Commission on Faculty Affairs
Minutes
December 8, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Hyer, Lener, Easterling, Brewster, Eriksson, Hagen, Sanders, and Ball

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with four agenda items: 1) Update on CFA Resolution on Faculty Grievances, 2) Update on SPOI Initiatives, 3) Schedule for Spring Semester, and 4) Discussion of Annual Evaluations for Faculty.

The minutes were approved with one correction (“members” misspelled in the last line). The agenda was approved with one addition (Update on Professors of Practice Resolution).

UPDATE ON CFA RESOLUTION ON FACULTY GRIEVANCES
University Council approved the Resolution on Faculty Grievances with little discussion. The resolution will be sent to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

UPDATE ON SPOI INITIATIVES
A meeting was held with the major stakeholders to discuss how to move forward with Balci’s resolution. The provost will be asked to establish a task force. With the assistance from members of the Faculty Senate and Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, this task force will be charged with identifying how the SPOI is currently being used, what messages are being conveyed by what is currently being measured compared to what we want to foster in good pedagogy at Virginia Tech. The task force will then work on implementation of a new system with faculty and administrative input.

SCHEDULE FOR SPRING SEMESTER
The calendar for next spring will be emailed shortly after the meeting. The meeting time will remain the same, 1:00pm on Fridays. The following dates were confirmed: January 26, 2007, February 2, 2007, February 16, 2007, and February 23, 2007.

DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL AND PROBATIONARY EVALUATIONS FOR FACULTY
Hardcastle presented draft revised language for the Annual Evaluation and Salary Adjustment section of the Handbook. A number of suggestions were made. Hyer was charged with capturing the changes and providing a new version at the next meeting of CFA in spring term.

In regards to probationary faculty evaluations, the following feedback was provided:

- Evaluations should be conducted at either years 2 & 4 or 3 & 5
• Evaluations should be conducted by a committee; departments are encouraged to provide as much feedback as possible; feedback should be ongoing and continuous
• Peer evaluation of teaching must occur, as well as student appraisal of teaching
• Recommend using the P&T format to track activities
• Due to the possibility of legal issues, there is hesitation with departmentally mandated mentoring; however, some form of mentoring is encouraged.
• Consideration was given to providing workshops (possibly with faculty senate) on how to perform an effective peer review
• The 4th year review should be substantive and thorough
• Written feedback is critical and the faculty member being evaluated should receive recommendations
• The pre-tenure process is one of mutual responsibility. The faculty member should also be responsible for seeking feedback and mentoring opportunities.
• Minimum and consistent written standards should be maintained by the P&T committee through whatever mechanism the college identifies.

Hardcastle will work on a revision concerning probationary reviews for junior faculty.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost