

February 3, 2011

TO: Provost's Council

FROM: Judith M. Bowman  
Assistant Vice President for Undergraduate Studies

SUBJ: Provost's Council Agenda for Tuesday, February 8, 2011

The Provost's Council will meet on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the Board Room in Koch Hall. The following agenda items will be discussed.

1. Approval of the January 8, 2011 minutes (see attachment, p. 1-2)
2. Outside Review of Faculty Credentials by SACS Off-Site Team (see attachment, p. 3-4)  
Marty Sharpe and Sara Morris
3. WEAVE Assessment Reports  
Worth Pickering
4. Update on the QEP  
Worth Pickering
5. Tenure and Promotion Procedures
6. Faculty Senate Issue 2009/10-3, Initial Appointment of Teaching and Research Faculty  
(see attachment, p. 5-7)
7. Review of Course Evaluation Questions and the Status of Student Opinion Polls (see attachments, p. 8-17) – 9:15 a.m.
8. Discussion of Written Survey Document Used by the Deans to Gather Input on the Evaluation of Department Chairs (see attachments, p. 18-21; refer to item 3.a. on p. 18)
9. Announcements
  - A. SACS On-site Visit – April 15-22, 2012
  - B. Graduate Research Day – April 6, 2011; will be held in Webb Center
  - C. National Telework Week February 14-18: Anyone who is already on a Telework Agreement is encouraged to “pledge” for this week and actually Telework during the week. Anyone else wanting to Telework should first register, take the VPAN training and pledge.

PROVOST'S COUNCIL  
February 8, 2011  
Minutes

The Provost's Council met on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 from 8:30-10:00 a.m. in the Board Room in Koch Hall. Those present were Carol Simpson (Chair), M'Hammed Abdous, Osman Akan, Andy Casiello, Pau Champagne, Chandra de Silva, Linda Irwin-DeVitis, Brenda Lewis, David Metzger, Sara Morris, Ginny O'Herron, Worth Pickering, Chris Platsoucas, Marty Sharpe, Deanne Shuman, Charles Wilson, and Gil Yochum. The following agenda items were discussed.

1. The January 8, 2011 minutes were approved.
2. Outside Review of Faculty Credentials by SACS Off-Site Team

Marty Sharpe and Sara Morris discussed the outside review of faculty credentials by the SACS off-site team. January 31 was the deadline for loading Faculty Activity System data for all new faculty members teaching in spring 2011. The next steps are as follows.

- The SACS Faculty Roster will be submitted with the University's Compliance Certification, under preparation now.
- During the fall 2011 semester, an off-site team of peer reviewers will review the Roster in detail.
- In December 2011, the University will receive a listing of those individuals whose credentials have not been sufficiently justified.
- By February 2012, we will have to supply additional information to justify those individuals identified in the December 2011 report.

The format of the feedback from the Off-Site Review was included with the agenda for information. The Deans were asked to be prepared to respond to a request from the Provost's Office during the December 2011-January 2012 timeframe to resolve any outstanding issues.

The Deans were reminded that the date to notify probationary tenurable faculty in their second or subsequent year that they will receive a terminal contract is December 15, and the date to notify probationary tenurable faculty in their first year that they will not be retained is March 1.

Sara Morris informed Council members that we must have evidence of our promotion, tenure and evaluation processes and examples of annual reviews, third-year reviews, tenure decisions and promotion decisions. Personally identifiable information will be redacted to the extent possible. Carol Simpson asked the Deans to provide examples from each College. The examples should be within the last three years.

3. WEAVE Assessment Reports

Worth Pickering discussed the WEAVE assessment reports. He noted that the key is whether we are using the data to make improvements and asked the Deans to look at the feedback from the assessment team's review and the feedback from the compliance assessment team. Issues to consider, particularly for 2010-11, are as follows.

- Are the assessment reports telling the story?
- Has a comparison of distance learning vs. face-to-face instruction been done?
- Do the findings lead to improvement? That is, do we have action plans?

The deadline for the 2010-11 reports is June 1, 2011. The reports will be submitted in September. Dr. Pickering noted that each program should be prepared to describe changes and improvements that have taken place in the last three years and what prompted those improvements.

