Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
September 16, 2005

Members attending: Kerry Redican, Valerie Hardcastle, Susan Hagen, Carlyle Brewster, Roby Robinson, Bob Stephens, Diane Zahm, Mike Kelly, Pat Hyer, Catherine Amelink, Ken Eriksson, Carol Burch-Brown

Redican called the meeting to order with four items on the agenda: 1) Kevin McDonald, Director for Equal Opportunity, Conflict and Resolution Program, 2) Update on "Research Extended Appointments" policy revision, 3) Professors of Practice, 4) Part-time Tenure Appointments

Conflict and Resolution Program:

Kevin McDonald, Director for Equal Opportunity, described the Conflict and Resolution Program the Office for Equal Opportunity is developing in concert with other key areas including Student Affairs, the Provost's Office, Human Resources, and the Office for Multicultural Affairs. The nature of the environment at Virginia Tech is best suited to a "centralized dispersed" model. Implementing the model will require a group of mediators to be trained with a specialization in dealing with conflicts that arise among faculty, staff, or students. The program will provide opportunities for facilitated discussion between groups as well as between two people.

Members of the CFA thought it would be useful to make representatives of the Faculty Review Committee aware of the program, as they settle grievances. Issues may come to light which might be best dealt with through the Conflict and Resolution Program. Members also felt that publicizing the services offered through the program was important in creating a culture that promoted successful resolution of disagreements and conflicts between different parties. Ken Eriksson will serve on the planning committee in his role as chair of the Faculty Senate Reconciliation Committee, whose members may be among the first faculty to be trained.

Research Extended Appointments Policy Revision:

The university policy on Research Extended Appointments (No. 6200) has been revised to provide faculty on academic year appointments with options to extend their base nine month contract to a 10, 11, or 12 month contract when the extended appointment is funded by sponsored grants or contracts. The policy includes detail outlining the formulas that are used to calculate salaries based on the conversion factor. Initial conversions must be made by the end of the fall term if there is only one summer of funding available. The policy provides the flexibility to earn wages through other activities such as teaching summer school courses as long as the combined earnings do not exceed 33 1/3% of the base annual year appointment. The Committee on Research has approved the policy. A motion and seconded to endorse the revised policy; it was approved unanimously.

Professors of Practice:

Prior to the meeting, members of CFA were provided with examples of policies at other institutions that utilize a non-tenure-track appointment commonly referred to as "Professors of Practice." The professors of practice distinction applies to individuals who are hired because of the benefit they can bring to teaching a class and working with students due in part to their experience, demonstrated excellence, and professional expertise in a particular field. One of the primary distinctions between professors of practice and instructors is the notion that professors of practice would be eligible for promotion through assistant, associate, and full professor ranks. Involvement in department activities, advising students, and administrative duties would further serve to distinguish professors of practice from instructors.

One area of concern highlighted by members of CFA was the negative impact such a classification might have in the Arts. Currently, the university is struggling to define creative scholarship as it relates to the research profile of the institution and having this particular set of ranks might result in fewer tenure and tenure-track positions being allocated to the Arts. Members of the CFA suggested guidelines that state a limited percentage of the faculty can be professors of practice, emphasizing the classification should be used in a limited fashion, and stating in the policy that the department executive committee must decide if they want to use this classification might resolve those issues. Zahm, Hyer, and Redican will work to draft policy language that will be shared with CFA.

Part-time Tenure Appointments

CFA members will receive a sample of literature that has been collected on part-time tenure track appointments. From the deans' standpoint, several initial concerns were pointed out regarding allocation and/or re-allocation of resources within a department including lab and office space and the difficulty in making a sustained commitment to an individual over such a long period of time.

Members will review materials being sent to them in anticipation of the next CFA meeting.

Recorder: C. Amelink, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
September 2, 2005

Members attending: Mara Baker, Carlyle Brewster, Ken Eriksson, Pat Hyer (for Mark McNamee), Mike Kelly, Kerry Redican, Diane Zahm, Valerie Hardcastle

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Welcome and Charge of CFA, 2) Board of Visitors Faculty Affairs Issues, 3) Policy Issues, 4) Future Briefings, 5) Other Issues of Concern. A motion was made and passed to adopt the agenda.

Welcome and Charge of CFA

Redican welcomed CFA members and introductions were made. The purpose and charge of the CFA was reviewed.

Board of Visitors Faculty Affairs Issues

Hyer explained the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors (BOV) chose to focus on three areas (Graduate Education, Diversity, and Faculty Affairs) during their 2004 session. The progress report on identified faculty affairs issues that the Academic Affairs Committee received during the August 29, 2005 BOV meeting was shared with CFA members. The progress report summarizes recent actions that have sought to resolve faculty affairs issues associated with faculty compensation, retention and employee relations, worklife policies, and balancing the teaching and outreach missions with the research agenda.

CFA members suggested sending the progress report to the Faculty Senate and allowing them to add to the list if they felt there were additional items that needed attention.

Policy Issues

CFA members were provided with copies of the Stopping the Tenure Clock (2.8.2.1) policy as it is currently written in the Faculty Handbook. Hyer explained the policy is being reviewed by the *AdvanceVT* Policy Workgroup. Despite recent actions that have been taken to publicize and educate the administration and faculty about the policy, it continues to be enacted differently across departments. Misinformation and misaligned perceptions surrounding the policy result in faculty anxiety about possible negative consequences during the promotion and tenure process and confusion over legitimate reasons to stop the clock among faculty. The *AdvanceVT* Work Group has proposed changing the policy so that it is easier to use. Using other institutions as a model, the group is proposing that the policy be written so that childbirth or adoption would entitle both male and female faculty to an automatic one-year extension of the tenure clock. Each subsequent birth or adoption would entitle faculty members to one additional extension. Faculty who have multiple births would be entitled to two years.

