to address vacation for AY faculty members on summer wages. Some members recommended splitting the policy changes into two parts to be addressed independently. All agreed part one would include an immediate incorporation of shifting institutional funding to cover a small

percentage of summer salaries and reinstating leave accrual for research extended appointments. The second part would be to address the issue of vacation for faculty members fully funded on summer wages. CFA members believed separating the issues would give the university more time to step back and review the vacation problem that some believe represents a big change to the way we do business.

Hyer will continue to work on transition plans for faculty member conversion to research extended appointments. She will consider removing some language from the Faculty Handbook drafts about vacation and address this policy issue at a later date.

CFA members must pass the resolution by April 9 in order for the changes to Policy 6200 and the Faculty Handbook to make it to the University Council for review on April 19 and May 5. The changes, if approved, would then go to the Board of Visitors on June 7.

CFA members proposed meeting on April 2 and April 9 to review and vote on the resolution.

Outside Employment

Hyer presented new language in the Faculty Handbook to permit outside employment of faculty members. Key principles are that a faculty member's primary commitment is to Virginia Tech, the supervisor must grant permission, and outside employment work hours must be during non-business hours. CFA members recommended changing the reference from "...employment not directly related to the person's field or discipline" to "...employment not directly related to the person's job expectations." Hyer mentioned the external activities form will need to be revised to reflect consulting and outside employment activities. The department head will determine in consultation with each faculty member whether the activity is consulting, which may be done on university time and is viewed as beneficial to the employee and the university, or outside employment. CFA members are generally supportive of the outside employment policy with suggested modifications.

Committee Membership

Debbie Smith asked for volunteers for CFA commission representative appointments. Smith agreed to serve an additional year on the Employee Benefits Committee. Volunteers are needed for a one year term on the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Committee and a three year term on the Virginia Tech Employee Spouse and Dependent Scholarship Committee.

CFA Meeting Changes

April 2
April 9 – new meeting
April 16 – Cancel
April 23

New Business to be Addressed at Future Meetings

- 1) Presentation on the study of tenure success by faculty cohort by Tracey Cameron, GA in the Provost's Office.

Recorder, Cindy Wilkinson