Kent Stark Faculty Council Minutes
15 February 2013

Attendance by constituency: I. Kim Garchar, Carey McDougall, Leslie Heaphy; II. Julie Cremeans-Smith, Erin Hollenbaugh, Deidre Warren; III. Robert Hamilton, Gro Hovhannisyan, Relja Vulanovic; IV. Jayne Moneysmith, Brenda Smith, Mary Rooks; V. Deb Shelestak, Verena Murphy; VI. Greg Blundell, Beth Campbell, Jarrod Tudor

Absent:

Ex-Officio: Dean Walter Wagor, Assoc. Dean Ruth Capasso

Guests: Rob Kairis, Mitch McKinney

I. Call to Order was given by Carey McDougall at 2:04 p.m.
II. Roll call and determination of quorum made by Mary Rooks.
III. Leslie Heaphy made a motion to approve the agenda. Jayne Moneysmith seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved.
IV. With minor corrections, the minutes of the 18 January 2013 meeting were approved.
V. Chair’s Report
   a) Chair McDougall reported that RCFAC would like feedback on whether or not Stark faculty would like to see RC faculty presence on departmental websites. Currently, some RC faculty members are not represented at all, some are in a separate category, some are listed with no differentiation, and some sites link to RC webpages. Some feedback has already been provided: 1) it would be good to be represented on the department website as we are part of the school, 2) it would be good to list us and not separate us out to create more collegiality, 3) if our campus is mentioned it would help advertise what Stark has to offer for students who start by looking at the department site (it would also indicate to students that they can work with us if they are near the RC faculty’s campus), 4) it would be good to have RCFAC encourage departments to list RC faculty, but to let the department FAC decide what is the best way for each dept. McDougall invited ideas and suggestions on this matter and noted that if there is enough support RCFAC will probably ask Provost Diacon to ask department chairs/directors to follow up. After discussion, Council supported suggestion #4.
   b) RCFAC would like feedback on whether or not faculty would find it useful to have a common weighting section for RTP review in all the RC handbooks. The handbooks are currently very similar and most are based on our wording. McDougall invited questions. Ensuing discussion led to Council’s support for pursuing this proposal.
   c) Cabinet recommended that we use the first 10 minutes of the All Faculty Meeting to meet Theresa Ford, Stark’s new Grants Administrator. After that, the meeting will follow up on our discussions on reviews. McDougall invited feedback regarding the agenda for the meeting. Council supported the agenda for the meeting, to be held March 1 at 2:00pm in MH 203.
   d) At the request of Chair McDougall, Vice Chair Kim Garchar reported on a recent incident that led Cabinet to discuss Stark’s policy on, and the availability of, gender neutral restrooms. Cabinet agreed this is a facilities issue and a policy issue, and asked the Dean to address signage (to indicate gender neutral facilities). Garchar distributed handouts from Amanda Weyant with suggested policy language, noted that she has been in contact with the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (which office supports the new policy language), and noted that the CARES team is looking into using this as an educational opportunity. Dean Wagor reported that the signage issue is in the process of being addressed.
VI. Dean’s Report

a) Dean Wagor reported that last week he sent out a correspondence regarding a consultant visiting campus to do a market survey, which will be conducted on all campuses (beginning with Stark). The university hired a consultant, who has been hosting and will continue to host discussion groups with interested parties, to find out more about how we are perceived, what we do, etc. Some faculty members have already met with the consultant. Dean Wagor encouraged faculty members to participate in any way they can in the coming week.

b) Dean Wagor reported that the Governor has released his proposed budget. The Kent Stater reported on it, but the report is oversimplified and does not tell the whole story. Dean Wagor noted that this discusses only the first year of the proposed budget; other variables (with potentially negative consequences) kick in after that. Some experts say this is one of the most complex formulas possible for divvying up education funds. Dean Wagor invited questions. Julie Cremeans-Smith asked, “how are we preparing to proactively respond to the types of variables that will be in this new budget?” Dean Wagor noted that we are working on crunching numbers; the agenda is driven by the governor’s office, with emphasis on increasing the number of degree holders in OH (shifting funding to reward institutions that are producing graduates). One variable is “at risk students.” We will be looking at how we can help “at risk” students be as successful as they can be. Further discussion ensued.

c) Dean Wagor announced that Dean Capasso is retiring. He thanked her for her dedication to our academic community and her service to this campus. He reported that we will work to hire someone soon so that there will be little or no gap between August 1st and the start of the new Associate Dean. The PRA is already processed. Dean Wagor requested that Council provide a list of faculty to select from to help form the search committee (6-8 names). Chair McDougall asked who else would serve on the committee. Dean Wagor replied that Heather, a representative from student affairs, and faculty members will be on the committee. McDougall invited Council to nominate faculty members for the committee. Jayne Moneysmith suggested an e-mail be sent out with a call for nominations. McDougall agreed and noted that Cabinet will be asked to convene for a special meeting to discuss the nominations and make recommendations. McDougall thanked Dean Capasso for her service and said she would be missed. Her sentiments were reiterated by members of Council.

VII. Associate Dean’s Report

Dean Capasso provided an update on curricular progress. We have departmental permission to move forward with minors in Geography and Geology (to announce these minors). The BA in Fine Arts is through the EPC level and was sent to Ohio Board of Regents.