After discussion, CFA members agreed the policy would better serve faculty if it was re-written so that childbirth resulted in an automatic extension of the tenure clock. Faculty

could elect not to stop the tenure clock but having the policy in place would encourage more faculty to use the policy and lower anxiety. CFA members advised that revisions to the policy should be accompanied by education of department heads and that the policy should explicitly state that males and females are eligible. Hyer will re-write the policy and present it to CFA members for review.

Revisions to the policy governing Research Assignments was also examined by CFA members. Hyer explained that a workgroup of the Faculty Senate had reviewed the policy and advised dropping the quota that currently limits the number of research assignments granted in one year to 5% of the tenured faculty. The quota has never resulted in an application for a research assignment being turned down at the university level, however, having the quota in place may dissuade faculty from applying. CFA members reviewed the revised policy that would be included in the Faculty Handbook (Research Assignment, Section 2.15.3). A motion was made and passed to vote on the revised policy. The revised policy was unanimously approved.

Future Briefings

The list of topics to be considered for upcoming CFA agendas was reviewed. CFA members agreed two issues should be addressed first: part-time tenure track or tenured appointments and non-tenure track options, such as "professors of practice."

Amelink will obtain recent reports on part-time tenured and tenure-track appointments from U. of Washington and U. of Michigan to distribute to CFA members. Kelly will present the idea to the deans to get a sense of the support for these types of appointments and will report back to the CFA. Hardcastle will inquire whether Duke has policies that address non-tenure track appointments similar to the professors of practice and how they are used.

Other Issues of Concern

Hardcastle agreed to serve as the CFA representative on the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity. A representative is still needed for the Health and Benefits Committee.

Recorder: C. Amelink, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
October 6, 2005

Members attending: Kerry Redican, Sheryl Ball, Roby Robinson, Diane Zahm, Mike Kelly, Pat Hyer, Catherine Amelink, Carol Burch-Brown, Lindsay O'Connell

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Update on Professors of Practice, 2) Sloan Report 3) Faculty Affairs BOV topics, 4) Part-time Tenure Appointments, 5) Future CFA Issues. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Update on Professors of Practice

Zahm met with several representatives in the arts and humanities to gather feedback on the proposed creation of a Professors of Practice faculty classification. Representatives recognized the advantages such a classification might have, especially for the science and engineering fields. However, they were concerned about the impact such a classification might have for the tenure-track lines that are allocated to the arts and humanities. Some members of the CFA agreed that creating a classification such as this would change the infrastructure of the university and how the professoriate is conceptualized. If the issue is the prestige of the title and associated ability to attract faculty than the better solution might be to revise the form that is used to designate a title for new appointments. Due to the concerns, CFA members suggested it might be useful to create an additional designation such as Visiting Assistant, Associate, or Professor of Practice. Likewise, utilizing the term adjunct with the rank designation for faculty might allow for further delineation of duties associated with the Professors of Practice title. Hyer pointed out the technicalities involved in regard to faculty classifications. Currently, visiting professors are only able to remain at the university for six years. Adjunct faculty denotes faculty who are paid with P-14 wages. CFA members agreed the best way to create flexibility for departments while allowing them to attract faculty with the qualifications associated with a Professor of Practice might be to re-write the definition of a visiting professor and an adjunct professor. Re-formulating the definitions would also allow human resource needs to be addressed.

Sloan Report

Hyer updated the CFA on the recent Sloan Conference on Flexible Faculty Career Paths. The conference was attended by representatives of administrative teams from colleges and universities nationally. Virginia Tech was represented by Hyer, Provost McNamee, and Susanna Rinehart. Major sessions at the conference dealt with bias avoidance, non-tenure-track faculty appointments, pregnancy/childcare and promotion and tenure issues, and pipeline issues associated with the representation of women in faculty careers. Policies associated with leave, stopping the tenure clock, delayed entry, modified duties, temporary part-time appointments, and phased retirement were also addressed. Given the large number of administrative teams from research universities represented at the

conference that are considering creating flexibility in faculty careers, Virginia Tech has a substantial amount of competition for recruitment and retention of faculty.

Faculty Affairs Topics for Board of Visitors

CFA members reviewed a list of possible topics for the Board of Visitors to address related to faculty affairs that fell into major categories including: compensation, benefit, and role issues, faculty worklife policies and programs, retention and satisfaction issues, and conflict of interest issues. Hyer asked for additional suggestions or editorial remarks. CFA members suggested that summer school compensation and a flexible teaching schedule be added as items for consideration under compensation, benefit, and role issues.

Given the substantial amount of time the CFA devoted to other items on the agenda, in the interest of time the remaining items will be addressed at the next meeting. The CFA will meet on October 21, 2005 in 325 Burruss from 3:00 – 5:00.

Recorder: C. Amelink, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
October 21, 2005

Members present: Kerry Redican, chair; Ken Eriksson, Sue Hagen, Carlyle Brewster, Mike Kelly, Sheryl Ball, Pat Hyer, Valerie Hardcastle, Robert Stephens.

The agenda was approved with one addition. Minutes from the previous meeting were already approved electronically.

There was no significant progress to report on three topics under consideration by CFA this fall: revision of stop-the-clock language, development of a temporary part-time option, and professors of practice. Work on these topics will continue outside of CFA meetings and will be brought to the commission when ready.

Pat Hyer briefed commission members on plans for the October 24th session for academic leaders concerning faculty work-life issues. CFA members were all invited to attend since last year's commission was deeply involved in the design and conduct of faculty focus group sessions that were held in April. The report of the focus group findings is one of several reports that will be featured at the meeting. Participants will also get copies of work-life data from the AdvanceVT survey, a summary of the exit survey results, and a report on voluntary departures of tenured and tenure-track faculty. In addition to the presentation on the 24th, a similar presentation is planned for the Faculty Senate meeting on November 9th, and for the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Visitors on November 7th. The Commission will be central to any of the policy initiatives that may come from these discussions.

