

Executive Committee of the AFSE  
Meeting Minutes  
January 17, 2020

Present: David Brafman (by Zoom), Samantha Brunhaver, Christopher Buneo, Dianne Hansford (Secretary), Marcus Herrmann (Chair), Rosa Krajmalnik-Brown, Douglas Montgomery, George Pan, Rod Roscoe, Sefaattin Tongay, Yalin Wang

Absent: Michael Goryll, Tony Lamanna

Guest: Dean Kyle Squires

1. Minutes of the December 6, 2019 meeting were approved.
2. **Dean's Dissertation Award.** Dean Squires talked with the EC about how this award process could evolve. Should there be more awards? Should other models be considered? Should there be one award per school? Should the awards be linked to the number of Ph.D. students graduating that term? Can we make the selection process more transparent? Do we need address complaints from candidates not selected? Before reviewing the current process, the committee should ascertain why we have this award.

Having the dean's dissertation award on your CV matters. Because of the award's potential impact, Yalin suggested expanding the award to include an award for current graduate students rather than just graduating/graduated students. Rosy suggested some connection with the Graduate Student Associate, which would involve the students in the selection process.

What about the issue of people wanting more feedback about the process? Sef brought up the point that at the funding agencies, applicants are not given feedback on unfunded proposals, so reflecting the real world, there is no reason we should be concerned with giving these applicants feedback. Chris suggested clarifying the ranking process. We could communicate the number of applicants.

From your perspective, do you feel the award is doing its job? Does it recognize achievement? How can we improve it? Rod brought up the challenges created by differences in the schools, such as valued publication types, competitiveness, size, and age. TPS is a very young program and thus differs greatly from some other FSE programs. School-based awards would address this issue.

What are some ways to reconcile the bias the selection process has for larger and older schools? One suggestion made is to focus on impact within a domain of study. Or ask, what is your greatest achievement in your Ph.D. thesis? This approach would transform the selection process from sheer numbers to achievement. Also suggested was a presentation component to the selection process. This could take the form of a short presentation, a video submission, or a

poster session as part of a minisymposium. Coupling a poster session with a distinguished lecturer visit would give the award more visibility and give the candidates more exposure. Additionally, the distinguished lecturer gets to meet great students.

Comments were made concerning the timing of the awards presentation. If Ph.D. candidates have left campus, they might not be available to attend a poster session or awards ceremony. Suggestions to over-come this problem included a companion or a requirement for participation in the awards event.

**ACTION ITEM:**

The EC will continue to discuss this idea, identify a process by the April meeting, and outline a new process by end of Spring semester.

3. **Langer visit.** Details regarding the Langer itinerary for February 7 were reviewed with the EC. Members will be asked to connect with their directors about outreach strategies to their faculty to ensure turnout at the seminar and participation in the meetings.
4. **Non-T/TT faculty serving as PI on proposals.** Is the non-T/TT PI policy an ASU or FSE policy? Rod read from the ASU research administration webpage and concluded that this limitation is specific to FSE. David mentioned that in BDI, research faculty submit their own proposals. The NIH looks favorably upon research faculty submitting proposals. Commonly, grants are for education or equipment. Lab space is not always a requirement of a grant. The lab space issue is an important factor in broadening the PI pool.

Sef brought up the fact that in his area, if a PI cannot mentor Ph.D. or post-docs, then they will have little chance in a grant award. Rod recommended that faculty pay attention to what their sponsors want.

Consensus is that non-T/TT faculty should be able to serve as PI in FSE. This should also be benchmarked against peer institutions and internally.

**ACTION ITEM:** David, Yalin and Dianne will draft a memo for Dean Squires and Vice Dean Saraniti for the March meeting.

5. **Discuss PNAS Article.** Rosy mentioned an NAS committee that was asked to write a report on promotion and tenure because there is a sense in some areas that many times the evaluation is based not on what is in the best interest for science. There are also two other reports, one on harassment and one relating STEM to other sciences, like social studies and humanities. Rosy will share these reports with the committee once she receives them.

Rod thought the PNAS article was overall positive. It suggests that faculty innovate, think outside the box, and then encourage that activity. In general, having more ways to be successful, allows people to grow and change and not just be a mold. He mentioned a downside to the article was that it was very money driven.

**ACTION ITEM:** This will be on the March agenda.

6. **Other items from EC Members.** David Brafman reported that consideration for multi-year contracts for lecturers came up at a faculty meeting. This is a continuing topic that this committee has been trying to push. The first hurdle is multi-year contracts for senior lecturers. This is difficult to implement because the Provost has established a year-to-year renewal process. Why should lecturers be different?

Another suggestion for improving the lecturer contract renewal process is that contract renewals should be done earlier in the year. Offer letters should be in hand at the beginning of the spring semester. The faculty review process is gearing up right now and the argument was that those reviews are not in. This committee should continue to push this. The renewal offer side of things is more at the school level. Kyle said he would talk to directors to make an effort to facilitate these early renewals. We should probably bring this up with him again. This remains a concern.

**Next Meetings:**

**Lunch with Robert Langer:** February 7, 2020; 11:45am – 1:00pm; CAVC 501

**EC Meeting:** March 6, 2020; 12:00 – 1:00pm; BY 420