

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA
Executive Council Minutes
MAY 27, 2009
CP 206C

The meeting was called to order at 12:35 p.m.

Attendance: Chair, Michael Forman, Vice Chair, Johann Reusch, Gregory Benner, Siân Davies-Vollum, Marjorie Dobratz, Janice Laakso, Josh Tenenberg

Guest: Anne Beaufort

Synopsis:

1. Approval of agenda
2. Approval of minutes from May 13, 2009
3. Anne Beaufort (UWT Writing Council): “W” Policy
4. Report from the Chair: Carry Forward money and legislation
5. Legislation from Faculty Committee on Appointment Tenure and Promotion
6. Adjournment

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1. The agenda was approved with the proviso that Anne Beaufort might be late, in which case the report from the chair would become item # 3.
 2. The minutes from May 13, 2009 were approved.
 3. Report from Chair Michael Forman on Carry Forward Funds and faculty Legislation
 - A) On May 19, Forman met with Chancellor Patricia Spakes, VCAA Beth Rushing, and Cheryl Greengrove (Interim Director of IAS). The main subject of this meeting was the carry forward money policy which had been discussed at the May 14 meeting of Faculty Assembly. Chancellor Spakes called this meeting to clarify issues. A frank discussion was held. Forman and Greengrove later agreed that this had been a very useful and potentially productive meeting. The following summarizes Forman’s recollections of this May 19th meeting
 - a. The Chancellor’s policy is “to sweep up” any funds remaining in unit budgets at the end of the current fiscal biennium (June 30th). Sixty percent of these funds will be held centrally, with much of this going to replenish the UWT reserve accounts. The remaining 40% will be redistributed among vice-chancellor units. Vice-Chancellor Rushing will thereafter decide how and when to reallocate her portion of the funds among Academic Affairs units. None of the funds will likely be available until later in October.
 - b. The policy on Procard spending limits is associated with the “sweep” policy.

- c. Part of the difference between the carry forward policies of the Seattle campus (there, units will keep any balance at the end of the biennium) and those of Tacoma is due to the fact that Tacoma does not have ready access to UW-Seattle reserves.
- d. While all parties agree on the need for a reserve, there was disagreement over its size. The decision, however, is ultimately the Chancellor's to make who bases hers on recommendations by Moody's.
- e. Historically, according to the Chancellor, sweeps such as this have happened every year and been used primarily to enhance the reserve funds. The only difference this time is that 40% of funds will be returned to vice-chancellor units.
- f. Also discussed at this meeting were the role and composition of the Chancellor's Management Team. It consists largely of Vice Chancellors. The confidentiality of these meetings is required because this is where the rough draft of policies is first aired and these may never go any further. Forman and Greengrove agreed that this was appropriate.
- g. At the same time, the discussion suggested that better communication between Faculty leadership, the directors and the Chancellor would result if mechanisms for linking these groups with the Management Team were developed. Several options were explored. Chancellor Spakes proposed that a retreat involving Faculty leadership, the directors, and her Management Team be held during the summer, probably in July. The goal of this retreat would be to develop new mechanisms of interaction and to discuss the role of groups such as the campus Budget Committee.
- h. The dissemination of budget information was also discussed. One conclusion all seemed to share is that different constituencies both need and can use different levels of budgetary information. For example, faculty are primarily interested in the big picture. Faculty leadership, in their advisory role, need more detail and especially information about process and resources. Directors need a great of detail. Ysabel Trinidad will work on improving the ease and accessibility of budget information.
 - a) Several committee members commented that unspent funds had not been recouped centrally last year. They also said their impression was that this had never been done.
- i. Forman recommended that the incoming Faculty leadership and next year's EC follow up about this discussion.

B) Faculty Legislation: Forman reported that he had asked committee chairs to report all policy decisions so the EC might review them and put them up for a faculty vote. This is the only way committee decisions become legislation. Two such proposals will be discussed today. Proposals which did not arrive will have to wait until the next meeting (June 10th) or next year.

C) Laakso asked about the Faculty retreat. Johann Reusch pointed out that funds for this purpose had been cut from next year's budget. Star Angelina Murray, Faculty Assembly office assistant, suggested using remaining money

from the current budget. If this is allowed, she will start planning a retreat in Tacoma with an emphasis on the budget constraints.