The commission then discussed plans for their upcoming meeting on October 28th. Susan Willis-Walton has been asked to provide a detailed presentation on results of the faculty exit survey. In addition, P&T considerations will be brought up for further discussion with Dr. McNamee who is expected to attend.

Promotion and Tenure Issues:

Ken Erikkson provided an overview of six issues concerning promotion and tenure that have been identified through various grievances and reconciliation requests during the last year. These issues are being introduced to determine if CFA wishes to recommend any changes in current policies or practices.

1. Deans chairing college-level P&T Committees: The Faculty Handbook calls for deans to chair college-level P&T committees; however they may not vote as part of the committee. The issue that has been raised is whether this policy and practice might lead to undue influence on the committee's deliberations when the dean has a particular view on a case.

Members shared their experience with P&T deliberations in their respective colleges. In LAHS, the dean convenes the meeting, addresses issues of procedures, responds to questions, but otherwise "witnesses" rather than participates in deliberations. There is a faculty chair designated who manages the meeting.

Brewster suggested that deans can play a *positive* role in a case, supplementing information provided by a designated presenter. The dean in Agriculture reads all two and four-year reviews and all annual evaluations and hence is familiar with the accomplishments of individual candidates. There should not be a presumption that a dean would automatically be using their influence in a negative fashion concerning individual cases. There is a faculty committee chair in CALS other than the dean.

Kelly reflected that he would welcome a wholly separate faculty committee for college-level deliberations that would meet without his participation. That would leave his judgment truly independent of the committee's views, and it provides a better vantage point for adjudicating differences should they arise. In Natural Resources, the dean prepares the letters summarizing the committee's view on the candidate's record, in addition to his own letter.

At this point in the discussion, commission members appeared to support a recommendation that would reduce the dean's involvement or control of college-level deliberations. Further conversation with the Provost, the deans, and with the Faculty Senate are needed to test whether some variation of this recommendation would be more broadly supported and accepted.

2. Role of department heads on college-level P&T committees: A related issue is the role that department heads have in serving as voting members of the college-level committee after having a formal vote and voice through their own letters at the departmental level. Both Engineering and Natural Resources, and perhaps other colleges, give voting membership on the college P&T committee to department heads. This is permitted by the Faculty Handbook as long as their collective vote does not exceed that of other faculty representatives. Again, the expressed view of several members of the commission was that college-level committees be faculty-only committees. The issue of who serves on college committees appears to vary by college (separately elected? Departmental P&T committee chairs? Department heads?) may need some attention to determine if greater consistency is desirable, and whether all colleges are actually in compliance with Handbook guidelines on selection of members.

   Given recent changes in the university-level P&T process whereby faculty representatives and deans get only one opportunity to vote on candidates from their own college, it may be worthwhile revisiting the role of heads in the same way.

3. Annual Evaluations: Erikkson shared his concern that several recent cases have brought to light serious deficiencies in departmental level annual evaluation processes, and also two and four-review probationary reviews. The absence of written feedback to faculty members creates a serious problem in documenting difficult or marginal cases of performance since faculty members can, rightly, insist that they have not been told how they needed to improve.

   Commission members again shared their experiences in their departments with annual evaluations. Clearly the process is formalized and functioning well in some departments, with written feedback provided annually, which the faculty member must sign in acknowledgement of receiving. But this is not true in other cases. Commission members all felt that written feedback on annual evaluations and for the formal two and four year probationary reviews was critical and should not be optional.

   Valerie Hardcastle agreed to write a sentence or two for section 2.9.1 of the Faculty Handbook on annual evaluations requiring that they be done in writing. Kelly pointed out that it will be important to have training for department heads so that they understand the importance of written annual evaluations and the best way to go about providing them to faculty members.

   Hyer agreed to draft some language for section 2.8.2 of the Faculty Handbook concerning the necessity of doing formal probationary reviews for tenure-track faculty and providing constructive feedback in writing as part of their reappointment.

4. The commission then took up the Provost's suggestion about allowing deans to defer their vote on P&T cases on which they have decidedly mixed views, allowing the case to come forward to the university-level committee along with all other cases rather than giving it a negative vote and forcing the faculty member through a formal appeal. This particular suggestion did not have a lot of support, but commission members asked if Dr. McNamee could explain his concerns on October 28th so that they might better understand why this might be useful.

Additional issues on Erikkson's list will be discussed at subsequent meetings.

The next meeting of the Commission will be Friday, October 28th, at 3:00 p.m. in 325 Burruss.

Recorder,

Patricia Hyer

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
October 28, 2005

Members present: Redican, Eriksson, Hagen, Brewster, Kelly, Ball, Hyer, Hardcastle, McNamee, Zahm, Stephens.

Guests: Susan Willis-Walton, Co-Director, Center for Survey Research; Ellen Plummer, Director, Women's Center and representative from the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity; and Peggy Layne, AdvanceVT Project Director.

Redican called the meeting to order with three items on the agenda: 1) Exit Survey Data, 2) Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1, 3) Continuing Discussion of Promotion and Tenure Issues. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Exit Survey Data

Susan Willis-Walton provided a detailed presentation on results of the Faculty Staff Exit Survey. An executive summary of the findings from the 2004 and 2005 administration of the Exit Survey as it pertains to faculty can be found on the Provost's website: http://www.provost.vt.edu/web_pages/Worklife_Documents.html. The executive summary captures much of the detail provided by Willis-Walton's presentation.

