Present: 24 October 2007
Dean Von Dras (Chair) 3:15 pm, CL 825
Steven Meyer
Illene Noppe
Terence O’Grady
Laura Riddle
Previous Meeting: 10 October 2007
Kevin Roeder
Dan McIver (Academic Staff representative)
Rick Staley (Student Government representative)

Guests: Provost Sue Hammersmith, Dean Scott Furlong, Professors Steve Dutch and Heidi Fencl

1) The minutes of 10 October 2007 were approved.

2) Information Exchange with Provost Sue Hammersmith
The Provost summarized the relatively good news contained in the recently passed state budget. She also referenced the continuing progress being made in establishing a common meeting time within the new 14-week schedule.

The discussion then turned to ways in which the faculty might have more direct and consistent input to university-wide planning and budgeting processes. The Provost suggested that input from the Senate Budget and Planning Committee on phases two & three of the growth agenda would be very valuable. She also made the point that the Committee could be a great asset to the planning process by articulating the most pressing needs and priorities of the faculty as a whole. She underlined the fact that this would be a formidable task since the Committee would have to seek input from the faculty before making any recommendations, but concluded that this would be a significant contribution to the budget process.

3) Continuing Business

a) The modifications in code regarding the AAC and the GEC and their relationship to the Faculty Senate were discussed further. Changes will be made to the proposed language based on input from senators at the last Senate meeting and Tim Sewall. Further changes will be made so that the treatment of the GEC is more completely parallel with the AAC.
b) Leave Coverage
  Dean Furlong, last year’s UC chair and the person with the most direct involvement in this matter, joined the UC for a discussion of the UW-System’s request for a response to possible alternatives to the present policies regarding faculty’s reporting of sick leave and colleague coverage. The UC decided to respond to UW-System on two issues. First, the UC decided to recommend that no changes be made in the current policy of colleague coverage. It is, as several members pointed out, more of a student benefit (i.e., that classes be covered rather than cancelled whenever possible) more than a faculty one. The UC also agreed to support the position that collegial coverage does not cancel the necessity of reporting absences due to illness. Second, the UC agreed to recommend that monthly sick leave reports should be made during sabbaticals so that sick leave credit will continue to accrue during that time.

4) New Business

The UC was joined by Professors Dutch and Fencl, both members of the Institutional Assessment Committee. The two Committee members explained the process through which the Committee had arrived at its conclusions, both in regard to the adoption of the Rutgers University Student Instructional Rating form for a pilot study beginning in spring 2008 and in regard to their recommendations to academic units evaluating teaching. A lively discussion ensued, with Professor Fencl emphasizing the importance of using four dimensions or criteria to evaluate teaching rather than the one provided by either the standard CCQs or the new Rutgers form.

The next Faculty Senate meeting will be moved to November 14 so as not to conflict with the Thanksgiving break.

The next UC meeting will be October 31 at 3:15 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terence O’Grady, secretary pro tempore