

Meeting with Alan White
Tuesday, April 10, 2007

COPY

New Issues:

- Controversy that has arisen over the teaching of geometry:
Secondary ed students are required to take a geometry course in the Math Dept for their degree. For the last two years, Math Ed has allowed most of their majors to bypass this requirement by taking their geometry course for middle school teachers. This last fall, 16 math ed majors bypassed the requirement and 4 took our course. When I (Gail Ratcliff) brought up this issue, the reaction was that they had the authority to make substitutions for degree requirements for their majors, and would continue to do so. It seems to me that this practice goes against our institutional approval process for degree changes. If a department can effectively bypass requirements for all or most of their majors, they can ignore the process we have in place for making these changes "official." I know there has been some communication between the two deans concerning this issue, with no resolution. I am now thinking that this is a faculty governance issue that should be handled by UCC or the Faculty Senate.

Evaluations due April 2 in the College of Arts and Sciences

College's Personnel Committees

Math

English' Partner Hiring Policy

Mediation in Foreign Languages

Issues from last meeting:

- John Crammer
- English Task Force
- Math: courses in Engineering, timeline for new department chair

Lee, Lori

From: Taggart, Mark Alan
Sent: Monday, April 09, 2007 11:52 AM
To: Lee, Lori
Subject: Fwd: Mediation needed
Importance: High

FYI

From: "Michael Schinasi" <mschinasi@suddenlink.net>
To: <TAGGARTM@ecu.edu>
Subject: Mediation needed
Date: Mon, 9 Apr 2007 10:51:22 -0400
Thread-Index: Acd6tom943yIg1qxS76InM/1A2YNIw==

Mark,

I am sorry to say that the Spanish CC would probably be best served if we had a mediator for at least one of our meetings. I was wondering if you could suggest someone.

This situation reflects our continuing conflicts with Dr. Romer and the division between the Fixed Term and the Tenured and TT faculty. We have a new coordinator of 1000 level language courses taking up a position next year and we have been trying to create a coordinating committee that he will Chair. The problem arose over the makeup of that committee. A proposal by Dale Knickerbocker at our last Curriculum Committee meeting, of which I am Chair, called for a majority position of tenured faculty members on the committee with a minority presence of fixed term faculty. The fixed term faculty wanted to know why they should have a minority vote, and I stated that since they did not work at the upper levels of the program I thought that their minority position was appropriate. I said that we were privileged to have them as our colleagues because they are real professionals, but since they do not have the experience at the upper levels nor have they experienced the pressures that our many tenure track faculty face to research and publish in order to maintain their jobs, they were less likely to understand their impact on our upper level courses and TT colleagues of a program they might be able to vote into place. Other tenured colleagues spoke of the importance of the PhD and the scrutiny that PhDs "suffer" as they go through their course work, qualifying exams, dissertation, dissertation defense and all of the reviews in the probationary period of their employment. The meeting was conducted in a procedural and decorous way (the only direct reference to individuals was when I said I thought they some of my colleagues were real professionals something that Robert's Rules of Order might prohibit me from saying); no one spoke out of turn, there were no raised voices, there was no anger expressed though the discussion was impassioned and frank.

The day after our meeting Dr. Romer asked me to see him in his office. Since he is not a member of the curriculum committee he did not attend the meeting. He first told me that he disagreed with the proposed makeup of the committee and then added that several people had come to see him about the meeting and that I and my other tenured colleagues had "used language that is improper in the work place." He explained that he meant the discussion of experience and credentials.

04/10/2007

It seems to me that if you cannot discuss at least experience and the impact of the 1000 level on the upper levels you cannot give an explanation for limiting the vote -there is no intent to limit input; it is in fact very welcome-of the fixed term faculty on the committee. If you cannot provide a rationale for the makeup of the committee, obviously you cannot propose it, which really ends our discussion in favor of Dr. Romer's point of view.

In the light of the seriousness of the charges against us -I take "language improper to the workplace to be among the most serious," though no documents have been placed in personnel files so far as I know-and our belief that we must continue discussion of the coordination committee (during which there could be a repeat of the question of the participation of the fixed term faculty) I believe that we can use the assistance of a mediator. Could you suggest someone?

Michael Schinasi

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