The Faculty Council on Research met Tuesday, December 7, 1999 at 2:30 p.m. in 36 Gerberding. Vice-Chair Mark Bothwell presided.


ABSENT: Professors Ewart, Furness, Kennedy, Mirza; Ex officio members Landolt, Simenstad, Trumbull-Camber, Kahl.

*Designates Ex officio with vote.

The minutes from October 19, 1999 were approved as written. Minutes from November 16, 1999 were approved with minor deletions.

Proposal by Prof. Sheehan to Grant Voting Rights to Research Faculty

Prof. Sheehan proposed that FCR take up the issue of granting voting rights to Research faculty. She stressed that, while this is an issue that ought to be addressed in FCFA, Faculty Affairs does not have room on its agenda this year and needs some incentive from FCR. She indicated that language in the Faculty Code prevented research faculty from having their appointments converted to tenured appointments. Prof. Sheehan put forward for discussion suggested amendments to Sec. 24-34 and 24-41 of the Faculty Code. The suggested amendments consisted of deleting from Sec. 24-34 the sentences "research appointments do not carry university voting privileges" (that tenure is not acquired through service in research appointments) and deleting from Sec. 24-41 the sentence "the University is not obligated to provide replacement funding during lapses of a faculty member's external support."

A motion was made that FCR officially take up this issue and express its support for the proposed amendments to FCFA. Prof. Boulware offered that he would support the principle of voting rights for research faculty, though he pointed out that the specific amendments suggested by Prof. Sheehan were not adequate because Sec. 21-32 of the Faculty Code enumerates who does and does not have voting rights in the Faculty Senate. Her proposal needs to be changed to take this section into account. The amendment would also have to make it clear that the University would in no way be obligated to provide funding to Research Faculty.

Prof. Bothwell commented that, in his opinion, the intended meaning of the Code is to make it clear that Research Faculty will not be automatically considered for tenure based on their record and time of service. He also pointed out that Research Faculty are not hired by the same process as regular faculty and most Research positions are created for senior post-docs who a department doesn't want to lose. Prof. Sheehan replied that Research Faculty are valuable assets to the UW and deserve to be treated as such--the UW is not responsible for WOT salaries, but WOT still receive the same benefits as regular faculty.

There was a general feeling that many regular faculty don't want to be overwhelmed by "South of Pacific" researchers as they are scrambling for research dollars already. This influx of research faculty into the voting pool of the Faculty Senate could potentially create problems for other researchers in the University. Prof. Sheehan commented that Research Faculty are concerned that they are not being given the opportunity to move from Research status to WOT but both Profs.
Kwiram and Boulware pointed out that the current Code already allows this to occur by decision of individual department Chair. Prof. Kwiram also asked what happens to Research Faculty who become WOT, then lose funding? Do you then make them regular faculty?

After further discussion, the motion to support the amendment to allow Research Faculty to vote was seconded and passed, though several expressed the view that it would not pass the Senate. Prof. Bothwell said he would draft a letter to FCFA expressing this.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00. Minutes by Todd Reid, Recorder. Edited by Dr. Mark Bothwell