

Faculty Welfare and Professional Development

Faculty Senate Committee Agendas, AY 2023-2024

Members

Landon Elkind
Ron Rhoades (guest)
Neena Jones
Peggy Otto
Xingang Fan
Todd Seguin
Pinky Rusli
Brandon Barber
Ben Dinan
Thomas Pabin (USG)
Rob Hale (guest)

Agenda

1. Ron Rhodes' memo on faculty salaries
 - a. Update: Senate Bill 6, will need to be reconciled with the Senate version, but removes mandated debt servicing.
 - b. Issues competing with a flagship university with SEC sports and R1 status, particularly when they admit 90%-95% of applicants
 - c. But our compensation is worse than peers, doesn't keep up with the pace of inflation, also making it hard to recruit people and keep people motivated
 - d. This will result in worse outcomes for students over the long term.
 - e. Revenue challenges from tuition and from state appropriations at once, particularly in the former with declines in enrollment on the horizon
 - f. Ron's suggestion: improving efficiency by increasing class-sizes in certain courses (Ron's worry is about ending up in a situation where we are faced with needing to make drastic cuts somewhere)
2. Faculty Workload policy
 - a. Rob: we started with a 5-5 idea and that gets reduced down based on service and/or research obligations, and possibly other factors as specified in the policy. The committee approved the draft, but the full senate rejected that proposal far too quickly to get a discussion. One concern raised was about job candidates, but we did not get enough discussion to actually address the concern. Landon convinced me that we can make rhetorical changes that will persuade people we are not increasing anyone's teaching load but still get a workable workload document. Here is the new draft (see language below).
 - b. Peggy: I think this draft addresses one concern, which is that there's no way service won't be expected so that 5-5 language was less useful. But this is 4-4 course load with service matches more appointments.

- c. Rob: there was talk of removing any examples about expectations for 100% effort, but the Provost (and I agree with him) thought it would be more honest to make explicit our views about how workload is determined and how effort is calculated.
 - d. Landon: I appreciate your working to address the concern that folks' teaching loads will not be increased.
 - e. Todd: we cannot allocate more than 12 months of effort.
 - f. Rob: This is not a change in current workload determination policies, it is a codification and explicit statement of current practices.
 - g. Landon: What about the concern that we don't need this document given that colleges are doing this individually?
 - h. Rob: We want to correct colleges if they allocate effort unfairly (not that every college must produce the same outcome, e.g. course load, when they calculate effort, but that the calculation or formula is similar university-wide).
3. Summer pay policy
- a. Rob: current policy has the faculty member deciding whether to offer the course 5 days before, and the pro-rated amount determined in low-enrolled courses on day 3 of the course.
 - b. Ben: the extra cost for the university is minimal, especially for an online course. What are they looking at as the minimum for the course – is it to make sure that the course is not costing more than it brings in. In my view we are offering the extra courses to help folks graduate on time.
 - c. Rob: that isn't built into the expectation for when we offer summer classes.
 - d. Peggy: my understanding is the minimum numbers are set so that the college still makes money from offering the course.
 - e. Rob: yes, that is why the minimums are set where they are.
 - f. Pinky: are other summer classes offered in-person?
 - g. Rob: yes
 - h. Xingang: so why wouldn't your model be such that the course runs or not based on some higher enrollment number?
4. Survey and other instruments
- a. Have faculty salaries at WKU made it more difficult to recruit and/or retain faculty? If yes, please provide as many specific examples from within the past ten years as you can (examples might include unsuccessful searches; faculty departures for other universities and/or non-academic work; falling numbers of applicants to open positions; etc.).
 - b. Have faculty salaries at WKU made it more difficult to train students to meet workforce needs in southwestern Kentucky and/or other neighboring geographic regions? If yes, please provide as many specific examples from within the past ten years as you can (examples might include high-paying jobs where credentialing is needed, but we cannot staff the classes needed to train such students; hiring adjunct instead of full-time faculty to teach courses necessary for credentialing;

anticipated workforce needs in the region but lacking the personnel to train students to meet them; etc.).

- c. Have faculty salaries at WKU impacted student learning at WKU? If yes, please provide as many specific examples from within the past ten years as you can (examples might include much-beloved faculty members departing the school; faculty being unable to undertake research and service because they need to work second or third jobs; faculty morale that is then imparted to students; etc.).
 - d. Other questions?
- 5. New Business
 - 6. Adjourn