VIII. Committee Reports

a) PAAC—Kim Garchar requested that Council members spread the word that only full-time faculty are eligible for travel requests and noted that there has been a request to reconsider the level of funding for chairing and commenting on a session. She invited faculty to submit issues of concern to the committee for consideration at their next meeting.

b) Committee II—Mary Rooks provided handouts detailing the recommendations of Committee II regarding merit application and review protocols. Ensuing discussion led to minor changes to the recommendations. Leslie Heaphy made a motion that the changes, as amended by Council, be made, and that the form then be brought back to Council for approval. Gro Hovhannisyan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

c) Colloquium Committee—no report.

d) Treasurer/Social Committee—Deb Shelestak reported that the committee is in the process of planning the spring party, at which all retirements and promotions (including NTT promotions, this year and last) will be celebrated.

e) Handbook Committee—no report

f) Faculty Technology Committee—Erin Hollenbaugh reported on the status of software requests.

g) Faculty Senate—Chair McDougall invited questions on the distributed Senate report.
h) Speaker Series Committee—Mitch McKinney reported that two speakers—Don Mitchell and Jill Carroll—will be coming in April. He noted that the call for next year’s submissions will be coming out soon. Chair McDougall suggested that the series might benefit from a more exciting title. Kim Garchar urged Council to encourage faculty members and students to attend the events.

i) Academic Planning Committee—no report (see Dean Capasso’s report for update).

IX. Old Business

a) SSI Norming—On behalf of Lori Wilfong, Jayne Moneysmith read a report (see below) summarizing the ad hoc committee’s progress and recommendations. After extensive research, the committee concluded that the best way to proceed is to run several norming scenarios; trial runs will provide evidence that will help the committee make informed decisions. The committee requested Council’s approval for a test run, which would go back to a previous semester to test the results of norming based on varied groupings. Ensuing discussion focused on possible norming groups/divisions—including traditional/online classes, lower/upper level classes, and classes in majors. Moneysmith noted that the charge of the committee was not to discuss how the SSIs are going to be used, but how different norming groups will produce more useful data. This, she continued, indicates the dual nature of the SSI’s: they are intended to be useful for the faculty member, but are also used for evaluation/review—do we need the same set of data for both of these? What are we trying to achieve—more useful information for the teacher or for RTP committees? Are these really different? Dean Wagor argued that, as a campus, we put too much emphasis on SSIs as a single measure for review/RTP (“we allow numbers to gain mystical value they don’t possess”); this is out of tune with what other universities are doing. He suggested that we need to look toward a more representative set of guides that place more weight on peer evaluation of teaching and analysis of teaching materials, philosophy, intent, etc. He commented that we allow numbers to become too important. During ensuing discussion, several Council members agreed with Dean Wagor. Moneysmith noted that the committee’s research supported Dean Wagor’s points. The research shows that this kind of data is not sound, and that a portfolio approach is more advisable. During the ensuing discussion, it was noted that students are not experts in teaching, that sometimes student discomfort/frustration is an important step in the learning process, and that the response rate, especially for DL classes, is so low that the survey is not statistically viable. Moneysmith reminded Council of the need to clarify what the test runs should be, noting that it will depend on what we want to show/find out. Dee Warren suggested that Council needs to revisit this issue from a broader perspective. Moneysmith agreed, calling attention to the fact that the ad hoc committee completed its task, and now needs to know what to do next. What scenarios, if any, Council would like the committee to test depends on our goals—what we want to find out. Chair McDougall pointed out that there seems to be a general consensus that we need to reevaluate the ways SSI’s function. Ensuing discussion led to Moneysmith’s suggestion that Council focus right now just on the SSI’s—finish the research, report, and share best practices. Discussion ensued regarding the best scenarios the committee might run. Erin Hollenbaugh suggested that the committee, having done the research, can be trusted with this decision. Kim Garchar made a motion that Council request that the ad hoc SSI committee run scenarios, determined by them based on their research, that attempt to re-run one semester’s worth of data in 3 different configurations. Deb Shelestak seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

b) Bookstore Survey. Greg Blundell distributed, and reported on the progress of, the bookstore survey. After discussion, Kim Garchar made a motion that the survey be distributed to faculty. Brenda Smith seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

X. New Business—none

XI. Announcements—none

XII. Adjournment—the meeting was adjourned at 3:57 pm.
Report of the SSI norming groups AdHoc Committee

Committee members: Lori Wilfong, chair; Jayne Moneysmith, Ran Li, Kathleen Stirbens, Brandon Vaccaro, Oliver Ruff, James Seelye

February 15, 2013

Will different norming groups make an impact? Our research suggests yes (Arreola, 2007; Berk 2006). In general, we also found that we are doing far less to parse out different norming groups than other institutions. We have looked at several models, but until actual scenarios are run with real-world data from our campus, we are simply guessing. Our recommendation:

The AdHoc committee would like to establish **three** different norming scenarios based on models found in our research. These include upper vs. lower division courses, courses for majors vs. LER/Core and service courses, and splits by department or College. Using these scenarios, we would run a set of SSI data from a previous semester. Faculty would be able to compare the existing norms with those of the new scenarios and be able to make an informed decision about changing norming groups. This allows faculty to have a valued voice in an important process and puts to rest the question – will different norming groups make an impact?

If our recommendation is accepted, we request additional time to draft the scenarios and work with support staff to run the data. Faculty would be fully informed of the process and given a voice in ultimately choosing which norming groups are used by the campus. If our recommendation is unacceptable, we will simply sum up our research findings and present the report at the next Faculty Council meeting.