4. Anne Beaufort appeared on behalf of the UWT Writing Council, to explain its proposal for a new “W” course designation policy.
Forman explained that this proposal had been first sent to the Academic Policy Committee. This body, however, was unable to find a time when all members could meet. Committee chair George Mobus and Michael Forman agreed to move this discussion directly to the EC
The EC was given two documents to explain the proposed “W” policy change one reviewed the policy and the other discussed the rationale. (Please review Exhibit A and B).
 - a. Beaufort explained that the existing policy was constructed in the early ‘90s and does not meet the current best practices standards. It also does not allow for the much broader variety of academic programs and curricula on our campus today.
 - b. Part of Beaufort’s role as Cross Campus Writing Coordinator is to review the existing writing practices.
 - c. The changes will be easier to implement and more realistic for faculty.
 - d. The emphasis will be on out of class writing assignments
 - e. This will encourage better writing skills.
 - f. The changes will help students with writing expression
 - g. While journals are a useful pedagogy, their use will not meet the criteria for a W designation for a class.
 - h. Feedback is one of the most useful practices for teaching and learning writing. Some of this feedback may come in the form of comments on paper, but these are more useful when they are limited to two or three major issues. Peer feedback is also useful.
 - i. The opportunity for revision is crucial to best practices in the teaching of writing.
 - j. While the Writing Council recognizes the importance and usefulness of longer paper assignments, it urges faculty to consider that, from the point of view of teaching and learning writing skills, shorter papers or assignments that allow for revision are preferable
 - k. Laakso noted that the new policy would make writing instruction more practical with larger classes. Davies Vollum suggested that peer reviews can be a work around with larger classes.
 - l. Reusch suggested that drafts be optional for confident students. Beaufort suggested that Katie Baird’s idea of using two pages of a larger paper in peer reviews is a good tool.
 - m. Forman asked about a central location where faculty can access Beaufort’s writing tools. Beaufort advised that she is the process of building a website
 - n. Laakso asked about ESL writing issues. Beaufort clarified that this is a separate issue, not covered in this policy. ESL students' writing skills vary;

some have serious issues, while others can be re-directed. There may be two issues for ESL students; the English language and the writing process.

- o. Reusch asked about the The Learning (Writing) Center. Beaufort clarified that she has no official relationship with the TLC
- p. Beaufort urged that faculty consider the context of the class; the appropriate time spent on writing
- q. Beaufort also pointed out that part of class time should be spent on ungraded writing. Research shows that this is a valuable tool. Josh Tenenberg noted the Beaufort's level of expertise shows with this policy with the strengths shown in the rationale and the level of faculty freedom to implement this. Tenenberg suggested that Beaufort included some short models about other faculty use in implementation. Gregory Benner suggested that technological tools, such as audio or authentic writing tools might be something to also implement.

Action: Forman will revise the rationale statement and reframe the proposal for a faculty vote following EC discussion via e-mail.

5. Legislation from the Faculty Committee on Appointment Tenure and Promotion

Action: Josh Tenenberg suggested that “there should be a log denoting the committees’ approval of the inclusion.” The faculty unanimously approved the policy with the revision. Forman will prepare for a vote with a view to its inclusion in the UWT Handbook.

6. The meeting adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

‘Exhibit A’

Proposed New UW Tacoma Policy for W-Course Designation

UW Tacoma faculty are committed to encouraging the development of writing skills, including formal W courses, as well as other types and levels of writing across the curriculum. To ensure that students take classes that have more intensive levels of writing, students are required to take one course designated as C (composition) and two courses designated as W (writing) to complete their bachelor’s degrees.

To be designated as a W course, the course must include:

1. Out-of-class writing assignments in appropriate discipline-specific genres that account for 30% or more of the final grade, including either:
 - At least two shorter writing projects (3-5 pages each), OR
 - One longer writing project that includes developmental feedback during the term, such as instructor-supported pre-writing, drafting, peer review.
2. Student revision of at least some portion of his/her writing. A revision process is important in order for students to reflect on writing feedback.
3. Feedback on writing from the faculty member for out-of-class writing projects. Writing feedback should be limited to 2 or 3 areas for improvement (research shows this strategy to be most effective for improving student skills).
4. Some class time dedicated to building writing skills needed for success in projects, for example, critical analysis skills appropriate to the subject matter, knowledge of genre conventions of the project, research skills as needed, standard conventions for paragraphing, etc.
5. Occasional, brief, in-class, ungraded writing to promote critical thinking, fluency, and increased retention of subject matter. Examples of such writing may include responses to questions posed in class or summaries of key ideas from a discussion.

Not all courses that include writing assignments qualify as W courses. Only those meeting the criteria above should be so designated. The faculty of each program or school should ensure that sufficient W courses are offered each year to allow students to meet W course requirements.

‘Exhibit B’

PROPOSED POLICY ON ADDING MATERIAL TO T&P FILES

Rationale: Currently there are no policies or guidelines at UW Tacoma that address the ability of candidates to add material to their tenure and promotion file during the review process. This lack of direction for candidates has created numerous problems with regard to consistency in the review process, as well as burdening staff when candidates wish to continually add, what is often, superfluous material. The file one review body sees is “different” from another body when material is continually added to the file. This problem is further complicated by the inability of most reviewing bodies to discern what material is added after the file is submitted.

Proposed Policy: At the time a candidate’s file for tenure and or promotion is evaluated by the review committee, no additional material can be added to the file except:

1. When the material to be added is considered an important and substantive update to the candidate’s scholarly record; and
2. A specific request for this addition is made or approved by one of the review committees, and the request is in writing and becomes part of the record; and
3. Any materials added after the faculty vote by the candidate’s home department should be clearly annotated including the request to add material, and the date the material is added. All materials shall be placed in a separate folder and labeled as such, making it clear the material is an addendum. There should be a log denoting the committee’s approval of the inclusion.