Willis-Walton explained that the exit survey findings parallel results from the *AdvanceVT* Work-Life Survey conducted in spring 2005. Significant differences between administrative/professional faculty, research faculty, and tenured and tenure-track faculty on individual survey items were highlighted. Differences within and across faculty type in regard to gender and race were also mentioned. Themes in the survey data as it pertains to responses about job separation circumstances, factors influencing decisions to leave, confidence in university leadership, morale and motivation, communication and opportunities for input, and perception of treatment university-wide were presented. Negative perceptions in regard to salary were pervasive across faculty type. Departmental climate was highlighted through items that asked about perceptions of support, departmental leadership, and relationships with colleagues. Significant differences in perceptions relative to departmental climate were seen between males and females with males reporting more positive experiences. Other items asked about resources, workload and work-life balance, job security, and recognition, promotion, and compensation. CFA members felt the data collected through the Exit Surveys to date would be useful for benchmarking purposes.

Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1

CFA members reviewed a draft revision of the first paragraph of Section 2.9.1 of the Faculty Handbook. After reviewing the draft, several changes were suggested in order to clarify the role of the department head and dean in requiring annual evaluations be done in writing. Members also mentioned it would be useful to include a statement reflecting the role of the personnel committee in fashioning recommendations when appropriate.

The revised draft with the suggested changes incorporated will be circulated prior to the December 2nd CFA meeting.

Discussion of Promotion and Tenure Issues

Revisiting an issue introduced at the last meeting, Provost McNamee suggested allowing deans to defer their vote on P&T cases on which they have decidedly mixed views, allowing the case to come forward to the university-level committee along with all other cases rather than giving it a negative vote and forcing the faculty member through a formal appeal. McNamee explained that he felt appeals should be confined to questions of process and not revisiting the merits of a dossier. By deferring their vote, the dean could seek the advice and review of the university-level committee with full consideration of the merits of the case. After some discussion, CFA members felt there was some merit to the suggestion; however, there were also problems. For example, what do the deans say to candidates about how their case is being handled, and under what conditions is it being forwarded to the university committee? Also, sending it forward in this fashion precludes the faculty member from making their own case in person upon appeal. And they would not have access to an actual appeal, possible leading to grievances that would be difficult to resolve.

Recorder, C. Amelink, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
December 1, 2005

Members present: Redican, Eriksson, Hagen, Ball, Hyer, Hardcastle, Sanders, Robinson

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1, 2) Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Sections 2.3.1.2 and 2.3.1.3 to include Professors of Practice, 3) Draft of Modified Duties Policy, 4) Continuing Discussion of Promotion and Tenure Policy Issues, 5) Meeting Dates and Times for Spring, 2006. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Draft of revision of Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1

Members reviewed revisions to the policy on annual and probationary period evaluations based on feedback from the previous CFA meeting. Members felt language in the policy should be revised further to encourage consistent implementation across departments. Changes in the policy may have implications for the manner in which evaluations are currently handled and result in a cultural shift by requiring more collective input from faculty committees within the department when writing evaluations. Therefore CFA members felt it would be worthwhile to vet the revised draft policy in several locations for a period of comment from college deans and Senate departmental representatives.

Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Sections 2.3.1.2 and 2.3.1.3 to include Professors of Practice

Members reviewed revisions to the policies concerning Visiting Professors and Adjunct Professors to include Professors of Practice. Some CFA members expressed continued concern with introducing the Professor of Practice title in the arts as some faculty believe that it might negatively affect future allocation of tenure-track lines to those department and because they are non-tenure- track appointment, they might provide less protection of academic freedom. Redican suggested it would be better to wait to vote on the revisions as members who had expressed concern were not able to attend the meeting. Other CFA members agreed to postpone definitive action.

Draft of Modified Duties Policy

Hyer provided an overview of the draft Modified Duties Policy as it relates to responding to the need of faculty who are seeking greater flexibility in their careers due to personal and family circumstances. There will be a central fund to help cover the projected cost associated with a change of duties. The policy has been written to accommodate a variety of needs across colleges. Further discussion related to the policy will take place at the *AdvanceVT* conference in January. CFA members are asked to be present so that feedback in regard to the policy can be collected from faculty members in attendance. CFA members suggested there needs to be language incorporated into the policy that provides a timeframe for negotiations. Further suggestions were made to revise the

language so that the policy was as comprehensive as possible, and so that it was clear that deans and department head can provide accommodations even if central funding is not available..

Continuing Discussion of Promotion and Tenure Policy Issues

Given time constraints, this item will be discussed at the next meeting. Eriksson agreed to write draft language regarding representation of deans on promotion and tenure committees that could be reviewed at the next CFA meeting.

Meeting Dates and Times for Spring, 2006

Friday afternoons appear to be a bad time for CFA members as representation at the meetings continues to decline. Redican will send an email note to the CFA listserv with possible meeting dates to get a better idea of when the next meeting will be held.

Recorder,

Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
January 20, 2006

Members present: Redican, Ball, Eriksson, Zahm, Hagen, Hyer, Hardcastle, Sanders, Kelly, Robinson, Stephens, O'Keefe, Porterfield

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1, 2) Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Sections 1.5.1 and 2.13.1, 3) Draft of Modified Duties Policy, 4) Draft revision of Stop the Clock Provisions, 5) Update on Faculty Senate Discussions and approval of 1.5.1 and 2.13.1 6) Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2, 5) Meeting Dates and Times for Spring, 2006. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Draft revision of Faculty Handbook Section 2.9.1 on annual evaluations

Kerry Redican reported on the recent discussion at the Faculty Senate meeting of proposed changes concerning annual and probationary period evaluations. A brief survey was completed by 34 senators with the majority stating that they met with their department head annually and they received a letter about their performance on an annual basis. Senators were generally supportive of the policy revisions proposed by CFA, but were divided about the recommendation to ***require*** involvement of a personnel committee in the annual evaluation of colleagues. Senators thought it would be useful to develop a best practices manual that could be used by department heads to improve annual evaluation processes. Redican will revise the policy to reflect the editorial changes suggested by CFA and the Faculty Senate and circulate the revised draft.