#### 4. Update on the QEP

Worth Pickering provided an update on the QEP. The topic for our QEP is reason through writing and research. Reasoning is an iterative process of seeking, evaluating and reflecting on information leading to relevant conclusions. Writing and research are processes as well as products that demonstrate reasoning. Improving students' writing and research skills enhances reasoning and leads to informed decision-making and application.

During the spring 2011 semester, forums and meetings will be held in the colleges to get faculty involved in the development of the QEP. A draft of the QEP will be completed by August 1, with the final document ready for submission in January 2012. SACS will visit the campus to review our QEP on April 16-20, 2012. They will meet with a wide variety of faculty, staff, and students to evaluate both the QEP and the process by which it was developed and will be implemented.

#### 5. Tenure and Promotion Procedures

Carol Simpson reminded the Deans to adhere to the deadlines in the promotion and tenure processes. For next year, she asked the Deans to be cognizant that apparent or perceived conflicts of interest need to be avoided when seeking external review letters.

#### 6. Faculty Senate Issue 2009/10-3, Initial Appointment of Teaching and Research Faculty

Council members discussed and endorsed the recommendation from the Faculty Senate to revise the Policy on Initial Appointment of Teaching and Research Faculty. Under the current policy, the review for a faculty appointment with tenure at the time of the initial appointment is based on the candidate's normal application materials. The proposed revision would add language to require a statement of research and teaching philosophy, letters of reference, and evidence of teaching and research excellence when the initial

appointment to the University includes the award of tenure. The Council's recommendation will be forwarded to the President for approval.

## 7. Review of Course Evaluation Questions and the Status of Student Opinion Polls

Council members discussed the current course evaluation questions and the draft set of questions suggested by M'Hammed Abdous; a revised version of the draft questions was distributed. Paul Champagne noted the need for more student participation in the course evaluation process. It was suggested that students would be more likely to participate in a shorter survey vs. a longer one. It was also suggested that providing incentives to students might increase participation.

In response to questions from Grace Little, Council members agreed on the following.

- The maximum number of University-wide questions should be 10.
- The maximum number of College questions should be 5.
- The minimum class size (enrollment) for which data can be shown directly to the instructor without affecting anonymity should be 5.
- Regarding when the surveys are made available to students:
  1. For courses greater than 14 weeks duration, courses can be evaluated anytime within the last two weeks (14 days) of the course end date, which should be the last day of classes.
  2. For courses less than or equal to 14 weeks duration, courses can be evaluated anytime within the last nine days of class (at one time this was the last five days).
  3. The surveys should be made available on Reading Day in the spring semester.
- At this time, evaluations in the summer will continue to be optional. The Deans expressed interest in conducting the surveys in the summer, but the Faculty Senate feels they should remain optional. Carol Simpson will look into amending the policy to require evaluations in the summer for those faculty who are on alternate contracts.

Council members also agreed that the current set of 10 University-wide questions, with minor editorial revisions, should be on the survey instrument along with some questions related to distance learning. Andy Casiello will share the questions with the Distance Learning advisory committee for input. Carol Simpson asked the Deans to discuss the questions in their college. She will also get a group together with representatives from the Faculty Senate to review the questions. Discussion on this issue will continue at the next meeting.

## 8. Discussion of Written Survey Document Used by the Deans to Gather Input on the Evaluation of Department Chairs

This issue will be discussed at the next meeting.

## 9. Student Age Distribution and Headcount

Carol Simpson distributed data on undergraduate and graduate student headcount by college and age distributions. She asked the Deans to think about which graduate programs have capacity for growth and areas where we can bring in additional students as graduate student numbers have been steadily declining overall across the University. Andy Casiello stated he is available to talk to the Deans about opportunities for growth in on-line programs.

## 10. Announcements

- A. The SACS On-site Visit is April 15-22, 2012.
- B. Graduate Research Day will be held in Webb Center on April 6, 2011.
- C. National Telework Week is February 14-18. Employees who are already on a Telework Agreement are encouraged to “pledge” for this week and actually Telework during the week. Anyone else wanting to Telework should first register, take the VPAN training and pledge.
- D. David Metzger announced that the Undergraduate Research Symposium will be held February 12, 2011.
- E. Information on the U.S. Professor of the Year Program for 2011 was circulated and will be distributed electronically. Entries are due April 18. Carol Simpson encouraged Council members to submit nominations.