Council of Directors Meeting Minutes  
December 10, 2018


1.0 Call to order

2.0 Guest Dr. Karen Coats, Dean of Graduate School
A proposal was shared about changing the institutional policy requiring the GRE for admission to graduate study. At USM, there is variation in if departments want to use the GRE or not. The policy circulated has not been approved by Grad Council. Dr. Coats’ research yielded that other institutions are allowing programs to select their own acceptance measures. Dr. Coats affirmed that this is not about lowering our standards, but about allowing for flexibility and localizing the decision about this to the unit level. Key points: not lowering standards, other rigorous and suitable options, program level application rubrics (i.e., documentable scores), and the process for approvals. The CoD gave an affirmation of the policy as presented. Schools who are to modify this policy should start the process in the Spring.

3.0 Adoption of Agenda
The agenda was approved as circulated.

4.0 Approval of Minutes. 
Minutes from the November meeting will be circulated to the CoD later this week for review and approval. After that they will be posted to the website.

5.0 Committee Reports
   5.1 Executive Committee 
   Dr. Rehner is leaving USM for The Ohio State University at Lima. His last day will be March 15th.

   Ann Marie Kinnell shared information about the Service Learning seminar for faculty members. Directors are asked to solicit interest from their faculty.

   Dr. Bennett will be in attendance in future Expanded CoD meetings.

   Pat Sims thanked the council for their input at the last expanded CoD meeting.

   5.2 Standing Committees 
   5.2.1 Professional Development committee (Ann Marie Kinnell)
A reminder was given about webinars that are available to faculty through the Center for Faculty Development. Kinnell will send out information about forthcoming webinars.

The CoD might repurpose future meetings for guests, workshops, etc.

5.3 Ad Hoc Committees

5.3.1 Faculty Handbook committee (Ward Sayre)
Changes to the bylaws have been approved by the President and a final vote will be in the spring semester. After that, they will be circulated to faculty.

6.0 Old Business

6.1 Initiative #1
There are concerns about the tenure and promotion process. For example, a workload allocation (reassignment) for junior faculty for service obligations impacts tenure and promotion. There was discussion about faculty meeting criteria for promotion and if that is flexible based on service responsibilities. It appears that some documents do not have any built-in flexibility. Do we want to include a recommendation that flexibility be built in to school level T&P documents or in to this initiative? It seems that a flexible school-level T&P document is favored by the CoD. There is additional concern that service is not valued if there is no language supporting credit for it.

There are concerns about the statement “meeting expectations” in the initiative. Does the language translate to a degree of effort that is less than expected? The directors are interested in raising the baseline of expectations. Pat Sims recommended language that would add the idea of striving for professional development. It was acknowledged that it is hard to quantify effort, whereas quantifying output is easy. The evaluation process should be about the latter. Overall, the expectation is high quality performance. This may vary across disciplines, but it does mean more than just showing up. “Meeting expectations” should also mean that the faculty member is on the track towards successful tenure and/or promotion.

There was some discussion about sharing school documents in their formative stages for some sort of peer review.

Language about faculty evaluations of directors when Option 1 is chosen needs to be corrected in the document.

Administrator workload in appendix A: First, is it clear how faculty administrators are evaluated annually in the category of research? The discussed idea was that Directors and Associate Deans would develop an appropriately scaled research agenda with the Dean for each year and that this would be become their research expectation. This would avoid faculty administrators being evaluated against the same criteria as non-administrative faculty.
Second, should Directors be evaluated as faculty members by faculty at all? Should Deans only evaluate Directors as faculty members? There are issues with being evaluated by the faculty who you evaluate.

Third, there is the issue of rank: Should Associate Professors holding administrative appointments be evaluated as faculty members against unit level expectations so that their progress towards promotion to Full professor is tended to? It seems that there should be a unique process for Associate Professors that yields a documented path toward promotion to Full Professor. Can a bifurcated process be used based on rank, or would this add more complications?

In council conversation, it showed that processes are being invented across the institution based on a variety of scenarios. This issue will be presented to the Provost in a future meeting. This was a significant discussion within the council about this facet of Initiative #1.

The document overall does not have workload language for Associate Deans.

The document needs consistency in language about academic units and schools.

“Faculty Leads” should be changed to “program coordinator” throughout the document.

This document discusses online course evaluation and if such courses should be the same as other delivery methods. The CoD recommends the present course evaluation form be revised.

Faculty Senate evaluations are in addition to annual evaluations of faculty.

Reallocation of faculty workload based on faculty departure, etc. may require an expediated process that will impact research. Any policies about this need to be flexible enough to accommodate this. For example, protracted negotiations may not always be possible.

The term “negotiation” comes up a lot in this document. This kind of process for teaching assignments simply is not possible or advisable in most schools.

All language should be “12 credit hours or four courses” and not just 12 credit hours. The reflects current language in the Faculty Handbook.

6.2 Initiative #2
The “no probation period” for promotion to Full is to allow for the flexibility for faculty members who meet criteria for promotion without waiting a certain number of years. Some directors are concerned about how this negatively impacts teaching and service. One possibility is waiving the probationary period for exceptional cases. Overall, the CoD
is not in favor of no probationary period but would like for there to be a process for exceptions.

There is a concern for consistency in the document across tenure track and teaching track faculty.

External letter writers for promotion to associate professors remains a discussable point. If we value assessing impact on the field, then external letters seem appropriate at the level of Assistant to Associate. The Directors agreed that the process is daunting, but also that it seems to be a regular process at peer institutions. For sure, our timeline for dossier submissions is late. Some directors have created processes where letters can be requested earlier and where research is shared before the dossier is officially submitted. There is varying practice about how the external letters writers are requested. While there was strong favor for this, there still needs to be flexibility in the policy. Perhaps this can reside at the school level. The directors do not seem reluctant to point where it should not be done.

Perhaps schools can work backwards from what the intent of this process is. Does this inadvertently prioritize research over teaching and service? Should the flexibility be based on terminal degree offered? Should accreditation be considered? All of these factors play in to if programs would do this or not. How does this mesh with the tenure process?

The CoD voted to not support the statement requiring external letters as stated in the Initiative.

7.0 New Business
8.0 Discussion items
  8.1 Expanded Council of Directors meeting with the Provost and Deans
     8.1.1 GEC Scheduling Framework
     A general comment was made about the timing of how such messages are communicated. This is negatively interpreted by some faculty members. Can school directors meet directly with Amy Miller/the Scheduling Task Force. There is concern for the timeframe. We will share this with the Provost.
     8.1.2 HR
     8.1.3 OOL website
     8.1.4 Email
  8.2 CoD Leadership
9.0 Announcements
  9.1 CoD website is up and running
  9.2 January 14, 2019: Guest Amy Miller to discuss scheduling
  9.3 Spring CoD meetings will be held in OMH 102