

Marquette University

Subcommittee on Part-Time Faculty (Subcommittee of the Committee for Faculty Wellness)

October 10, 2007 Subcommittee Minutes

Members Present: Sharon Crowe, Thomas Kukowski, Ginger Lee, Brian Truka

Members Excused: Maureen McAvoy

1. **Call to Order:** 4:05 p.m.

2. **Chair's Report** – Brian Truka

Mr. Truka welcomed the members and discussed a recent correspondence with the chair of the University Academic Senate, Dr. Kristy Nielson. Regarding the correspondence, it was mentioned that the subcommittee has no precedent as such and its first order of business should be the identification of salient topics for the subcommittee to review and pursue.

Ms. Crowe queried the involvement and extend the Committee of Faculty Wellness (CFW) and the University Academic Senate (UAS) desired from the subcommittee. Mr. Truka expressed that at present he was unaware of the subcommittees full extent though he would be able to provide a healthier understanding after a meeting of the committee chairs scheduled later in the week.

3. **New Business**

The floor was opened to discuss the potential directions for the subcommittee and articulate principle items of importance for part-time faculty.

- a. It was questioned by Ms. Crowe if there presently exists unilateral policies for part-time faculty across colleges – e.g. lobbying of grievances, orientation, course protocol, etc.– or is each college subject to unique policies.
 - i. Dr. Lee mentioned the part-time faculty orientation opens each academic year, yet university uniformity was not as clear. It was uncertain if such matters as pay, benefits, course sizes, course criteria, etc. were equitably in place between part-time faculty of the various colleges and how accessible such information is.
- b. The collection and distribution of the above information with the intent to provide greater transparency and assistance for new and senior part-time faculty was agreed to be a poignant goal for the subcommittee.
 - i. In this endeavor it was suggested by Ms. Crowe that the subcommittee could function as a representative and moderator for part-time faculty academic questions and concerns, akin to an ombudsman.

- ii. Dr. Lee and Mr. Kukowski mentioned for the above to prove helpful, the community of part-time faculty would not only need to be notified of the subcommittee's presence and intent but must also be afforded sufficient access to the subcommittee. The exact method and extent was agreed to be discussed later if/when the subcommittee adopted this role.
 - iii. Mr. Truka questioned the exact number of the part-time faculty community and the percentage of academic courses under their auspice and how this may affect the above role.
- c. Dr. Lee commented upon the lack of security in terms of future employment for part-time faculty. Contracts are offered, at best, only 6 months in advance thereby leaving part-time faculty in financial uncertainty semester to semester.
- i. Mr. Kukowski seconded this concern and suggested that contracts offered yearly would help to mitigate this difficult.
 - ii. This discussion pointed to a two-fold distinction in the part-time faculty community:
 - a) Certain departments presently offer one year contracts – e.g. the College of Professional Studies – pointing to a degree of autonomy within each college towards part-time faculty. This potentially signifies differing concerns among part-time faculty along departmental/college lines.
 - b) There exist two principle types of part-time faculty, those that instruct as their primary source of income at Marquette and other academic institutions (vocational instructors) and those that teach as a supplement to a primary income outside of academia (avocational instructors.)
- The significance of such distinctions, particularly in regards to the subcommittee and its role, was agreed to be discussed at a later date.
- iii. Mr. Kukowski and Ms. Crowe questioned if seniority is consulted when determining the volume and type of teaching assignments. Additionally, it was asked if seniority is reflected in pay or pay raises. The subcommittee was uncertain the role seniority played either for course assignment and pay concerns thus reflecting the prior question of transparency.
- d. Mr. Truka inquired as to benefits offered to part-time faculty and their feasibility. A regular part-time faculty receives no company matching shouldering the costly expense entirely. Dr. Lee mentioned how this is not so for full-time employees and question why the drastic difference between full-time and part-time employees.
- e. It was noted that the host of free workshops (e.g. D2L) offered for part-time faculty were of tremendous aid for professional development while proving instrumental for the incorporation of the traditional classroom with tools of the electronic classroom; continuance of such programs prove beneficial for new and senior part-time faculty alike and should be encouraged.

4. The session was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.