FACULTY COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 5, 2007

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Faculty Committee met on Monday, March 5, 2007. Chair James Lambert called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. in Room 107, Art Department.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: James Lambert, Monika Linehan, Kirsten Underwood, Maxwell Kwenda, Thomas Davis

Absent: Edna McMillan, David Fennema, Matt Jenkins

III. NEW BUSINESS

Chair James Lambert stated that the purpose of today’s meeting was to revisit three items from the November 2006 Faculty Senate meeting that were referred to the Faculty Committee for review. He noted that the Faculty Committee could accept these items, reject them, or work on them.

1. Faculty transfers. At the November 2006 Faculty Senate meeting, the question was asked whether professors could be assigned to departments other than their own. This stemmed from a grievance brought against Cameron University. A motion was made to refer the issue of faculty transfers to the Faculty Committee to determine if any clarification needed to be made in the Faculty Handbook.

Discussion on this item ensued. It was noted that the Grievance Committee found that pursuant to the Faculty Handbook, “both the President and the Vice President of Academic Affairs have the authority to transfer Faculty Members where it serves the best interest of the University.” With its ruling, the Grievance Committee set a precedent. Other than the quoted statement above, the Faculty Handbook makes no other references to faculty transfers. Tom Davis volunteered to research this item further and report his findings to the Faculty Committee at the next meeting.

Kirsten Underwood moved that Tom Davis should research further the issue of faculty transfers to departments outside their own. Maxwell Kwenda seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2. Research and travel policy changes. At the November 2006 Faculty Senate meeting, Tony Wohlers stated that there were faculty concerns in the School of Liberal Arts regarding the new policy changes for research and travel. He stated that previously, a faculty member who planned to travel to a conference to fulfill research requirements was only required to submit a memo stating their reason for traveling and how it would benefit the university. Under the new policy, the faculty member must also state how they plan to cover their classes in their absence. He noted that if faculty is required to do research for the purpose of tenure and promotion, then there is a conflict between tenure procedures and this new policy because it is not always possible to cover missed classes. A motion was made to refer this policy issue to the Faculty Committee for review.

Discussion on this item ensued. It was stated that historically in the School of Liberal Arts, a professor attending a conference filled out a simple form with an explanation of their intent. Recently, under the new policy, many of the research requests were denied if classes were deemed not adequately covered. The point was made that the new policy is vague and inadequate. It does not clarify acceptable means of covering classes in one’s absence. The Faculty Handbook in Section 5.3 makes reference to meeting classes, but does not fully address this issue. Chair Lambert noted that Vice President John McArthur’s belief is that
classes should never be cancelled due to conferences and that he should be involved in the process of clarifying the policy. He volunteered to contact Vice President McArthur to discuss this matter.

Tom Davis moved that James Lambert talk to Vice President McArthur to get clarification on the new research and travel policy. Maxwell Kwenda seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. **IDEA faculty evaluation data.** At the November 2006 Faculty Senate meeting, it was stated that a major concern – the manipulation and use of raw data gathered from the new faculty evaluation forms – needs to be addressed formally, beyond the Academic Standards & Policies Committee. The AS&PC suggested that the Faculty Committee could address this concern in the Faculty Handbook.

Discussion of this item ensued. It was stated that at the February 2007 IDEA evaluation form training sessions, the question of how the data will be used was not addressed. One major concern is that the evaluations will be used by the administration to determine raises. It was noted that if we use and value student evaluations, we should also have a system of peer evaluation in place. It was also mentioned that many departments are treating the new evaluation scores in the same manner as the old, using them internally for evaluation by the department chair, Maxwell Kwenda and Kirsten Underwood volunteered to contact Tom Sutherland and research how the university will use the evaluation scores.

Kirsten Underwood moved that the Faculty Committee research the question of how the new faculty evaluation data will be used. Maxwell Kwenda seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Lambert adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

V. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Faculty Committee will be on Monday, April 9, 2007, at 3:30 p.m. in Room 107, Art Department.

Respectfully submitted

Monika Linehan
(for Edna McMillan, Secretary Faculty Committee)