CoNTTF meeting

Tuesday November 14, 2017 2:00-4:00 p.m.

392 Lory Student Center

Leslie Stone-Roy - minutes

Attendees:

Jenny Morse, Chair

Natalie Barnes

Matt Camper

Dan Baker

Steven Benoit

Joseph DiVerdi

Leslie Stone-Roy

Patricia Stutz-Tanenbaum

Natalie Ooi

Mary Van Buren

C.W. Miller

1. Meeting was called to order at 2 p.m.
2. Introductions were made by everybody
3. We forgot to approve minutes from last meeting
4. Jenny summarized the goals for the meeting
5. Jenny summarized the events that occurred prior to, and at, the recent non-tenure track faculty reception & some of the things that emerged as a result of the events at the reception. A positive outcome is that more conversation about NTTF issues is occurring. Other issues that were brought to the surface as a result of the reception were discussed by the committee. One problem seems to be a lack of enforcement for certain parts of the code. There was more discussion about how to resolve this.
6. Jenny asked for a report on the CoRSAF meeting. Steve reported that meetings are generally positive and summarized his observations about the committee. A short discussion ensued.
7. Don Estep (CoFG) joined the committee meeting at 2:30 p.m.
8. Introductions were made
9. The first topic discussed with Don was how Section C proposals from CoNTTF were received and handled. Don explained how Faculty Council works to put his response in perspective and emphasized that there are a lot of checks and balances that have to occur. He also said that’s it’s hard to have a discussion in faculty council. Usually issues are brought up and they have to be investigated by standing committees and then brought back to the committee. This led to the question of CoNTTF and its role as a standing committee. Don said that CoNTTF is different because it’s elected in a special way, has specialized construction and TTF aren’t involved as much. He said it should be a standing committee at this point.
10. Don told the committee some of the history of motions that CoFG has “dealt” with from CoNTTF. He stated that CoFG is supportive of NTTF and summarized his history with CoFG & with the CoNTTF committee. Part of this was describing how there have been a steady stream of motions from CoNTTF and he stated that every motion has been fully considered. He said that some of things CoNTTF were suggesting went nowhere because there were fundamental conflicts with the code and this was explained to our committee previously. He said some of the things in our recent proposal were the same issues that his committee had already dealt with, decided wouldn’t work and this was reportedly explained to our committee. He seemed frustrated that we didn’t have that history. He said they deliberately did nothing because they had already responded that these proposals were in conflict with code. He felt his committee was being pressured to approve things that they had already said wouldn’t work.
11. Don stated that the CoNTTF going to the Council of Deans was a big error on our part & that the Deans started attacking him after that. Since he felt he had already dealt with these issues, he didn’t know what to do, so decided to write concerns in his letter that was sent to the faculty on campus. He created an anonymous website and asked for input. He indicated that he wanted to get departments to discuss issues. Don then said that things escalated and he was told that the CoNTTF proposal was going forward despite problems that his committee had detected and despite the fact that his committee had said no. He wanted an informed vote, so he thought people needed to talk at department level, so he emailed Chairs. He started getting requests for the document, so he sent it to all the Chairs & visited a few departments. He stressed that there has been a lot of miscommunication & some misrepresentations.
12. Don then discussed how academic labor abuses of NTTF are a serious problem and that 80% of these abuses are already forbidden by the manual, but they are not being enforced. He talked about how statistics evaluates NTTF and negotiates assignments with NTTF just like they do with TTF. He’s offended by abuses personally and professionally since statistics does the right thing and loses money because of it.
13. He stated that he, and CoFG are not against NTTF, but they do have concerns about the proposal.
14. There was more discussion about the interactions between CoNTTF and CoFG during spring semester 2017.
15. The next topics discussed were the power of voting rights on committees with respect to NTTF getting voting rights, the jurisdiction of CoFG, the purpose of tenure to protect faculty from being fired so that they are able to stand up to the administration, and the vulnerability of NTTF that might result in more influence on this group by the administration. The vulnerability of tenure-line assistant professors in the same committees was discussed.
16. There was some heated discussion about communication and respect between CoFG and CoNTTF.
17. Don summarized some core beliefs of his committee:
    1. Tenure is important to have power
    2. If faculty council had a lot of NTTF it would become more ineffective
    3. If NTTF were allowed to serve on committees they would become mostly NTTF (this led to a discussion about limiting NTTF numbers on committees)
18. In terms of moving forward, Don thinks it would be best to come up with goals/problems and try to take individual pieces of code to address. It will be a slow, incremental process. There was some discussion about this.
19. Don reported that a new committee has been proposed that will check that policy is being enforced at the university. This was received well by the CoNTTF committee. There was further discussion about how policy is developed and approved at the university.
20. Don discussed work in progress for tenure for faculty with primarily teaching roles. This was in place prior to federal funding and now that funding is diminishing, it’s time to revive this type of tenure. Start-ups are too expensive for all new hires to be research heavy faculty. Return on investment for start-ups is only about 0.7. He stated that culture around tenure will have to change.
21. Major problems that Don sees:
    1. University accounting for departments is unusual – many don’t receive a big part of budget until a week before semester starts. This has to be fixed. Who will fix? It needs to be a lot of faculty that have tenure.
    2. There is not enough investment in teaching and service by the university and this needs to change. Education needs to be respected and faculty who teach recognized as a fundamental part of the university and university mission.
22. A problem Don sees with our committee is that we represent a very wide range of people. It would help if our group was subdivided and part of the group aligned with TTF and part become more organized like Administrative Professionals at the university.
23. There was a discussion about steps we can take now. Jenny stated that we need to start changing the culture and increasing NTTF representatives. She suggested that each person on this committee could be on Faculty Council since we all represent a college. This was discussed and it appeared that Don thought this might work.
24. It was suggested that we should all meet again, and the committee will invite Don to the last meeting of the semester.
25. The committee meeting ended at 4 p.m.