Draft of Modified Duties Policy

Hyer provided an overview of the draft Modified Duties Policy which provides faculty members a reduction in teaching load (or other workload accommodation) for one semester in order to deal with extraordinary personal or family circumstances. A central fund has been proposed to help cover the projected cost for hire behinds. The deans are concerned about allocation of scarce new funding to this proposal, but are supportive of the policy in general. CFA members felt that establishment of a central fund is important to demonstrate administrative support. Further discussion related to the policy will take place at the *AdvanceVT* conference on February 3. CFA members are asked to be present so that feedback in regard to the draft can be collected from conference participants. Redican will notify the Faculty Senate that the draft will be circulated during the Advance event if they would like an opportunity to provide feedback.

Revision of the Stop the Clock Provisions (Faculty Handbook section 2.8.2.1)

Hyer reviewed the suggested changes to the Stop the Clock provision. Commission members remain supportive of the policy revision to make new parents (either mothers or fathers) ***automatically*** eligible for an extension upon completion of a form/notification of

the department head. A few changes were proposed and will be incorporated in the version going to the Advance conference discussion.

Reconciliation Committee and Valid Issues for Grievance (FH sections 1.5.1 and 2.13.1)

Revisions to sections 1.5.1 (charge of the Faculty Senate Reconciliation Committee) and 2.13.1 (Valid Issues for Grievance) were also vetted at the recent Faculty Senate meeting. The discussion at CFA focused on the nature of the formal grievance process which is designed to deal with complaints by faculty members against supervisors or other university administrators. Kevin McDonald, the new director of EO, is leading an effort to create a mediation service, which would be available to help with disputes between colleagues or peers. Ken Eriksson is serving on that planning committee so that the Reconciliation Committee will be well connected with this effort.

CFA members suggested editorial changes to the policies as well as urging more general language to clarify where the reconciliation committee fit in the process. Hyer will revise the language for both sections; CFA will revisit these at the next meeting and approve the change if the revisions are satisfactory.

CFA members agreed that it would be helpful to have a website, eventually, that outlined the different procedures and resources that are available to resolve conflicts, who to contact, and what venue is appropriate for the grievances based on the circumstances.

Draft of Proposed Revision to 2.8.4.2 (College level P&T Evaluation)

Revisions to 2.8.4.2 (College Evaluation) will be discussed at the next meeting due to time constraints. CFA members were provided with a summary of the colleges' committee structures and appointment processes that were collected by the Provost's Office in 2004.

New Business

Based on the procedures outlined in 2.14 in the Faculty Handbook, full-time faculty at Virginia Tech must appeal to the CFA in order to seek approval to enroll in a degree program at Virginia Tech to avoid conflict of interest. After review of the appeal, the CFA must then make a recommendation to the Provost as to whether approval to pursue the degree should be granted or not. CFA members reviewed a recent appeal by a faculty member. Members recommended provisional approval based upon the information they had been provided, and asked that the letter of approval from the Provost simply urge the faculty member to avoid any perception or actual conflict of interest by careful selection of committee members, for example.

Meeting Dates and Times for Spring, 2006

Redican circulated the meeting times and dates for Spring 2006.

Recorder, Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
February 3, 2006

Members present: Redican, Ball, Eriksson, Hagen, Hyer, Hardcastle, Sanders, Kelly, Robinson, Stephens, O'Keefe, Welch, McNamee

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Draft of Modified Duties Policy, 2) Draft revision of Stop the Clock Provisions, 3) Annual Evaluations Update, 4) Discussions and approval of 1.5.1 and 2.13.1, 5) Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Draft of Modified Duties Policy

Hyer and Redican provided an overview of the feedback that was received during the *AdvanceVT* conference session on university policies. During the session a draft of the Modified Duties Policy was circulated for comment. Participants suggested editorial changes so that the policy was as comprehensive as possible. Changes would also allow the policy to be interpreted by faculty in a manner consistent with the policy's objectives.

Draft of Stop the Clock Provisions (2.8.2.1)

Hyer and Redican also reviewed the suggested changes to the Stop the Clock Provision that were collected during the *AdvanceVT* conference session on university policies. Currently the draft Modified Duties policy and Stop the Clock provisions are written to not only address personal concerns of faculty but also addresses faculty concerns related to attending to the needs of immediate family. CFA members discussed whether legal issues could arise from the term 'immediate family' as it is subject to different interpretations. Hyer will work with Linda Woodard, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, to clarify the language and revise the policy so that it is consistent with language used elsewhere in the Faculty Handbook.

Participants in the *AdvanceVT* conference session felt it would be beneficial to monitor how often faculty request a modification of duties or an extension of tenure. Participants felt the decision should be negotiated at the department level but the Provost's Office should have a record of all requests that are made so that the number of approved and denied requests could be monitored. Reasons why faculty are using the policies could also be tracked. Oversight would allow the university to determine whether the policies were being enacted consistently across departments and colleges and whether faculty members were able to utilize the policies. One participant suggested that moving to an electronic form that could be submitted simultaneously to parties involved at the department, college, and university levels would be an ideal way to monitor policy usage. CFA members agreed with this notion. In addition, CFA members agreed the university grievance procedures would provide an adequate measure of recourse if faculty wanted to appeal a denial.

Annual Evaluations Update

CFA members agreed to return to this item on the agenda if time allowed after the other items were covered.

Discussions and approval of 1.5.1 (Reconciliation Committee) and 2.13.1 (Valid Issues for Grievance)

Provost McNamee joined the CFA to provide insight into how grievances are addressed and how the Reconciliation Committee is currently used during the university promotion and tenure process. CFA members highlighted the importance of having appropriate bodies review procedural and merit based issues when an individual files a grievance during the promotion and tenure process.

