Memo

To: Academic Senate

From: Chair Valerie Burke

Date: October 8, 2014

Re: Creation of Handbook Task Force

Proposal: Senate will create a task force (“Handbook Task Force”) to explore the alignment of the Faculty and Staff Handbooks, and consider the need to create an “Employee Handbook.” By the last Senate meeting of fall 2014 (i.e. December 10), this task force will recommend to Senate whether the Faculty Handbook should be restructured.

Rationale: The current Faculty Handbook includes a combination of facts, policies, and procedures, some of which are directly and distinctly relevant to faculty, and others that apply to all employees of the college. It is an unwieldy document, and changes to it are cumbersome. The protocol for changing handbook language related to procedures may not be relevant when applied to certain employee policies, such as federal regulations. In addition, inconsistencies have been found between policies in the Faculty Handbook and Staff Handbook. The current protocol for changing handbook language does not automatically catch other importance changes, such as revised legal policies.

For these reasons, it may be beneficial to restructure the current Faculty Handbook. One option is to separate faculty-specific guidelines and procedures (e.g. committee structure, Rank & Tenure guidelines) from policies that apply to all employees (e.g. sexual harassment policy and FERPA policy). Other formats for restructuring may be deemed more appropriate.

Additional Information:
Suggested membership:
- Faculty Handbook Coordinator – Jim Sauerberg
- Faculty representative – Senate member?
- Provost or designee
- Assistant Vice President for Human Resources or designee
- Staff representative – Staff Council member?
  (This task force should consult with legal counsel as needed.)

If restructuring is recommended, this task force should also provide suggestions on the following:
- What should be the general revised structure?
- What should be the general procedures for modifying handbook language in each handbook?
- What should be the new structure of the Faculty Handbook Review Committee?

If restructuring is recommended, a subsequent task force (with similar membership) will be charged with the details of the implementation of that recommendation.