AAUP ExComm Meeting with the Provost

November 8, 2018

Greene Hall 528

Present: Jane Albrecht (VP); Doug Beets (Sec.), Steve Boyd (Pres), Provost Rogan Kersh

Minutes

Jane Albrecht, who extended the invitation to the Provost, began by stating the goals of the meeting:

1. establish an on-going relationship between the AAUP and the Provost (e.g., one meeting per semester);
2. facilitate communication between the faculty and Provost (e.g., forums between the Provost and faculty);
3. focus this meeting on the motions passed Spring 2018 by the College and Senate on faculty salaries;
4. set a general time for a Faculty Forum with the Provost early Spring 2019

**Salary discussion:**

1. **Falling Behind Inflation: Associate/Assistant Profs** ***falling behind inflation*** rate last 6 years; according to the April 2018 AAUP Salary Report, in the College between July 2011 and July 2016, purchasing power of Associate and Assistant Professors’ salaries declined by 1.43 percent and .27 percent, respectively Table 1). In the same period, on the Reynolda campus purchasing power of Associate and Assistant Professors’ salaries declined by 1.05 percent and 8.03 percent, respectively (Table 2).

On Assoc/Assts falling behind inflation, the Provost referenced a graph from his office showing that the percentage increase in the overall salary pool in the last six years has been above the rate of inflation. Ensuing discussion lead to the observation that the high percentage of tenured (especially Full Professors) at WFU, whose salaries have kept pace with inflation, masks the situation of other faculty, whose salaries have not kept up with increases in the cost of living. [In subsequent email communication dated 12/5/18, the Provost said he will consult IR about the statistics].

1. **Debt Levels: Junior faculty have** ***higher student debt levels and payments than previous cohorts*** (Boyd mentioned a case in which the monthly salary increase equaled one-third of the student load debt payment);

*Question to Provost*: is your office aware of this increased burden and are you tracking it? The Provost: indicated that he was not aware of the extent of the increased student debt for junior faculty and that he was unaware whether anyone in the administration was tracking it. *AAUP ExComm offered to include questions about debt in a faculty survey.*

1. **Budget Timetable**: The Provost expressed concern about, particularly Assoc/Asst Profs and said the he was glad that he was in the midst of meetings with the Budget Committee and now was the time to push for an increased percentage in the salary pool. He thought that an increase over two straight years that could somehow address the weaker position of Assoc/Asst would be advantageous in addressing those who had fallen behind. He said he intended to explore that.
2. **Cost of Living and Merit**: AAUP asked if the Provost was willing to support a distinction between a COL increase and a merit increase. AAUP said that, without such a distinction and raises for many individuals at or below the inflation rate, talk of merit is meaningless.
3. **College Salaries/Salaries BUS,LAW,DIV**: most of the meeting was spent talking about salaries of College Faculty. [In follow-up email communication dated 12/4/2018 , the Provost stated that the professional schools, and graduate school, sit on their own financial bottoms, and do not draw on College tuition. The business school receives tuition from juniors and seniors who elect a major in the school, though the College is credited a portion of tuition for any bus-school majors who take College electives or elect a College minor.]
4. **Peer Group**: AAUP asked whether the identification of new peer group of schools would help persuade the Budget Committee to increase the pool. The Provost said he didn’t believe so, although a new peer group needed to be identified going forward because these problems were not going to go away.

**Conclusion:** AAUP asked if The Provost would attend a faculty forum on salaries in late January or early February. He said he would be happy to.