The draft revision to Section 2.13.1 includes "substantive violations of promotion and tenure *procedures*" as a valid issue for grievance. The expectation is that faculty members would pursue available appeals as described in section 2.8.5 of the Handbook, but they could also file a grievance if their claim included a substantive procedural violation (probably after exhausting P&T appeals). CFA members agreed there is no expectation that the outcome of a grievance would be the granting of tenure, but the grievance process allows a more thorough investigation of irregularities, gathering of relevant documents, hearing of the parties and others who may have relevant information, and an opportunity to uncover serious procedural problems that may exist and should be addressed for consistency across the university. The recommendation would go to the provost who could, in the most egregious cases, convene an ad hoc committee to conduct an independent evaluation of the dossier, if so warranted. The more likely outcome, however, would be identification of problem areas with recommendations for changes. CFA members agreed that the valid issues for grievance as listed in 2.13.1 were satisfactory.

Reviewing a case that has been denied based on merit should be done by a committee that is closely aligned to the faculty member's field and should therefore be reviewed at the department or college level. Based on the discussion, both policies need to be reworked so that they clearly state that promotion and tenure guidelines provide a process to file an appeal based on merit while grievances and appeals based on procedure are handled by the Faculty Reconciliation Committee. Members agreed that the provision to create an ad hoc committee as outlined in Section 2.8.5 of the Faculty Handbook should be dropped from the policy. The concern is providing faculty with different opportunities and venues to pursue his/her appeal that would involve convening additional committees. Hyer will revise and distribute at the next meeting.

Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2

The university-level P&T process has been moving toward the principle that participants vote only once on a case. Revisions to 2.8.4.2 (College Evaluation) make that principle

consistent at all levels, removing department head participation on college committees since they make a separate recommendation at the department level. CFA members agreed that wording in the policy should be revised so that it is clear deans and department heads could not serve on college level review committees. A representative from each department should serve on the committee and members should be chosen by either elections or a faculty-approved selection process. The committee should be chaired by a faculty member who does not hold the role of dean or department head. Language should also be included to make it clear that the college committee and the dean prepare independent recommendations. Language in the policy will be revised based on the discussion and brought before the CFA for review and approval.

Recorder,
Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
February 17, 2006

Members present: Redican, Ball, Eriksson, Hagen, Sanders, Kelly, Robinson, Stephens, O'Keefe, Brewster, Zahm, Burch-Brown

Redican called the meeting to order with five items on the agenda: 1) Update on Modified Duties Policy, 2) Update on Stop the Clock Provisions, 3) Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2, 4) Discussions and approval of 1.5.1 and 2.13.1, 5) 4) Annual Evaluations Update. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Update on Modified Duties Policy and Stop the Clock Provisions

Redican informed CFA members that the draft Stop the Clock provisions have been sent to legal counsel for review. The President felt it was necessary to have counsel review the changes to avoid any problems. The Modified Duties Policy is currently being examined as well as to make sure the central funding outlined in the document will be available before the policy goes further.

Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2 (College Evaluation for Promotion and Tenure)

CFA members reviewed revisions to the policy. A considerable amount of discussion among members focused on whether the policy needs further revision so that the process is more easily understood by faculty undergoing review, is more transparent, and creates greater consistency in regard to how colleges handle review of appeals. CFA members agreed that denial at the department level and subsequent appeals to the college-level should be reviewed by the college-level promotion and tenure committee rather than an ad hoc committee. Members emphasized the importance of having department and college-level promotion and tenure committees review the merit of cases as they are the best qualified to do so. In addition, a process that requires the university-level promotion and tenure committee to spend a substantial amount of time reviewing and making a final decision on marginal cases would do a disservice to the promotion and tenure process as a whole and to the university. Due to the amount of discussion surrounding these issues and the implications revising 2.8.4.2 has for other related policies in the Faculty Handbook, CFA members agreed the process should be examined in its totality. Having a flowchart would greatly aid the discussion and would illuminate improvements that could be made to the current process.

CFA members agreed to return to other items on the agenda at the next meeting as time would not allow for an in-depth discussion.

Recorder,
Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
March 17, 2006

Members present: Redican, Ball, Eriksson, Hagen, Sanders, Kelly, Robinson, Stephens, O'Keefe, Hyer, Welch
Guest: Bernice Hausman, Associate Professor, Department of English and chair of the Committee on Faculty Ethics

Redican called the meeting to order with six items on the agenda: 1) Update on Modified Duties Policy and Stop the Clock, 2) Faculty Ethics, 3) Discussions and approval of revisions of sections 1.5.1 and 2.13.1 of the Faculty Handbook, 4) Continuation of discussion of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2, 5) Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity Resolution 2005-06A, Reporting Diversity-Related Activities on Faculty Activities Reports, and 6) University Libraries CFA Membership Request. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Update on Modified Duties Policy and Stop the Clock Provisions

President Steger has suggested several modifications to the policies. The Stop the Clock policy currently states that a faculty member will notify administration if they are enacting the Stop the Clock provision for childbirth. President Steger has asked that 'notify' be changed to request. In addition, review by legal counsel has highlighted the need to require medical documentation for requests based on medical reasons. Language was added to the policy to clarify how stopping the clock affects probationary reviews. CFA members agreed to the changes.

Faculty Ethics

Bernice Hausman, chair of the Committee on Faculty Ethics (CFE) explained proposed changes for sections 1.5.3 (describing the Committee on Faculty Ethics) and 2.7 (Professional Responsibility and Conduct) of the Faculty Handbook. Additional language has been added to section 1.5.3 to address conflicts of interest that involve faculty members who serve on CFE and language has been revised to address confidentiality of communications. Section 2.7 has been reorganized so that the scholarly misconduct policy is clearly identified as a type of unethical behavior and the policy comes immediately after the "Statement of Principles of Ethical Behavior," to emphasize this point.

