

**Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
December 3, 2010**

Members Attending: Debbie Smith (Chair), Bruce Pencek, Sam Riley, Ranjana Mehta, Richard Sorensen, Monica Ponder, and Jack Finney

Guests: Bill Knocke (Office of the Vice President for Research), Hal Irvin (Human Resources), and Peggy Layne (Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost)

The meeting was called to order by Debbie Smith, Chair, who distributed the agenda with two new items for presentation and discussion: Short-term disability for restricted research faculty and the COACHE survey results.

1. Short-term disability for restricted research faculty: Jack Finney introduced the information item and Hal Irvin and Bill Knocke presented the current proposal. The Task Force on Special Research Faculty identified an issue that has been discussed numerous occasions: restricted research faculty do not have short-term disability. A subcommittee of the Task Force has moved the issue forward. The proposal was presented as an information item to CFA.

Hal Irvin summarized the proposal that has been formulated. The proposal involves an insurance provider providing short-term disability that covers pre-existing conditions and makes restricted faculty eligible for the benefit upon hire. The proposal includes a cost-sharing for three years while the university works the benefit into the indirect rate. The costs are reasonable, but without cost-sharing by the university, lower paid restricted research faculty members may find the costs burdensome.

A motion was made and seconded to support the extension of these benefits to restricted research faculty members. The commission voted 7 in favor, 0 opposed for the motion.

2. COACHE – Peggy Layne made a presentation on the results of the COACHE survey data from 2009. The COACHE data and reports are posted on a joinable Scholar site, COACHE Survey of Pre-tenure Faculty. (Go to <https://scholar.vt.edu>, then search Joinable Sites.) The presentation focused on the 10 major themes assessed by the COACHE survey. The results indicate some strong aspects of Virginia Tech and also some areas for focus on improvement.

New Business:

3. Debbie Smith reported that Leon Geyer, Agricultural and Applied Economics, will attend the January meeting to discuss information he has received about limited mentoring and lack of evaluation of progress toward promotion and tenure issues for pretenure faculty members.
4. Bruce Pencek is serving on the university committee that is investigating veterans' issues. The university is actively investigating the needs of this growing student population.
5. Policy changes for research leave will be on the agenda at University Council December 6th for the First Reading.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Recorder, Jack Finney