

Minutes
Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs
October 23, 2003

Members present: Elaine Matuszek (chair), Debbie Day, Dawn Barnes, Ruby Cox, Mike Roberts, Gail Haynie, Carol Byrd, Linda Woodard, Pat Hyer, Toni Stroter, Glenda Scales.

Guest: Laura Yu Hickerson

Chair, Elaine Matuszek, welcomed everyone to the first meeting. Introductions were done. Laura Yu Hickerson was invited to give the commission an update on the newly formed Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD). Laura is the representative for CAPFA on CEOD. The new commission held two long orientation sessions in September and a regular meeting in October. They will be trying to come to agreement at the next several meetings on a few agenda items, from among many suggested, to focus on for the year. The commission's minutes will be on the www.governance.vt.edu web site for anyone who wants to follow their deliberations more closely. Laura will report to CAPFA from time to time and whenever there are issues of likely concern to administrative and professional faculty.

Topics for CAPFA consideration for 2003-04:

Elaine asked for issues or topics that CAPFA should consider during the coming year. She briefed the group on issues identified by the other commissions at the recent meeting of commission chairs with Dr. Steger. In response to the staff concern about evacuation of buildings in cases of emergency, Judith Jones described Tim Mack's involvement in developing a major proposal to the state for a first responders' network with a dedicated T-1 line that would be available even in the case of loss of power or major disaster.

Items suggested for CAPFA included: 1) a briefing on the employee award and recognition policy approved by the Board in August; 2) an update on extension staffing issues following last year's budget reductions; 3) a preview of PeopleAdmin; 4) a briefing on changes in state benefits (probably spring after legislation has been introduced); and 5) a briefing on budget and other legislative matters following the General Assembly session.

Next meeting date:

After consulting calendars, the next CAPFA meeting was set for December 9th at 3:00-4:30. The major topics will be a preview of the new applicant software, PeopleAdmin, and the update on extension staffing. The meeting will probably be held in the new Personnel Services classroom at Southgate so that a demonstration can be done.

Demographics of VT Faculty and Student Body

Pat Hyer gave a presentation on the demographics of the faculty and student body. The current number of tenured and tenure-track faculty has dropped from 1417 in Fall 2001 to 1330 in Fall 2002. It will likely drop again for Fall 2003 because of budget reductions. Almost half of the tenured and tenure-track faculty are at the full professor rank, but only 10.6% of these are women. Women are 38.6% of the assistant professors, and 22% of the total number of teaching faculty on the tenure track. About 12% of the tenure-track faculty are persons of color — African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, or American Indians. Virginia Tech ranks relatively low among peer institutions on the proportion of faculty who are minority. The loss of black faculty in the last two years has been high — retirements, leaves, transfers to other locations, and resignations to pursue other opportunities. This will mean a substantial drop in numbers this fall.

A declining trend in the number and percentage of black freshman over several years was finally reversed in fall 2000. However, after several years of considerable increase, fall 2003 once again shows a dip in the number of new black freshman. This is probably a consequence of the difficulties Virginia Tech has experienced over affirmative action this last year. Forty-one percent of Tech's undergraduates are women compared to 56% of four-year college enrollments nationwide. This is a reflection of the predominance of science and engineering majors which continue to attract far fewer women. Black retention and graduation rates have improved over the last decade. In general, Virginia Tech has a higher six-year graduation rate than its peer institutions. Graduate enrollment includes a large contingent of foreign students, many of whom are enrolled in engineering or science disciplines. Foreign students are about 25% of all graduate students.

The presentation generated a lot of discussion among commission members about how to build a strong pool of diverse candidates for positions and whether it was possible to follow and nurture talented students of color so that we might recruit them as employees after graduation. Toni Stroter asked whether we were using our own students effectively for recruitment and pointed out that we needed to make students feel better about both Blacksburg and VT so they could be effective advocates for VT. This would be key to retaining them as eventual employees and having them recommend VT to their friends.

