University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee

Affirmative Action in Faculty Employment Committee
2009-2010 Annual Report

Members:

Linda Post  Assoc Prof  Curr & Instr
Rachel Buff  Assoc Prof  History
Rebecca Holderness  Asst Prof  Theatre
Kristene Surerus, Chair  Assoc Prof  Chemistry
William Velez  Prof  Sociology
Michael Powell  Assoc VC  Provost Designee

Charter:
Functions/ Responsibilities:

A1.35 Affirmative Action in Faculty Employment Committee

(1) Membership. Six members as follows: four faculty members elected, one member of the University Committee appointed by the University Committee; the Provost shall serve ex-officio.

(2) Functions.
a) Monitors programs and assesses the needs for changes in the recruitment and retention of women and minority faculty.
b) Formulates appropriate recommendations/actions/policies to the University Committee or Faculty Senate to enhance affirmative action policy in faculty employment.
c) Monitors campus administration progress in facilitating affirmative activities and progress in affirmative action in faculty employment at UWM.

(Document 1978, 5/11/95; UWM Administration approval, 6/7/95)
(Editorially revised, 7/1/96)
(Document 2179, 2/18/99; UWM Administration approval, 5/30/99)
(Editorially revised, 8/24/06)

Meetings:
The Committee met eight times. The main topics discussed were faculty workload policies, departmental handbooks, faculty recruitments and the use of AIMS, faculty orientations and the ombuds program.

The committee decided to review faculty workload policies that currently exist on campus. The committee was interested in assessing what flexibility, if any, currently exists to accommodate childcare, eldercare, or other personal issues and whether the policies are readily available and equitably utilized. Relevant documents located and
discussed were Milwaukee Faculty Document No. 2027 and 2122, a document describing L&S faculty workload practices, School of Education Faculty Document # 665 and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Work Load Policy. Executive committees make workload decisions in conjunction with the dean. It was noted that if a faculty member or an executive committee disagrees with the respective Dean about the faculty workload, it does not appear that there is another body to adjudicate. It was suggested that either the Provost or the Faculty Senate through the University Committee or the Faculty Appeals and Grievance Committee might be appropriate bodies to mediate such disputes. It was proposed that this committee should work on drafting a policy on faculty workload that allows for a grievance procedure and ensures that adequate protections for untenured faculty are included. Particularly in times of deficit budgets where load shifts become an attractive means to address shortfalls, it is important that these load shifts do not become the norm (maintained when the budget crisis passes), that they are applied consistently and that they do not unduly impact research productivity. In particular assigning instructional workloads to untenured faculty that inhibit or prevent progress on their research projects unfairly restricts their ability to earn tenure. Larry Martin was invited to discuss how the committee might collect data, in particular from untenured faculty about their experiences with workload practices in their unit. Determining to what extent junior faculty are or feel they are unfairly treated in workload decisions is challenging because it is difficult to protect those who come forward with concerns and if they do come forward, how can the junior faculty be protected from a punitive executive committee. It is difficult to protect identities in focus groups – surveys and/or confidential individual hearing sessions would be required. Setting up hearing sessions would involve a significant amount of effort but success in making institutional changes with only anecdotal evidence is unlikely. The committee decided that a survey should be sent asking the chairs to respond to the following questions:

1. Has your unit been impacted by budget cuts in terms of faculty workload?
   a. If so, how has it been distributed through the ranks?
2. Do you have a faculty handbook for your unit?
   a. Where is it available to faculty?
   b. Does it include a policy for teaching workload?

Responses were received from 20 departments. Nine units indicated their workload had been adversely impacted by budget cuts, primarily through increased class sizes, additional course assignments and the use of LTE instruction instead of replacement of open faculty lines. Eight units reported the increased workload was distributed equitably and one reported increasing senior faculty workloads more than junior faculty workloads. 10 units out of 20 responses reported that they had departmental faculty handbooks. A task for next’s year committee would be to request whether the departments who currently have a handbook would be willing to share theirs in order that the committee could develop a template for departments to use to develop their own handbook.

Dev Venugopalan reported to the committee on faculty orientation. In addition to the orientation held in August, CIPD holds a teaching workshop and the Graduate School
holds a workshop reviewing research services in September/October. Typically about a third of the new hires attend each event. There are also several social/culture programming events set up throughout the academic year. The committee felt that additional orientations may be helpful as it is challenging for new hires to retain all the information presented to them in their first few weeks of employment. Rebecca Holderness talked with Karl Sparks who was receptive to holding 2nd or 3rd year orientations for faculty and staff. It was suggested that holding information sessions with junior faculty to educate them on their rights, including workloads would be useful, additional suggestions for topics will be solicited from untenured faculty.

There is an ombudsman program currently in place that faculty could utilize but perhaps it needs further advertisement. Vice Chancellor Joan Prince was invited to discuss the program with the committee. The Ombuds Council was set up in response to taskforces which found campus didn’t have a confidential way to navigate the system. It is not a legal entity but rather provides a confidential listening ear and helps generate roadmaps to address the issue of concern. In response to posters and emails soliciting applications, ~55 people from a range of classifications applied and after interviews, ~14 were selected and provided training in communication. In addition, each school/college has an ombud but they are not all well advertised. The Ombuds Council will post the school/college ombuds on their website. The Ombuds Council can be reached by a confidential phone line. VC Prince screens the calls and triages them to one of the 14 ombuds. Last year the Ombuds Council received about 50-60 calls mostly from classified staff. Many of the issues can be resolved by providing additional training to supervisors. If mediation is necessary, the issue is referred to the Legal Office. The Ombuds Council does not deal with students as they come under the purview of the Dean of Students and faculty who call are directed to the University Committee if their concern regards tenure, otherwise VC Prince directs them to their mentor or another faculty member. The ombuds do not take notes and will meet off campus if requested. A maximum of four meetings about an issue are allowed, if the issue is still not resolved after four meetings, it is referred to the Provost and Legal Office. The Ombuds Council meets once a semester with the Chancellor and Provost. Training is provided to the ombuds and it was suggested that this training be made available to more people, such as faculty mentors. VC Prince will discuss this with the new Provost.

The committee met with Karen Massetti-Moran and Karl Sparks who answered questions about the AIMS program. They said it is possible to see the aggregate summary of diversity/gender for the shortlist in addition to the pool as a whole for each position. If there are difficulties, the search and screen committee should contact Human Resources and they will assist. There is an opportunity to intervene at each step of the recruitment process, however working with the search and screen committee prior to beginning the process helps ensure diversity/gender profiles are maintained throughout each step of the process. It currently is very difficult to capture information on where the candidates report learning about the position as they put it in a free form box – in a future upgrade a drop down list of ad sources will be incorporated to make it easier to capture this information. There was some discussion that even if candidates don’t site a particular ad there is still value in placing those ads as it provides increased visibility for UWM. Dev Venugopalan stated that research indicates that personal contacts are the most effective
recruitment strategy for increasing diversity/gender applicants in the pool. The next upgrade will also incorporate acceptance of reference letters into the system and the program should be easier to navigate. AIMS will be replaced by PeopleSoft in about two years.

The committee reviewed our charter and determined no modifications were necessary.

Respectfully submitted, K. Surerus, chair