

Library Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

1 December 2009, 2:00 p.m., Room 218, Poynter Library

Librarians Present: Deborah Henry, Tina Neville, Jerry Notaro, Kaya Van Beynen, Jim Schnur

Regrets: Patricia Pettijohn

Guests: Carol Hixson

Meeting: Called to order at 2:04 p.m. by Deb

Minutes: Minutes of November 3 meeting approved on 1st by Tina and 2nd by Jerry. *Motion carried unanimously.*

Old Business

Deferred until later in the meeting to allow for a discussion involving the Dean.

New Business:

Expectations of Librarians' Professional Development and Support: Dean Carol Hixson met with LFC members to discuss matters related to professional development and support within the context of the University's expectations of research, scholarship, and/or creative activity by library faculty. Carol stated that she interprets these expectations broadly and in a way that allows for individuals to pursue different alternatives than traditional measures of scholarly output. This perspective goes beyond the narrower view that research, scholarship, and creative activity should be evaluated primarily through publication in refereed monographs and/or journals, grant productivity, or other measures generally performed by tenure-track faculty. We cannot expect librarians to be held to the same levels of scholarly productivity, community service, or pursuit of external sponsorships and resources that may be appropriate for faculty on tenure clocks with release time, sabbaticals, reduced course loads, or other incentives unavailable to library faculty. As a Council, the librarians could decide to enforce a narrower definition, but Carol made it clear that she is comfortable with one that provides flexibility for the varied talents and assignments of the individual librarians. All were in agreement that librarians have had to put in forty (or more) hours per week and there is little (if any) time set aside for research.

Methods of Explaining Our Expectations to External Reviewers: One possible concern would be devising a method to inform external reviewers of the standards of research, scholarship, and/or creative activity expected of our library faculty when considering suitability for promotion. Part of this is addressed by the candidate and Dean selecting external reviewers who have an understanding of our condition of employment (i.e., not eligible for tenure). Once packets are sent out to external reviewers, we should also include a statement explaining the latitude permissible for research, scholarship, and creative activity so that the reviewers may make evaluative statements understanding the value of these activities within our library.

Blurred Lines between Service and Research: The conversation also addressed that professional involvement in societies, organizations, or other creative activities may begin as a service commitment but evolve into a more substantial activity. For example, a member of FLA who takes on duties to put together a program or assist in an annual meeting may have duties that fall on both sides of the fence. These categories cannot be considered a black-or-white issue. Librarians must take responsibility to present themselves in the best positive light and to explain (in promotion packets, annual reviews, and elsewhere) how their involvement played a substantial role or served as broader purpose.

Library Faculty and Other Faculty at USF St. Petersburg: Finally, the conversation focused on the evolving nature of faculty research and scholarship expectations as the mission of USF St. Petersburg continues to evolve. Unlike the Tampa campus with its abundance of Ph.D. programs, the academic focus at USF St. Petersburg is undergraduate teaching with some limited programs at the master's level. We best fit into an arrangement that emphasizes faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity within the context of the teacher-scholar relationship (evidence of how our "teaching" activities in our primary assigned duties enhance scholarship). This differs greatly from the "Research I" emphasis that is more appropriate for many academic units on the Tampa campus. We have a different mandate than USF Tampa. Fortunately, the flexibility that the teacher-scholar approach offers corresponds with the less rigid view of research, scholarship, and creative activity that we embrace in the library. Also, as a final point of discussion, Carol emphasized that our primary duties as librarians were of the greatest importance.

With Carol departing from the room after this discussion (and prior to the approval of meeting minutes or discussion of any old or other new business items), the meeting continued as follows:

Old Business:

Annual Review Guidelines/Revisions: With Patricia unable to attend the meeting, all were in agreement that this would be deferred until a later date. With winter break approaching and staggered annual leave requests, those in attendance discussed possible dates.

Motion to recommend the deferral of this agenda item until such time that all LFC members can attend, at or prior to the 5 January 2010 meeting, with possible alternative dates of December 4, December 7, or December 9. Motion made by Jim and seconded by Kaya. Motion carried unanimously.

Use of Campus Computers/Data Collection: Librarians have regularly logged computer use within the building and at the computer labs on campus since early 2009. All were in agreement that we will end this data collection at the end of the fall semester on December 11. We will notify Carol that we have finished collecting data.

New Business, continued

Meeting with President Genshaft: Librarians involved with faculty governance committees briefly discussed their group meetings with President Genshaft regarding the continued status of Margaret Sullivan as Interim Regional Chancellor.

Future Tasks or Projects We Need to Consider: Deb suggested that we may want to consider developing bylaws or governance documents specific to our purpose and mandate. Other suggestions were solicited.

Future Reporting/Meetings: For those months when we have little to report on except for reports from other committees, there was a consensus that we should continue to set aside time in advance for LFC meetings and that those time periods could also serve as an appropriate meeting time for in-service training sessions, brown bag programs, etc., as necessary and appropriate.

Reports

Budget Council: Jerry reported that there have been no new meetings this academic year.

Enrollment Management: Jerry said that Noreen Noonan and Linda Crossman (registrar) attended to discuss how USFSP should handle transfer credits and changes to the catalog to reflect USFSP programs.

Faculty Senate: Patricia was not in attendance. No report.

Faculty Technology Committee: Deb mentioned that Eric Odgaard served as chair.

General Education Committee: Tina said that this group focused on assessments.

Graduate Council: Jim mentioned that he did not attend the most recent meeting due to a schedule conflict, but that Michael Sampson (College of Education) served as chair and Jerry Lander (College of Business) served as recorder.

Research Council: Much of the last meeting, according to Deb, focused on IRB training, as well as undergraduate and graduate research opportunities.

Undergraduate Council: Kaya stated the Linda Crossman and Noreen Noonan attended the meeting. Linda has regularly been meeting with colleagues in Tampa to expedite some course proposals developed at USF St. Petersburg so that they are properly formatted for forwarding to Tallahassee. Once reviewed by the Florida Department of Education, selected topics courses may be awarded unique numbers in the statewide common course-numbering system. Discussions also focused on possible fields of study for the Health Sciences baccalaureate degree presently under development and the need to clarify residency requirements (number of courses that must be earned at USFSP) before the institution confers a degree. For most programs, a minimum of thirty semester hours must be taken at USFSP.

QEP Committee: Tina encouraged everyone to make their selections in the QEP straw poll circulated to the campus via email.

Announcements

Tina announced that, as of this afternoon, the library had received thirty-three applications for the visiting business librarian line. Deb, Kaya, and Tina serve on the committee. An overture has been made to the College of Business to encourage representation by a member of the teaching faculty as well. A system for rating applicants that meet minimum requirements was put into place before applications were received. The deadline has been extended until December 15.

Meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Schnur
Council Scribe