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21 October 2009
FDDE Committee Meeting
Library Tech Services Conference Room

Attendees: Donna Carter, Kathy Chudoba, Maria Cordero, Jennifer Duncan (chair), Renee Galliher, Alvan Hengge, Sherry Marx, Karen Mock, Nick Morrison, Chris Neale, Reza Oladi

Absent: Kelly Kopp

Guests: Ann Austin, Maure Smith

Jennifer called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

AA/EO Office

Several concerns were raised at last month's meeting about the AA/EO Office. Ann Austin came to this October meeting to hear our concerns, and Maure Smith attended to share concerns. Maure shared several stories of faculty members' experiences with the AA/EO Office. When raising issues of discrimination, people relayed to Maure that staff in the office made them feel unwelcome, minimized concerns that were raised, and "didn't get it." Members of the committee shared similar stories. For example, during the sexual harassment workshops, attendees have been told implicitly "This is not a problem here at USU, and we offer these workshops because we have to."

Questions were also raised about the Office's role in advising search committees about AA/EO issues. Several current search committees were not made aware of the videos on reducing bias in the hiring process or encouraged to use them. In one instance, a search committee took the initiative, asked the Office to lead a presentation and viewed videos as a group, but the office did not do an adequate job of leading a discussion about how to appropriately respond should issues arise. Committees have also not been informed about sexual orientation issues and how to ensure their searches reflect the University's position, Faculty Code, etc. Is it the responsibility of the department conducting the search to approach the AA/EO office for guidance or should AA/EO take the initiative?

Others noted that the staff has offered good advice on legal issues and is knowledgeable about federal law. We wondered what an appropriate reporting structure was for AA/EO (e.g., should it report to the Provost or another entity?). What do other universities do and where does AA/EO report?

People also expressed concerns that there is little diversity among the staff in the AA/EO Office, and people have said they do not feel comfortable raising an issue with the Office because of this. The location of the office is also uninviting – it is difficult to find, surrounded by construction, and located in the Military Science Building.

In sum, concerns centered around three areas:

- What is the appropriate role for the AA/EO Office: protect the University's legal interests or advocate and provide support for those who believe they have experienced discrimination or a hostile work environment? If AA/EO is only meant to provide litigation support to University management, then should there be a separate advocacy office?
- Do people feel comfortable taking their concerns to the AA/EO Office?
- What is the quality of response people receive when they talk with a member of the AA/EO Office?

Together these issues can negatively impact morale and retention. This is problematic because

retention is an important focus for the University now, especially for faculty who are members of under-represented groups.

Ann asked us to reflect on how the office has handled issues in the past. The response was that the Office played an advocacy role in the 1980's and 1990's, but one or two administrations ago, the climate changed. The Office had "its hands slapped," and staffing and funding were cut.

Ann and members of the committee suggested that the Provost may not be aware of these issues and concerns. She will meet with him and discuss our concerns. Jennifer offered to participate in a meeting with the Provost and others to represent FDDE.

Ann and/or Jennifer will update the Committee at its next meeting.

On a related topic, a Student Diversity Panel will be held on Wednesday, October 28th in the Library, room 154 at 2:30 to talk about experiences as multicultural students or students of diversity. This is primarily for faculty and staff, but students can come too. This is part of the Provost's Lecture Series.

Promotion from Associate to Full

Maria summarized current guidelines for promotion from associate to full professor. A P&T committee must be formed within 3 years of promotion to associate and must meet 6 months before the person submits her or his binder for promotion. Last spring, a proposal was reviewed with the Provost that a P&T committee must meet within 18 months (1.5 years) of promotion to associate for an information and planning meeting and provide guidance about steps the associate professor should take to prepare for promotion to full professor. The Provost was concerned about adding more structure for mentoring and over-burdening senior faculty. In addition, the Northwest Accreditation raised a question in its most recent review because P&T committees currently have dual roles of mentoring and evaluating. The Provost has commissioned a new committee to review the entire P&T process and it has only recently started to gather information. Mike Parent is chair of the committee. As a result of insights gained from the Advance grant, the Provost recognizes that women associate professors feel less confident about the process, are not sure when to go up, and are less likely to know when they're ready for promotion to full. Stories were shared about deans in some colleges who take an advocacy role and personally mentor women and faculty about the process of promotion to full professor. It was generally agreed that deans can do a lot to improve the process by providing guideposts and active mentoring to associate professors.

Donna shared copies of Extension's Roadmap for Excellence that provides guidelines to navigate the promotion and tenure process.

Jennifer will invite someone from Provost's Committee to come and talk to us about the process. We want to keep in the loop on the process and be available to provide a perspective as it moves ahead with its mission.

Minutes of September meeting

A motion was made and passed to accept the minutes as submitted.

New Business: Possible Salary Inequities

Several committee members shared stories of female colleagues hired at salaries less than male colleagues. Some raised the issue with department heads and/or deans and were told "nothing can be

done.” Others were concerned about possible repercussions if they raised the issue and have not approached management. There may be some retention money available to remedy inequities, and Jennifer will investigate this. Kathy will raise the issue with the Data Committee (Ann Austin, Craig Petersen, etc.) and see if we can use data from Banner to determine whether there are salary inequities based on gender, rank, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10.

Respectfully submitted,

K. M. Chudoba

Katherine M. Chudoba