

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON FACULTY AFFAIRS
MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2006
36 GERBERDING HALL**

Chair Jan Sjøvik called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Approval of agenda and minutes of the November 20, 2006, meeting.
2. Review workload and appointment procedures for the position of Secretary of the Faculty (continued discussion) – Lea Vaughn and Donna Kerr

1. Approval of agenda and minutes of the November 20, 2006, meeting

Both the agenda for the day's meeting and the minutes of the November 20, 2006, meeting were approved as written.

2. Review workload and appointment procedures for the position of Secretary of the Faculty (continued discussion)

Chair Sjøvik mentioned that he had drafted two proposals for changes to the *Faculty Code* that had been discussed at the previous meeting for distribution following presentations by both guests. He then introduced Lea Vaughn, past Secretary of the Faculty, and Donna Kerr, current Secretary of the Faculty. He asked them both to talk about their experiences in the position. Lea Vaughn was the first to address the Council.

Professor Vaughn prefaced her remarks by saying that she had served in the position for six years at 75%-time, which seemed appropriate, given her experience. Although it seemed like a full-time position, she was able to publish a number of professional articles and book reviews. She reported that she felt she had built upon work that her predecessor, Míceál Vaughan, had done before her, moving toward establishing a more automated office, using e-mail and web-based opportunities. Much of that work centered around expanding and developing an existing database over a period of 18 months – a database that Vice Provost Olswang ultimately felt was the most accurate faculty information on campus. The database facilitated selection of faculty for service on Faculty Councils and for the first time, they had more faculty volunteering to serve than spaces available on Councils. In addition the database was the source of information for Faculty Senate voting, recruitment of members for the Senate, and appointment and thank you letters for Senators and Council members. She emphasized that this was a team effort – that none of this could have been accomplished without a full staff which also served as a rich source of institutional memory. Much of her work as Secretary of the Faculty was invisible because of the staff support provided.

She tried to visit all Council at least once a year, and some more frequently, especially FCR, FCTCP and FCMA. She attended FCFA on a regular basis. She convened regular staff meetings every two to three weeks to ensure coordination among her staff and the staff of the Faculty Senate Chair.

She took minutes at Faculty Senate meetings, distributing the final minutes via e-mail and posting them to the website within a week. She supported the work of the Faculty Senate Chair and Vice Chair and was frequently involved in drafting Faculty Senate legislation.

Adjudications were an unpredictable part of the position. Some years were very busy, others were not. Her goal at the outset of each inquiry was to facilitate a settlement at the lowest possible level, by getting people at the table and using her skills as a trained mediator.

She mentioned that this task used to be done by the Chair, but had transferred over to the desk of the Secretary of the Faculty because the Chair is generally too busy. Parenthetically, Vaughn suggested that the Chair's position should be 100% - not the Secretary's. The current 50% arrangement for the Chair does not take into account the significant amount of time required to fulfill that obligation.

In response to a question about the possibility of removing the Adjudication duties from the office of the Secretary of the Faculty, Vaughn responded that it might work if it were a separate sort of ombudsman position for faculty only. Such a position would need to be filled by a faculty person well-versed in the *Code* and faculty challenges in general. She also feels that Chapters 27 and 28 need to be re-written, folding them into one chapter that deals more comprehensively with dispute resolution and actively makes mediation and conciliation a more viable part of the process.

In summary, she said that the position of Secretary of the Faculty includes administrative tasks, coordination of councils, grievances, miscellaneous one-time crises (e.g. RCEP issues and collective bargaining for TAs), support of Faculty Senate officers, and the various information dissemination roles.

In response to a question about appointment procedures and term length for the Secretary of the Faculty, she felt that the term should be at least three years, and that five years would be better because of the value of continuity in the office. "Recalls" of persons appointed to the position have happened in the past, but have always been handled informally. If this proved insufficient, Roberts Rules could be employed. She feels that including a provision for recall in the *Faculty Code* would not be necessary or desirable. She was equally ambivalent about the prospect of the position becoming one that is elected by the faculty. If so, she would prefer to see the SEC take the responsibility of the election and appointment of the Secretary of the Faculty.

In response to a question about conflict of interest in her role as conciliator or mediator, she reported that there was and is some conflict of interest here, as the budget for the salary of the Secretary of the Faculty comes from the Provost's office -- and from time to time the Provost is on the other side of a dispute that the Secretary may be trying to settle. In her experience, however, the personnel involved on both sides were successfully able to sort out the conflict. The Provost's office was also the first line of approach in many cases of faculty grievance. Sometimes a brief call from the Provost to a Chair would settle the matter without having to go any further.

In response to a question about the skills needed for the position, she reported that patience, people skills, communication (verbal and written – there’s lots of writing!) textual analysis, tolerance for detail, team skills, common sense and an appreciation of faculty are all required. This is a “chief of staff” type of position. There’s lots of behind the scenes work, so the Secretary of the Faculty needs to be someone who does not require the lime light. The Faculty Senate Chair sets the agenda.

Chair Sjøvik thanked Lea Vaughn and introduced Donna Kerr.

