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MINUTES
Faculty Affairs Committee
November 1, 2019
12:45 p.m. 411 Axinn Library

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Voting Members Present:

Russell Chun

Xiang Fu

Ann Grafstein

Michael Heiss

Rina Hirsch (Chair)

Kris Lotier

Kevin McElroy

Rebecca Natow

Jean-Paul Rodrigue

Sylvia Silberger

Non-Voting Members Present:

Elisabeth Ploran (AAUP President)

Terri Shapiro (Sr Vice Provost for Academic Affairs)

Cornell Craig (Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer)

Absentees:

Deborah Elkis-Abuhoff

Maureen Houck

Elisabeth Schlegel

Holly Seirup (Dean, HPHS)

1. Minutes from the October 16, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved.
2. Russell Chun presented sample Diversity CTR questions to the committee. Cornell Craig, Hofstra's Chief Diversity Officer was present for the discussions.
   a. Russell indicated that Hofstra's mission says that we are committed to diversity and inclusion.
   b. Russell indicated he was recently involved in creating a climate survey for the School of Communications. Many students were having issues with individual faculty members and felt they weren't part of a conducive and inclusive environment. How do we make faculty accountable for this? How can we link it to what's important to faculty: promotion, tenure, etc.? This is why Russell put together the CTR proposal (see questionnaire) asking about classroom environment and the integration of issues of diversity in the course curriculum.
   c. Russell spoke with Cornell Craig and the Center for Race, Culture and Social Justice, and the diversity committee at the school of communication (Vice Dean). It was also mentioned to Elisabeth Ploran, who expressed some of the hurdles that will be encountered with such a proposal.
   d. Russell indicated that a lot of other universities are doing this and they are measuring it in different ways. Some schools are requiring a statement on diversity. There are problems with that, because it is a one-time thing. This CTR change would be implemented every semester. For the curricular issues, we should frame it as rewarding the faculty instead of punishing them for these initiatives.

e. Cornell: this would make it more integrated into the learning process. If we are not being inclusive in the learning space, then we are creating hurdles. Some of the hurdles that other universities have faced deal with the wording of these things. We want to encourage creativity in how we can encourage diverse thought.

f. FAC members from various disciplines (math, accounting, computer science, etc.) indicated that they don't know how they would incorporate diversity into their classes.

g. Jean-Paul suggested this type of thing is destroying academia and that we are imposing ideology here. He indicated that diversity must be defined in the first place.

h. Russel stated that the university has decided that this (encouraging diversity and inclusion) is what we want to do.

i. Anne indicated that putting something like this into the CTR instrument is punitive. We don't share a commonly accepted definition of these terms. It can lead to checking boxes. Example: Am I including something by a person of color? Check. A woman? Check. Anne doesn't think this is what diversity is really about. What can we assume to be work worth studying and what is not? Diversity is a loaded term. Additionally, Anne strongly believes in an open exchange of ideas, but has a problem with teaching becoming increasingly reduced to numbers.

j. Elisabeth: From the union perspective, I have issues with the second question, which deals with how I choose to teach my course. Departments can include requirements in the curriculum for P&T purposes. That is permitted. But it cannot be done across the board at the university level.

k. Michael: DPCs opinions will change depending how they value diversity and inclusions for P&T. Michael indicated he was concerned about the interpretations of inclusiveness.

l. Russell: We could incorporate these two or this first question, into a subscale. Or we could pull this one out separately. DPCs will weigh these items differently.

m. Elisabeth: I suggest if we include the top one, there be a 3-year waiting period before it "counts" for P&T.

n. Terri: I feel nebulous about this right now. I have to think about it. We could try it out before it counts for P&T. Like a pilot study.

o. Xiang asked how we can create this inclusive learning environment in hard sciences.

p. Elisabeth suggested that faculty in the hard sciences can make the learning environment comfortable for women and students of color, to make them feel like they belong there.

q. At the conclusion of our extensive discussion, the committee felt that an Ad Hoc committee on this CTR Diversity Initiative should be created with faculty from across the university so that the sample questions can be refined and the issues of concern in our committee can be addressed before it returns to the FAC for a vote.

3. The committee began discussions on FPS #9 as it relates to adjunct faculty office hour requirements and office hours for online delivery courses.
   a. The CBA does not specify that adjuncts are required to hold office hours.

b. Michael Heiss (as an adjunct representative) indicated that adjunct faculty would want to be compensated for every additional hour they are required to hold office hours if that is required by them. Extra compensation would not be expected if email counted as being "available to student before or after their teaching periods" (per FPS #9).

c. The committee discussed perhaps removing discussion of adjunct faculty requirements from the FPS and specifying that "Full-time faculty" are to "schedule regular times for conferences with students at least one hour each week for each three hours taught."

d. Discussion also took place about whether it makes sense to be forced to hold physical office hours for online classes. The committee indicated that this didn't make sense because most students that take online classes do not expect a physical presence component of the class. Instead, email availability and virtual office hours (either scheduled by appointment or at standard blocks of times) should be appropriate given the learning environment.

e. The committee will continue discussions about updating FPS #9 at the next FAC meeting.

f. Tabled discussion of:
    i.   Review FPS #9 "Classes, Faculty Absences, Lateness, Office Hours, Syllabi, Course and Teacher Evaluations" as it relates to office hours for adjunct faculty and office hours for online delivery courses.
    ii. Discuss changing the title of the Secretary of the Faculty to Deputy Speaker and changing the responsibilities of the position with the goal of serving in an outreach capacity and formalizing the reporting apparatus for special committees.
    iii. Discuss having faculty pictures automatically associated with Outlook/Blackboard accounts with an opt-out option.

g. The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 pm.