

Governance and Personnel Policy Committee of Faculty Senate  
Tuesday, September 12, 2017  
Faculty Collaborative Conference Room, D.H. Hill

Attendees: Alton Banks, Karen Bullock, Marina Bykova, Kerry Havner, Paul Huffman, Bryan Lafitree, Doug Pearce, Ron Sederoff, Phil Sannes

Guest: Dr. Courtney Thornton, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Personnel and Policy

- Dr. Thornton was welcomed to the meeting, and asked about the issues surrounding errors discovered in the start dates for tenure track faculty. The investigation is on-going, but the problems appear rooted in the uneven history of record management practices within departments and colleges, and overall decentralization issues. The data is there, but its accuracy must be examined and in the end will be corrected as needed. A question was raised about an earlier provost's report on the topic and its availability. Courtney said she'd look into it.
- The discussion moved to the issue of faculty retention, which was one of the reasons for inviting Courtney to the meeting. Two factors that were recognized as contributing to the capacity to retain good people were the quality of the environment and roadblocks to productivity. It was stated that environments are often hostile and unsupportive. It was suggested that if it is not STEM related, it's not supported. The question of where our problem areas in retention might be? It may not be surprising that some colleges are more likely to have their best members "poached", while there are departments/colleges that have difficulty in attracting the best from other institutions. The Chancellor's University Scholars Program was launched to promote retention of faculty at risk of leaving, and the question was raised about whether or not it has been successful doing so? Are there statistical data on this? With regards to productivity, it was suggested that the lack of local level (departmental/college?) support are probable contributors to the problem. There should be more encouragement (reward?) for external collaboration and support.
- Some potentially credible solutions to this issue were entertained. One was organizing an aggressive external mentorship program for young faculty. This might entail enlisting top individuals in a field coming to campus, presenting seminars, and engaging/advising faculty. Another was developing a strong child day care program.
- The meeting closed with a discussion for future topics for future meetings, and including a more in depth examination of job satisfaction and our academic environment and how these can be improved. Another related to the new practice of staff having to "clock-in and out" of the work place, and whether this has engendered a positive environment.