

Academic Affairs Liaison Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2011, 3:00 pm

Cope Conference Room

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Members Present – M. Arndt, C. Beauchamp, S. Boyd, J. Brickey, L. Burriss, N. Callender, L. Clark, C. Cooper, L. Craig-Unkefer, W. Cribb, T. Farwell, G. Freeman, Z. Khan, A. Lutz, K. Nofsinger, G. Zlotky

Members Absent – L. Dubek, K. Mathis

Members Excused –

Additional Attendees – B. Bartel

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Action Items

1. Dr. Bartel reviewed the issue of rank for temporary faculty. Dr. Paula Short sent a letter to MTSU stating that temporary faculty shall not have rank. This was discussed across campus. Dr. Bartel said that the University would have to amend contracts accordingly. Lecturer and Senior Lecturer are the new titles. Nine of the 218 individuals affected went “ballistic.” These individuals’ perspectives were that this would adversely affect their job prospects for Tenure Track (TT) positions. AAUP sent a very strong letter calling MTSU’s actions “reprehensible.” The Chronicle of Higher Education also ran the story. In the Provost’s view, Dr. Short did not handle the situation well when asked for assistance. For all temporary individuals, their titles will now remain as is until their contracts have expired. Dr. Bartel reflected that communication needs to be improved for issues like this. He is considering a blog from the Provost. He also said that the only title will be Lecturer. Scott asked the question as to how one would move from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer. Dr. Bartel would like for there to only be the title of Lecturer. Dr. Bartel shared that this issue does not address Clinical Faculty for which policy already exists. AAUP recently sent the University a letter thanking us for changing how the situation was handled. Alfred shared that he communicated with the AAUP that this is not how to handle situations like this since regional AAUP representation was not used nor informed. Alfred asked about compensation for temporary faculty. Dr. Bartel shared that the title changes are not an attempt to alter their salaries. Alfred shared his concern with the method with which salaries for temporary individuals has been determined. Kim brought up the issue of departments which need Full Time Temporary (FTT) faculty to perform other duties to unload the TT faculty needing to work on other things. Dr. Bartel said that converting FTT to TT lines would not happen at the moment due to the potential cut backs in the budget. Dr. Bartel shared that there is a shortage of clerical positions as well. The topic of FTT vs. TT faculty teaching lower division courses was discussed. Alfred shared that communication with FTTs amongst the different departments is not uniform. Dr. Bartel shared that certain FTTs feel that they are not treated well. He shared that there is probably much variability with regard to this issue. Alfred suggested that Academic Affairs develop a best practices guideline for how FTTs are treated. Zaf suggested that an impact study be performed for retention of our FTTs regarding the title change issue.
2. Retention: The President’s Enrollment Management Strategy Team evaluates recruitment and advising. The President has allowed each college to choose their own advising model. The President wants certain things to happen. First the President wants all freshman to have a required advising session prior to receiving 30 hours. Second the President wants faculty advisors to use the same software system (Advisor Track) as the college advisors to annotate notes about advising sessions. This software is not a great system, so Mr. Petryshak has been tasked with finding a better advising platform. Dr. Bartel would like to have a new award system for faculty for advising. He would like colleges to have an advising award (monetary). Dr. Bartel shared the results of a survey of freshmen who did not return from last year. He stated that only one of the 1,100 nonreturning students stated poor advising as a reason for not returning.
3. It is a FERPA violation to use other email addresses than the University email when communicating with students. An exception to this would be to send a student an email requesting further communication should be with MTSU email addresses. This should be a syllabus issue. Some issues are still outstanding which will need to be discussed such as Facebook and Twitter.
4. The compressed schedule proposal from Motlow was discussed. The proposal entails certain General Education courses being completed in three weekends.
5. The question of posting grades via email was discussed.
6. Dr. Bartel shared that current searches are a concern. Some searches have few or no applicants.

Respectfully submitted,

Nate Callender

2011-2012 Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Edited: