Chair Jan Sjåvik called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting Synopsis:

1. Approval of agenda and minutes of the May 15, 2007, meeting.
2. RCEP and Section 26-41 of the Faculty Code (Dean Patricia Wahl).
3. Update on Electronic Faculty Effort Cost Share Management.
4. Additional Business.

1. Approval of agenda and minutes of the May 15, 2007, meeting.

Agenda for the meeting and the minutes of for the May 15, 2007, meeting were approved.

2. RCEP and Section 26-41 of the Faculty Code (Dean Patricia Wahl).

Chair Sjåvik welcomed Dean Wahl and explained that Jan Carlile had spoken at the previous FCFA meeting about his experience as chair of the Pathobiology RCEP Review Committee. Having heard a faculty member’s perspective on the process, the Council is interested in hearing how the process works (or doesn’t work) from an administrative point of view. He also assured her that a possible revision of RCEP procedures is at the head of the list of next year’s FCFA agenda.

Dean Wahl distributed two handouts: one outlined points of confusion with RCEP regulations that she encountered during the process; the other was a handout distributed to aid those following the procedures.

The first point of confusion was the use of the term “program.” The Code does state that the term program includes a department or other degree-granting unit. Nevertheless, time and again, the use of the term program led people to assume that RCEP procedures applied only to the Pathobiology graduate program and not the department of Pathobiology.

The second issue involved an apparent conflict between the text of Section 26-41 and the process flowchart on the handout she distributed with respect to confidentiality and contact with the faculty regarding RCEP procedures. Confidentiality that is carefully spelled out in Section 26-41.B.2.f is not reflected in the flow-chart that she had received, which in fact suggested that the dean should be engaged in intensive collaboration with affected program faculty and with the appropriate advisory committees, as well as arranging for “new homes” for regular and research faculty, before initiating the RCEP process. (An attempt will be made to find the origin of the flowchart.)

The Dean reported having been challenged by the PIC committee to describe arrangements she had made for new homes for the Pathobiology faculty. It was not clear to her how those arrangements might have been made without consulting with the faculty. The Code seems to imply that administration and faculty are on opposing sides and should not trust each other. The lack of communication that RCEP requires only exacerbates the problem.

The third point of confusion related to the lack of clarity and guidance about the operation of the PIC committee. Normally, the chair of a committee is responsible for calling and running meetings. After a month of no action following the appointment of the first PIC committee, the Dean’s office staff ended up scheduling and arranging the meetings, with the chair of the School’s Council running the meetings. Dean Wahl suggested that a set of administrative/operational guidelines for users might be drafted along with any changes to RCEP procedures in the future.
The fourth recommendation was that there should be an allowance for extension of the PIC committee deadline and an understanding that a PIC committee must make a recommendation. The first PIC committee, having not been able to come to a recommendation by the deadline, had to be disbanded and then reappointed in order to continue its task. As it was, they declined an offer to consult with the Dean and once more reported no recommendation because of a lack of information that easily could have been provided by the Dean.

The fifth recommendation is that information and materials gathered by the PIC committee should be passed to the subsequent Review committee.

In response to a question about the rationale for a second RCEP committee, a councilmember explained that the Review Committee looks at both the PIC committee report and the Dean’s report and ultimately allows for a system of checks and balances for the process.

The sixth concern pertained to a perceived inconsistency between the initiation of the RCEP process through the Provost and the final report and meeting of the SCPB with the President. The Dean suggested that the entire process should be through Provost, who has responsibility for academic affairs, faculty and programs.

The seventh issue dealt with an assumption (from the PIC report) that an RCEP process should be done when a graduate program becomes an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program. The Dean reported that this has never been done before and it is unwarranted. There is nothing in the criteria for doing a RCEP process that is involved in a program becoming an interdisciplinary graduate program. The Pathobiology (Graduate) Program became an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program following the Graduate School process, which was independent of the RCEP process. To require an RCEP Process every time a program becomes an Interdisciplinary Graduate Program would be a huge barrier to campus-wide interdisciplinary efforts.

A suggestion was made that the revised RCEP procedures specify that the SEC, as ultimate interpreter of the Faculty Code, is the group to determine what actions are subject to RCEP procedures in cases where a question has been raised.

Finally, the Dean felt there should be recognition in the Faculty Code of the difference between faculty appointments of University-based faculty and PDR faculty who have their primary home at another institution. The loss of a University appointment is much different for the two groups. For PDR faculty, the loss of University appointment does not mean the loss of the job, benefits, or space, whereas it does for University-based faculty. Perhaps regular faculty appointments should never be given for PDR faculty.

Chair Sjåvik suggested that this last issue was something that the FCFA might take on, but it would be considered separately from possible revision of RCEP procedures.

The Council agreed that revisions should move toward a more collaborative and transparent approach to the process. Sjåvik thanked Dean Wahl and suggested that the Council may call her back during the next academic year as it ponders revisions to the procedures.

3. Update on Electronic Faculty Effort Cost Share Management.

Linda Yeager, Project Manager for the Electronic Faculty Effort Cost Share Management initiative (under the auspices of the VP for Financial Management and the Vice Provost for Research) thanked the Council for taking time for her update, explaining that this project is a scoping study based on the USER model that has introduced a number of web-based initiatives, including My Financial Desktop, OWLs and OPUS. This initiative directly involves all faculty who are working on grants, as they all must regularly certify that they are indeed completing the expectations of their grants. This has been a cumbersome process for faculty and has for the most part become the job of administrators, who complete the forms for the signature of the Primary Investigator (PI). The electronic version of this process may be less cumbersome – it certainly will involve less paper – but it may require more effort and involvement on the part of faculty members than currently is the case.
Yeager distributed an extensive handout and highlighted some of the pages. Her primary hope in attending the meeting, however, was to get faculty feedback on how the project is shaping up so far – noting that implementation of such a program was still a number of years into the future. In response to questions from the Council, Yeager confirmed that she and her group are working with the Research Advisory Board and the Faculty Council on Research.

At this point, a decision has been made to develop an electronic system (the “build” approach) rather than purchasing new software (the “buy” approach). There are currently only two vendors that provide this kind of software, and neither completely fulfills the needs of the UW faculty. Despite the fact that every research university and institution must be faced with this same dilemma, the UW is in good company in their decision to build. Stanford (among others) is also currently in the process of doing the same thing.

Yeager and her colleagues are currently considering how best to phase in the new process and how to invite the right people into the discussion as the build phase continues. She asked the Council how best to involve PIs in the process. Council members suggested that she send people to the PIs – preferably during their office hours. They also suggested contacting grants administrators at the various colleges and schools for suggestions of PIs who might be cooperative and informative with their initiative. The Council also assured her that as long as she is in touch with FCR on a regular basis, she is doing her part in engaging faculty input. FCFA does not need to be contacted for a briefing more frequently than once a year.

4. Additional Business.

Chair Sjåvik reported on a recent meeting concerning English Language Program instructors associated with UW Educational Outreach. Significant progress has been made, as it seems the major problem was lack of communication between the instructors and Educational Outreach administration. Administration has been urged to document appointment procedures in a Handbook that is accessible to all, and instructors have been urged to respond more deliberatively with administration.

On this, the last meeting of the academic year for the FCFA, Sjåvik roundly thanked the members for their active participation both in discussions and in the work of the Council, which had an unusually challenging agenda this year. In turn, Council members thanked the Chair for his service and support of Council and Senate activities as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Minutes by Susan Folk, Assistant to the Secretary of the Faculty, sfolk@u.washington.edu, or 206-543-2637.

Present:

Regular: Christie, Graubard, Hildebrandt, Scheuer, Sjåvik, Vaughan
Guests: Patricia Wahl, Dean, School of Public Health & Community Medicine; Dan Luchtel, Vice Chair, Faculty Senate; and Lisa Yeager, eFECS Project Manager, Strategic Initiatives Office

Absent:

Regular: Callis, Gill, and Kirtley (all excused)
President’s Designee: Cameron (excused)
Members of Representative Groups: Cook, Doyle, Lovell, Patterson, and Shields (all excused)