

College of Arts and Sciences

Faculty Assembly

November 21, 2014

Andrew Rabin convened the Faculty Assembly at 2:07 PM.

The meeting opened with two announcements:

- The next meeting of the Faculty Assembly will be December 5, 2014. Any motion to be considered at that meeting must be submitted to Dr. Rabin by 5 PM on November 28.
- The December 5th meeting will be held in HUM 100 at its regularly-scheduled time. Prior to that meeting, Susan Howarth will discuss and explain the University's budgeting process beginning at 1:00 PM. This meeting will also be held in HUM 100.

Dr. Rabin recognized Dr. Willihnganz to discuss the results of the faculty salary study.

The provost explained that the study began in December 2013 as an effort to see how U of L faculty salaries compare with benchmark institutions (CPE, national benchmarks, ACC schools). A committee chaired by Dr. Robert Goldstein reviewed salary data provided by the University of Oklahoma in its work. The study only considered tenured- and tenure-track faculty salaries (the provost acknowledged that consideration of PTL, term, and clinical faculty salaries is also needed). Human Resources is evaluating staff salaries and its report was to be submitted "next week." The report has been delayed due to faulty data and is slated to be redistributed to the deans for their review now that those corrections have been made.

The faculty study considered the *average* salary by discipline and by rank within discipline. It found that the University is approximately \$11 million off if it seeks to achieve 100% of the median salaries (the provost reported that U of L is currently at 91% of the median). Arts and Sciences would need \$4.4 million to get to 100% of the median. The University is committed to addressing this issue, perhaps as early as the next budgetary cycle.

Dr. Willihnganz noted that the additional funds needed to make up this shortfall could be generated from several sources, including real savings from VSIP, use of undesignated funds from the recently-concluded capital campaign, carryover funds being released back to the individual units, and unit budget reviews in which deans make internal cost-saving changes.

The provost indicated that one of her major concerns coming out of this study was that many persons seemed to feel that their teaching, research, service and personal interests were not appreciated or valued. She stated that the University may need to do things differently if that is the case and solicited input from the faculty. When asked if factors other than salary had been considered in evaluating faculty satisfaction, the provost responded that only salaries had been explored to date.

Dr. Vandembroucke suggested that any available additional resources should be allocated to assistant and associate professors. Dr. Willihnganz replied that counsel had, in the past, questioned the legality of such an approach and had insisted that all regular faculty had to be included.

During a discussion of salary compression, Dr. K'Meyer noted that compression had negatively impacted professors as well as assistant and associate professors. Dr. Willihnganz replied that the "real problem" in A&S seemed to be at the assistant professor level because many of the assistant professors were hired at lower salaries.

Asked to explain who was reviewing the data and making decisions, Dr. Willihnganz explained that Dr. Goldstein's committee shares the data with the provost and her senior staff. The data will then be shared with the deans and chairs for their input and will also be shared with the Faculty Senate and the University Budget Committee.

Dr. Heineken suggested that the data generated in the committee's work should be shared publicly in the interest of transparency and that the committee's ongoing work should be communicated with the faculty. The provost replied that this was "good advice" and indicated that she would explore a mechanism for communicating the committee's work to the University community.

When asked about a provisional timetable, the provost responded that the speed with which action will be taken will be determined by what the committee proposes to do, how much money would be needed to enact an approved plan, the advice of counsel and board approval. Next year's budget has to be submitted to the board in May.

Discussion turned to finding a place for A&S in the University's development strategy. Concerns were voiced that the three research strengths that the board has approved have little to no place for A&S's faculty and that identifying individual strengths might even work against the uniqueness of a College of Arts and Sciences if A&S has to compete with the professional schools. Dr. Willihnganz noted that the three research areas/strengths advanced in the initial phase were "shovel-ready" programs being advanced by their units. The units are encouraged to identify and advance their own areas of strength/expertise. The provost suggested that "general education" could be a compelling theme/area of focus for A&S, leading to voiced concerns that such a focus would shift faculty away from disciplinary research/scholarship and that using an area of strength to drive hiring decisions could lock departments into research areas and allow little flexibility. The provost responded that research foci should come from what departments are already doing and excited about doing.

As the discussion wound down, Dr. Rabin proposed to invite Keith Inman, Vice President for University Advancement, to speak to the Faculty Assembly and this suggestion met with the faculty's approval.

After Dr. Willihnganz concluded her conversation with the faculty, Dr. Rabin recognized Dr. David Brown to update the faculty on the work of the Faculty Senate. Dr. Brown reported that

President Ramsey spoke about his concern that the University would receive a mid-year budget cut. Dr. Brown also mentioned that he had met with Keith Inman concerning the recent campaign and had a copy of the capital campaign report that he would be able to share with faculty.

The Faculty Assembly was adjourned at 3:21 PM.