In addition, revisions to the scholarly misconduct policy clarifies the role that the CFE plays in the process. The CFE chair receive reports and appoints a nonvoting participant to panels of inquiry to facilitate communication between different groups investigating an accusation. CFA members agreed in principle with revisions with the exception of language that has been added to address security of electronic communications. CFA members suggested leaving the policy as it is currently written as it seems to create an

efficient process that is already confidential and proposed changes would create unnecessary confusion.

Hyer and other members of the commission will review the proposed changes and follow up with Hausman if there are substantive concerns. Hausman will present the changes to university legal counsel for review and circulate any suggested changes among CFA members for additional comment before voting on revisions during the March 31st CFA meeting.

Draft of proposed revision to 2.8.4.2

CFA members reviewed revisions that have been made to 1.51. and 2.13.1 regarding promotion and tenure committee composition and the promotion and tenure process. A flowchart that reflects the current and proposed processes was circulated for comment. CFA members agreed the flowchart was helpful and made changes that would clarify the process further. Revisions to the policy include directing appeals based on procedural violations to the Faculty Grievance Committee and removing the option to create an ad hoc committee at either the college or university level should procedural issues have tainted the process. At the final stage, in cases where the university-level committee supports the recommendation for tenure and the Provost denies it, the appeal would go directly to the President rather than going through the Faculty Review Committee first.

CFA members also reviewed the changes outlined for promotion and tenure committee composition that limits the role of the department head on department and college-level review committees. Following a motion to vote on the suggested revisions with editorial changes, CFA members voted and unanimously approved the changes. The resolution will be sent to University Council for first reading.

Discussions and Approval of 1.5.1 and 2.13.1

Eriksson presented and explained the changes that have been made to 1.5.1 and 2.13.1 to clarify the role of the Committee on Reconciliation including a revision of the list of valid issues for grievance. Editorial changes were suggested to maintain clarity and consistency across policies. CFA members voted unanimously to approve the changes with the additional editorial corrections. The resolutions will be sent to University Council for first reading.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity Resolution 2005-06A, Reporting Diversity-Related Activities on Faculty Activity Reports

Hyer explained that the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) has approved a resolution to address the reporting of diversity activities on Faculty Activity Reports (FARs). The CEOD felt that it is important to have all colleges require the reporting of diversity-related accomplishments on FARs as diversity is a university priority. The CEOD suggested it would also be helpful to work with several groups on campus to provide examples and resources of specific activities that could be included on

FARs that would fulfill this reporting area. CFA members agreed that the educational piece was an important component and would ensure appropriate information is included when faculty do their reports. Including this on FARs could also create opportunities for conversations between faculty and administration. Following a motion to vote, CFA members voted unanimously to endorse the resolution.

Designated Slot for Library Faculty Representative on CFA

Redican shared a request from the library faculty association chair asking that a representative from the university libraries be included on CFA. Following discussion of the request, CFA members determined it would not be appropriate to designate a slot for a library representative. CFA membership is derived from the Faculty Senate as a whole, and slots are not allocated by colleges. The library faculty association is represented on Faculty Senate and their representative is free to volunteer to serve on CFA if interested. Kerry will encourage the Library Faculty Association to pursue this route to membership on CFA if that is a priority. Librarians have served as members and chairs of CFA in years past.

Recorder,
Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
March 31, 2006

Members present: Redican, Brewster, Welch, Sanders, Eriksson, Kelly, Stephens, O'Keefe, Hyer, Ball, Hardcastle, Zahm

Guest: Sam Easterling, member of University Council, and past President of Faculty Senate

Redican called the meeting to order with four items on the agenda: 1) Update and discussion on resolutions going before University Council, 2) Update on Committee on Faculty Ethics, 3) Update on Diversity-Related Activities on Faculty Activity Reports, 4) Annual Evaluations. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Resolutions Going Before University Council

Five resolutions, as approved by CFA, are scheduled to go before University Council on April 3. In reading material for that meeting, Sam Easterling, past President of the Faculty Senate, expressed concern about several of the resolutions that were being introduced. Easterling expressed support for resolutions CFA 2005-2006A (Stop the Clock) and CFA 2005-2006B (Modified Duties) as they are currently written with minor editorial changes suggested to resolution B. With regard to CFA 2005-2006C concerning departmental and college P&T committee composition, Easterling expressed concern about the lack of consistency in the way policy guidelines are applied across department, college, and university levels. For example, CFA removed the department heads from college committees, but left the deans on the university-level committee. Also, the deans can attend the college committee deliberations, but department heads cannot. Easterling cautioned against removing the department head's ability to participate and vote at the college level, as there are several colleges that currently follow this practice and it works well for them.

Another issue raised was the seeming inconsistency between an existing statement suggesting that these are "guidelines" open to variation, yet they read as prescriptions. Easterling thought this should be clarified. If CFA was really looking to have these practices adopted uniformly, then the guideline language should be removed.

CFA members were in agreement that no one should have two votes during the promotion and tenure process and explained that they were looking to create a policy that was prescriptive in nature to ensure better consistency across colleges and departments. CFA had discussed the involvement of department heads on college committees at length, and did not agree with Easterling that they should remain as voting (or non-voting) participants.

Redican agreed to provide additional opportunity for the Faculty Senate to discuss the resolution at their meeting on April 11. He will ask that the University Council to defer

the second reading of the policy. CFA meets again on April 21, so additional comments can be dealt with at that time and revisions made if appropriate, or the resolution can be postponed until fall if issues cannot be resolved.