Secretary of the Faculty Donna Kerr opened her remarks saying that she was finding herself in a most interesting position at this meeting. Before she agreed to accept the position of Secretary of the Faculty, she had written to both Ross Heath (then Chair of the Faculty Senate) and President Mark Emmert saying that given the tension that comes with a position that is nominated by the SEC and appointed by the President, there will be times when the Secretary will need to play “bad cop” to one or the other. She implied that her presentation at this meeting may be one of those times. She is not sure that a review of the position of Secretary of the Faculty lies within the scope of the FCFA, but that it might be inferred in the *Faculty Code*’s charge that the FCFA be concerned with things of “interest to the faculty.” The *Code* is often taken in context, but on some things the *Code* is very clear. It is a legacy – the faculty’s inheritance and a product of the history of the UW with its very particular form of shared governance.

Kerr reminded Council member about the impact of the McCarthy era on the UW campus, citing in particular a 1948 New Republic article entitled “Witch Hunt in the Northwest.” The President chose to fall silent in the face of the general hysteria at the UW because at that time the state funded almost the entire UW budget. To have rocked the boat in that regard could have resulted in a significant decrease in state funding. Although it took some time, this experience led to the drafting of the “new” *Faculty Code*, which is the one that is still in effect, though changed yearly through Faculty Senate legislation. This *Code* notes three sites of shared governance: The Faculty Senate, the University Committees, and Schools, Colleges and Campuses. The University Committees are advisory to the Provost and the SEC. They are deliberative bodies and do not take action. The Provost provides leadership through the University Committees and the Deans. The Schools, Colleges and Campuses (now numbering 18) are responsible for organizing their operations through by-laws. The Secretary of the Faculty is responsible for ensuring that the by-laws are in place, are compliant with the *Faculty Code*, and that actions taken that stem from the by-laws are in compliance with the *Faculty Code*. This has not been done systematically or fully in the past, and there are many Schools, Colleges, and Campuses where the by-laws are woefully out of date. Some are even non-existent. And many grievances go to adjudication as a result of by-laws that are not in compliance with the *Faculty Code*. She does not mean to criticize her predecessors, because there is a considerable price tag on this effort. One thing that should be included in every part of the *Faculty Code* and its revisions is a fiscal note. Given the number (and resulting cost) of grievances filed as a result of this job not being done in the past, it would pay to support this effort in the future. She and her assistant are

working with schools and colleges to reference the *Code* with each element of their by-laws. Most schools and colleges are in the process of drafting and redrafting their by-laws with the help of her office, but there is still much to be done.

In response to a question about the Secretary of the Faculty's workload she responded that she had given that a lot of thought and there are two things needed. The Faculty Senate should establish a University Council on the practice of the *Faculty Code* that would advise administration and the SEC. It should also appoint a Board of Shared Governance that would consist of past Faculty Senate Chairs, past Chairs of University Councils, past chairs of Faculty Councils, the Secretary of the Faculty, and a designee from the President's office. This Board would appoint and regularly review the Secretary of the Faculty who would report to the Board. The voice of shared governance needs to be more than the Secretary of the Faculty. It would be a mistake to make the Secretary of the Faculty an elected position. There's a need for greater continuity in all three sites of shared governance. Perhaps there should be a longer term for the Senate Chair and for Council Chairs. We should also encourage second terms on University Committees.

In response to a question about why the FCFA might have gotten a request to review the position and appointing procedure for the Secretary of the Faculty, she responded that there is no time pressure that she is aware of. The task she has taken on is not one that should be rushed. It's a huge job and the documents are extremely complex. She also reported that there are concerns about staffing issues within the office, but felt that this (FCFA) discussion should stay focused on the size of the job. She stated that if she is the question, she will step down, but she urged the Council not to change the system.

In response to a question about the advisability of removing the Adjudication responsibilities from the position, she stated that she is new enough in the position that she is still playing it by ear, and is not ready to make that judgment.

In response to a comment about the advisory role of the Secretary of the Faculty being an unsanctioned role for that position, she commented that she interprets that function as advising on possible alternatives for dispute resolution, not as a counselor. She has been careful not to act as a counselor to the faculty. The Secretary of the Faculty functions strictly as a "pass-through" for faculty looking for the best way to solve a problem.

In response to the suggestion that the Secretary of the Faculty has the latitude to choose what aspects of the position he or she wants to focus on, she objected, saying that the Secretary of the Faculty has the authority and the obligation to support shared governance, as stated in the *Faculty Code*. Bringing the by-laws up-to-date is clearly the task that needs to be done now.

In response to questions about her proposed Board of Shared Governance, she suggested that this body would be nominated by the SEC and appointed by the President.

Chair Sjøvik thanked Secretary of the Faculty Donna Kerr and distributed draft legislation that had been reviewed by Alan Kirtley. These will be discussed at the January meeting of the FCFA.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. *Minutes by Susan Folk, Office of Regional Affairs*

Present:

Regular: James Callis, Rich Christie, Anthony Gill, Katherine Graubard, Jacob Hildebrandt, , Todd Scheuer, Jan Sjøvik, Mícheál Vaughan

President's Designee: Cheryl Cameron

Ex-officio: Jennifer Patterson

Guests: Lynn Bazarnic for Bridget Doyle; Lea Vaughn, past Secretary of the Faculty, Donna Kerr, Secretary of the Faculty

Absent:

Regular: Alan Kirtley and Beth Kolko

Ex-officio: Julie Cook, Bridget Doyle (excused), and Erin Shields