FACULTY COMMITTEE MINUTES
April 9, 2007

I. CALL TO ORDER
The Faculty Committee met on Monday, April 9, 2007. Chair James Lambert called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in Room 107, Art Department.

II. ROLL CALL
Present: James Lambert, Monika Linehan, Tom Davis, David Fennema, Matt Jenkins, Maxwell Kwenda, Kirsten Underwood
Absent: Edna McMillan

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Faculty Committee members reviewed the minutes from the March 5, 2007, meeting. David Fennema motioned to approve the minutes. Matt Jenkins seconded the motion. The motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS
Chair James Lambert reported that the revisions made to the Faculty Handbook passed the faculty vote. He stated that only 42 faculty voted, 30 for and 12 against. Gary Buckley and Ted Snider were the official ballot counters. The Handbook revisions were then ratified at the April 4, 2007, Faculty Senate meeting.

Chair Lambert stated that today's agenda included reports on the three items discussed at the March 5, 2007 Faculty Committee meeting: faculty transfers, research and travel policy changes, and IDEA faculty evaluation data.

IDEA faculty evaluation data. Kirsten Underwood reported on the progress of research regarding the use and storage of IDEA faculty evaluation data. She stated that she had been unable to contact Tom Sutherland but would continue to research this topic.

Faculty transfers. Tom Davis reported on the progress of research regarding faculty transfers between departments. He noted that there are a number of discrepancies in regard to tenure contained in the Faculty Handbook. Specifically, there is conflict regarding how a Dean and regular faculty are tenured which needs to be resolved. Tom brought attention to the following sections of the Handbook.

• Section 2-16.d. Faculty responsibility of a Dean. "While the Dean is normally granted tenure within an academic department of the school . . ."

• Section 4-2, 4.1.2.1. Regular Faculty – Tenured. "A tenured appointment is reserved for those Regular Faculty members who have been granted tenure by the Board of Regents."

• Section 2-16.i. Tenure of a Dean. "Processes regarding tenure of the Dean shall be administered by the appropriate academic department . . ."

• Section 4-18, 4.5.c. Academic tenure. "Tenure is granted by the Board of Regents upon recommendation of the President . . ."

• Section 4-18, Step 7 – By March 1. "Upon receiving a recommendation from the Vice President of Academic Affairs, the President decides to approve or disapprove the request for tenure. If the President approves the request for tenure, he/she shall recommend the granting of tenure to the Board of Regents . . . Since only the Board of Regents may grant tenure based upon a recommendation by the President, de facto tenure is not recognized by the University."
Tom pointed out that according to the Faculty Handbook, Deans are granted tenure within an academic department, while faculty are granted tenure by the Board of Regents. This results in a gray area as it relates to faculty transfers between departments. He further stated that the language in the Handbook implies that faculty can be moved to other departments. To help protect faculty from interdepartmental transfers, Tom recommended that the Handbook should contain language stating that faculty is tenured within a department. One possibility is that the language in Section 2-15 be changed to "Tenure is granted by the Board of Regents within an academic department." Another suggestion is to use language other than "granted" in reference to tenure.

Further discussion of this issue ensued. The question was posed what would happen to faculty if departments merged. It was stated that if a program is dissolved, faculty can be asked to leave. The question was asked whether a Dean would lose tenure rights if they came from the faculty and then returned. It was stated that they would not lose their tenure rights. It was also noted that if a Dean is hired into the position, tenure is negotiated. The point was made that tenure should be vested in a department and that beginning the tenure process in a department is not the same as being vested in that department.

Chair Lambert recommended that the Faculty Committee design new language for the Faculty Senate to vote on in the fall. Tom was charged with revising the language in Section 4-16, 4.5.c, keeping the first sentence and adding a second sentence. Discussion of this topic by the Faculty Committee will continue into the 2007-2008 academic year.

Research and travel policy changes. Chair Lambert reported on the progress of research regarding research and travel policy changes. He stated that he had contacted Vice President John McArthur asking for clarification of the new travel policy. Vice President McArthur asked for a written statement explaining what he was expected to clarify. There has been no further correspondence with the Vice President at this time.

Chair Lambert referenced Section 5-2, 5.3 Teaching Responsibilities in the Faculty Handbook. Summarized, this section states that a faculty member is expected to meet his/her classes at all scheduled times in the scheduled places. In the event of an absence from a scheduled class meeting, the faculty member has the responsibility to make arrangements for the class and to notify his/her department chair so that arrangements relating to his/her absence can be made. Chair Lambert stated that Vice President McArthur had been requested to clarify what is meant by making arrangements for the class in the event of faculty absence as stated in sentence 2 of Section 5-2, 5.3.

Discussion of this issue ensued. It was stated that faculty attending conferences are responsible for covering classes, but that we need a more detailed description of what “covering classes” means. The faculty needs to know what the expectations are. The question was asked how classes should be covered during convocation, as it is required that faculty attend. It was also noted that the Faculty Handbook only requires the faculty member to notify their Department Chair in the event of an absence. However, the new policy requires that a statement to the Dean accompany a travel request.

Chair Lambert stated that all three of the issues addressed at today’s meeting would be ongoing in the 2007-2008 academic year.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Matt Jenkins stated that the use of Social Security numbers on travel request forms should be changed. Currently, the travel request form requires a Social Security number. He was told that a travel request would not be processed without the number. Matt stressed that the use of a Social Security number on forms that are circulated to various offices is a security risk and a violation of confidentiality. He suggested that an alternate ID number could be used, such as the faculty ID number.

Matt also referenced Section 5.10.3.a Disclosure of Confidential Information in the Faculty Handbook. This section states that no individual shall offer to or give, release, or
discuss confidential information obtained by the use of his/her official position to anyone not entitled to that information. Matt stated that a Social Security number is confidential information, and we have no control over who has access to it if it is written on a form sitting on someone's desk.

Maxwell Kwenda motioned to send a recommendation to the Faculty Senate to substitute the Cameron ID number for the Social Security number on travel forms. Matt Jenkins seconded the motion.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Matt Jenkins motioned to adjourn the meeting. David Fennema seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Monika Linehan
(for Edna McMillan, Secretary Faculty Committee)