Elections and appointments:

Several seats on other commissions or committees need to be filled. Judith Jones reported that Sara Burkett, Jennifer Able, and a third person to be designated by John Dooley, will serve on the Commission on Outreach and International Affairs. David Moore of VESA will need to be contacted to replace Gail Haynie on CAPFA following her retirement on January 1. Debbie Day

promised to check with colleagues from the Alumni Association for someone who might be willing to fill a vacancy on the Building Committee.

Announcements:

Hyer announced that there will be a campus-wide forum on November 10th from 3:00-5:00 on the status of our review of race-conscious programs. Ben Davenport of the Board of Visitors will be attending, along with the President and Provost. Everyone is urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned about 5:00.

Minutes
Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs
December 9, 2003

Members attending: Cheryl Peed (for Glenda Scales), Debbie Day, Dawn Barnes, Carol Byrd, James Penven, Becky Barlow, Ruby Cox, Toni Stroter, Elaine Matuszek, Tom Gabbard, Judith Jones, Patricia Hyer

Guest: Cathy Sutphin (to replace Judith Jones)

Report on Cooperative Extension:

Judith Jones updated the Commission on implementation of the budget reductions and the effect on VCE personnel. Since July 1, 2002, 140 Extension personnel took retirement through the Alternative Severance Option as part of two rounds of budget reductions — that included 83 field agents, the majority of the district directors, a number of specialists, and 25 field support staff. The Family Consumer Science and Food, Nutrition and Health Programs were disproportionately affected since there were more agents with longer-term service in these two programs. As of November 2003, there are 202 field agents compared with 416 in the mid-1980s. Despite the large-scale reduction in personnel, Cooperative Extension continues to reach many people, particularly through the use of technology and programming for larger groups.

Extension leaders hope to begin hiring personnel in key areas after July 2004, well in advance of their original projections. An amendment for \$3M in restoration funds and 56 positions has been submitted to the General Assembly. While the amendment has received good support from legislators, the state's revenue picture will determine whether any of the restoration funding will be appropriated.

Virginia has benefited by having strong support from local governments for extension programming. Agent salaries are a shared obligation of state and local government in Virginia, and in several cases, local governments have fully funded agent positions rather than lose them as part of the state budget reduction. Hopefully, this situation will be relatively short term, and the state will reassume its share of funding for critical positions.

Dean Quisenberry has toured five of the six extension districts to learn of VCE programs. This has been very beneficial for the dean and local hosts have been impressed with her knowledge and interest.

Overview of PeopleAdmin:

Rosie Higdon from Personnel Services and Pat Hyer provided an overview of the new applicant software, PeopleAdmin, purchased and adapted by the university.

PeopleAdmin provides a number of advantages, including the ability to receive and manage applications electronically, cutting down the amount of paperwork involved in a search and greatly improving applicant tracking for compliance purposes. Rosie demonstrated how managers complete a posting to announce a faculty (or eventually, staff) position. The posting is then approved by the department head, senior manager, the EO Office (in the case of a faculty position), and then posted to www.jobs.vt.edu. Applicants can search for postings on line in a variety of ways — for example, by job title, department, college, or date of posting. The on-line staff application follows almost exactly the state application and thus is relatively lengthy. The on-line faculty application requires minimal entry — just name, contact information, optional demographic information, and agreement to a statement concerning veracity of the information provided. Faculty applicants would then typically attach a cover letter and vita to the application prior to submission for any particular job. Once a faculty or staff application is prepared and saved in PeopleAdmin, applicants can recall it and use it as is, or alter it, to respond to any number of job announcements. The system went live about November 15th. However, classified job postings will be entered only by Personnel Services until everyone gains greater familiarity with the software. A number of departments have agreed to pilot faculty searches using PeopleAdmin, and they have already begun preparing their postings and receiving applications on line. The team involved in implementation of the software meets regularly to discuss any difficulties and to work with the vendor to make changes to meet local needs. To date, the vendor has been very responsive in this process.

Future Meetings:

The next CAPFA meeting will be February 3, 2004 from 3:00-4:30, location to be announced. Agenda items are always welcomed and should be directed to the chair, Elaine Matuszek. Two possible items include planning for spring 2004 CAPFA elections and the employee award program.