With regard to resolutions D and E, Easterling asked that resolution D clarify that the Committee on Reconciliation does not stay involved in a case that moves forward with the grievance procedure if reconciliation is not possible. Changes to resolution E were suggested to clarify the role of the Faculty Review Committee, however, CFA members felt that the resolution was sufficiently clear as it is currently written.

Faculty Ethics

Bernice Hausman, chair of the Committee on Faculty Ethics (CFE) joined the previous CFA meeting to highlight changes that the CFE would like to see made to Faculty Handbook sections 1.5.3 and 2.7. Hyer explained that editorial changes as discussed at the previous meeting could be made to section 1.5.3 by authorizing the Provost's Office to incorporate the changes in the next round of revisions to the Handbook. However, the scholarly misconduct policy (section 2.7) turned out to present larger issues, including how to deal with the growing number of research faculty who do not report through a college dean (the entire policy assumes the college deans will be in charge) and concern about whether deans are the most appropriate administrators to head up sensitive investigations of allegations of scholarly misconduct. The Research Division might be in a better position to manage such investigations. As further discussion is needed surrounding the scholarly misconduct policy, only the editorial changes to section 1.5.3 will be made at this time. CFA members agreed with the editorial changes and authorized the Provost's Office to make these during summer 2006.

Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity Resolution 2005-06A, Reporting Diversity-Related Activities on Faculty Activities Reports

Hyer explained that some feedback was collected by Valerie Hardcastle on the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) resolution to address the reporting of diversity activities on Faculty Activities Reports (FARs). Comments received highlighted concerns with the appropriateness of reporting and being held accountable for diversity-related activities. CFA concurred that including this on FARs was still important for the reasons highlighted during the last meeting as well as the fact it is already a section of the P&T dossier that faculty members are expected to complete.

Annual Evaluations

Feedback has also been received on the resolution concerning annual evaluations. While some colleges already use an appropriately charged faculty committee to conduct annual evaluations, other colleges leave it to individual department heads. CFA members agreed that a committee would allow junior faculty to receive multiple perspectives and feedback. The policy changes suggested would also allow for greater consistency across departments and colleges and ensure consistency in cases where a department head might

turn over frequently. CFA members also felt the policy should include a statement that written feedback should address teaching, research, and service obligations.

Redican called the meeting to closure due to time constraints. CFA will meet again on April 21, 2006.

Recorder,Catherine Amelink

Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
April 21, 2006

Members present: Redican, O'Keefe, Zahm, Hyer, Roberts, Eriksson, Porterfield, Hardcastle, Stephens, Hagen, Welch

Redican called the meeting to order with three items on the agenda: 1) Update on University Council Actions and discussion of comments received on promotion and tenure related issues, 2) Summary of 2005-2006 CFA Actions, 3) 2006-2007 CFA Issues and Planning. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

University Council Actions

Redican explained that the Stop the Clock and Modified Duties resolutions were approved by University Council. The resolution dealing with 2.8.4.2, Promotion and Tenure committees, was withdrawn. Feedback gathered from the Faculty Senate and department heads in some colleges suggested that some prefer to allow the department heads to participate in college-level promotion and tenure committee deliberations. CFA members agreed that department heads could gain a great deal from sitting in and listening at the college-level deliberations, but department heads should not have more than one vote during the promotion and tenure process. A few colleges appear to allow a more active role for department head, by chairing the department level committee, writing a separate letter that becomes part of the dossier, and also voting at the college level. Additional feedback also revealed that some deans chair the college level committee, write a separate letter, or in one case, write the letter for the college committee (not a separate letter). CFA members continued to express concern that these practices could result in the perception, if not the fact of undue influence on the part of the department head and/or dean.

CFA members discussed the pluses and minuses of a college level committee that was completely independent from the department and the need to create procedural consistency across colleges. Establishing the principle that each participant is allowed one vote is an important part of creating that independence and consistency. In addition, the resolution currently states that at least two-thirds of the college level committee must be faculty representatives – this would change the size and balance on those college committees that currently include department heads.

To gather further feedback from faculty members, it was suggested that all tenured and tenure-track faculty be asked to respond to a brief survey on survey.vt.edu in early fall that would ask for their input on five or six basic propositions that would guide the rewriting of the P&T guidelines. These principles could also be sent to college association chairs or faculty senators in colleges that do not have an association to collect definitive feedback. The statement of principles would include a sentence or two about what each is trying to accomplish. It would be ideal to have the survey ready for the first faculty senate meeting in August.

The resolutions addressing the Reconciliation Committee (1.5.1) and Valid Issues for Grievance (2.13.1) were also withdrawn at University Council. Opposition was raised to the listing of valid issues for grievance, including using the grievance process in cases of P&T process problems. One approach is to leave P&T issues as non-grievable, but to expand the definition of what issues might be ***appealed*** through the regular P&T process. Another suggestion was to explicitly state that pursuing process violations through the grievance process would not result in the granting of tenure. Some members believe that faculty members pursuing such claims are looking for redress rather than believing that the negative tenure decision would be overturned.

The revisions to section 1.5.1 were viewed as entirely editorial. Since they only make reference to the valid issues for grievance by citing the section of the Faculty Handbook, CFA members felt it appropriate to direct the Provost's Office to make changes to the Faculty Handbook during the annual summer revision process and not to deal with the changes through resolution format.

Summary of 2005-2006 CFA Actions and Planning Ahead

Redican summarized the accomplishments of the CFA during 2005 -2006, which were considerable: eliminating the quota for research assignments, approval of more flexible policies on modified duties and stop the clock, and significant discussion on issues of faculty evaluation and promotion and tenure, among other things. These latter issues will be carried forward to next year's agenda.

Two CFA members need to be represented on two university level committees/commissions. Zahm will serve on the Employee Benefits Committee and Hardcastle will serve on the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity.

Recorder, Catherine Amelink