Recorder,

Patricia Hyer
Office of the Provost

Minutes
Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs
April 5, 2004

Present: Elaine Matuszek, Kellie Morris (for Debbie Shelton), Jamie Penven, Lori Sheppard, Tom Gabbard, Cathy Sutphin, Linda Woodard, Patricia Hyer, Toni Stroter, Dawn Barnes, Glenda Scales.

Guest: Dwight Shelton

Nominations and Elections:

Nominations for various vacant slots on commissions and committees were solicited by email notice to all administrative and professional faculty members. About thirteen people self-identified or nominated others, and the nominating committee used these names, and others, to develop a slate for the election. This process appeared useful in capturing names of those who were genuinely interested in getting more involved with governance. VESA will meet on April 6th to identify names of extension agents for inclusion on the ballot. Ballots should be ready about mid-April. Linda Woodard will ask her staff to develop ballots on survey.vt.edu so that everyone can vote electronically over a two-week period. The commission requested that Lou Ann Phipps give us a report on the number of ballots received in this way versus what we had been receiving through the paper process so that we can evaluate whether this was an effective approach.

Business Standards:

Dwight Shelton, Vice President for Budget and Financial Management, reported on a series of meetings of the Finance and Audit Committee of the Board concerning employee awareness of business policies and obligations. There has been serious concern in the committee as they have heard numerous audit reports in which employees have stated that they were unaware of the policies they violated. While the Board appreciated the recent reminder that was sent out to all employees, they requested documentation of employees' agreement on an annual basis. Dwight is expecting that the administration will have to report to the Board on compliance with this directive sometime in the fall.

Several administrators were tasked to work on implementation of this directive. Their goal is to find an effective way to communicate policies and procedures as well as to conduct an annual distribution and acknowledgement process, preferably within the context of an existing process. The volume of related policies and procedures creates a daunting load so the task force has been working on a distillation of the basic principles with an attachment providing the specific policy references. A draft was shared with the commission.

The annual acknowledgement process is relatively easy on the staff side since this can be included as part of the annual performance plan process. Personnel Services is already involved in monitoring submission of annual evaluations so this would not impose an additional burden. Connecting to an existing process for faculty is more difficult since there is no uniform process across campus.

CAPFA members from Extension reported that their annual faculty activity reports are due May 1. Agents then meet with district directors in May-June. Personal action plans are due July 15, but these do not require a signature. Each employee gets a reappointment letter. CALS is working on electronic reporting.

Annual reports for student affairs faculty members are due mid-May. They receive a letter summarizing their evaluation. Glenda Scales reported that academic administrators in her college do a traditional activity report, also due in May. This does not require a signature.

The commission discussed the possibility of a separate electronic notification and tracking process that can be facilitated by special software at the Survey Research Center. Given that we have already missed the possibility of including notification and acceptance as part of the annual evaluation cycle this year, this separate approach has some appeal; it also allows more certainty about information sent and acknowledgement received.

Tom Gabbard recommended that we do a two-step process including a briefing as part of new employee orientation, and then also an annual acknowledgement. Linda Woodard replied that they are thinking about how to incorporate elements of this in new employee orientation, but that it may be necessary to go to a full day.

Extension members gave an example of how they are handling aspects of their orientation which includes on-line components. At the completion, the employee prints a sheet, signs it and sends it in to certify they have reviewed the materials.

The commission talked about what incentives (or punishments) were available to encourage compliance. Currently we don't consider someone for a raise if they don't turn in a Faculty Activity Report. It may be appropriate to consider having them turn in a sheet of acknowledgement along with the Faculty Activity Report, which has a high degree of compliance for academic faculty.

There was general agreement that departments should highlight those policies that are of particular importance to those in the unit so there is genuine education around these issues, not simply token signatures. The group suggested that the team try to focus more on personal responsibility of employees rather than presuming that supervisors are responsible for educating everyone who reports to them. Linda Woodard invited anyone who had suggested revisions for the text of the statement of principles or attachment to send her a note. The team would welcome identification of missing elements, or words and phrases that don't ring true for readers.

There be no further pressing business for the year, CAPFA will not hold any additional meetings. Results of the election will be conveyed by note to all members.

Minutes prepared by Pat Hyer