INDIANA UNIVERSITY-PURDUE UNIVERSITY
INDIANAPOLIS
School of Liberal Arts
MEMORANDUM

TO: Philip Scarpino, President
SLA Faculty Assembly

FROM: David Craig
Chair of SLA Nominating Committee, 2008-2009

SUBJECT: Nominating Committee Report

DATE: May 27, 2009

The purpose of these annual reports is twofold—to inform the incoming Nominating Committee chair of the recommended procedures for completing the committee's work and to suggest improvements in the process of getting faculty members to run for elected committees and positions. First I thank the members of this year's committee for their efforts, Didier Bertrand, Martin Coleman, Johnny Goldfinger, and Rob Rebein. I also thank Marianne Wokeck, Candice Smith, Patti Hair, Bill Stuckey, and Phil Scarpino for their aid.

The Committee chair's first three steps should be as follows:

1. Read the past annual reports from this Committee posted on the Faculty Assembly website.
2. Read the Faculty Assembly by-laws, with special attention to the sections on Officers, the Agenda Council, and the Elected Standing Committees. The by-laws include important information, including the rule that "No committee may have more than two members from the same academic department." This rule contradicts the rule I learned that each committee could have no more than one member from the same department.
3. Request three lists from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs: a) the current members of the Elected Standing Committees, including their completion of term dates, b) faculty without recent SLA service, and c) all SLA faculty, including their rank, minus those who have applied for sabbatical leave for the following year. This year Candice Smith in Dean Wokeck's office prepared these lists as a spreadsheet. It was a great help to the Committee, and we were able to recruit six faculty without recent SLA service, though three of them were newcomers to IUPUI.

As a newcomer to the Nominating Committee myself, I was unaware of the existence of annual reports until the year had passed. Future chairs should not make my mistake, and they should start with Paul Carlin's 2004-2005 report, which lays out a helpful timeline to follow (see my suggested additions below). I was also unaware of the guidelines in the Faculty Assembly by-laws until March. These oversights on my part contributed to the late elections this year, which occurred one month later than specified in the by-laws.

Without repeating Carlin's advice from his report, let me stress three target dates:

Early October: The Nominating Committee should meet no later than early October to select a chair. If possible, committee members should receive the lists mentioned above at this meeting, and they should leave knowing how many open slots need to be filled on the Elected Standing Committees, the posts of Faculty Assembly President or Secretary, and the School's representatives to the IUPUI Faculty Council. If this information is not available by the first meeting, then it should be sent to committee members soon thereafter. These steps will allow committee members to start identifying faculty to nominate for open slots and to begin asking people to run for them on an *ad hoc* basis during the fall semester.

Early January: The Committee meets to determine potential nominees and to determine which committee members will contact each potential nominee. As Carlin notes, "You must walk out of that meeting with sufficient nominees [and, I would add, two to four more] for each office and a list of which Nominating Committee members will contact each potential nominee."

One week prior to the March Faculty Assembly: A list of slated nominees is sent to the Faculty Assembly President, and a Powerpoint is prepared for that second Faculty Assembly meeting of the spring term. As stated in the by-laws, this presentation informs the faculty of any remaining open slots in the Nominating Committee's slate and allows faculty to add any nominees they choose to recommend. If this presentation is given and additional nominations are invited, then this step fulfills, in my judgment, the Committee's purpose of ensuring an open process of filling the Elected Standing Committees. There is no need to have extra volunteers running simply to contest seats, perhaps with the exception of Faculty Assembly President. (N.B., The School representatives to the IFC have to be submitted to the Coordinator of the IFC, currently Karen Lee: keeckert@iupui.edu, in early March.)

Rather than add to the litany of frustration in previous annual reports, I offer these suggestions for moving beyond tinkering with "process" to changing the "culture." Most importantly, I suggest making the nominating process a more integral part of faculty culture by seeking actual nominations from faculty outside the Nominating Committee. Here are several ways to do this:

- The Nominating Committee chair should address the second and third Faculty Assembly meetings in November and January, showing, by Powerpoint, the open slots needing to be filled and soliciting, by voice or in writing, suggested candidates to fill these openings.
- The chair can add a slide at the November meeting listing the number of faculty in each department who have served on an Elected Standing Committee in the past few years. It never hurts to shame delinquent departments.
- In the late fall, Nominating Committee members should visit three department meetings each to request nominations and volunteers at these often better-attended gatherings.
- The chair can also visit one of the bi-monthly chairs meetings to make a similar pitch.
- Committee members can then use the collected nominations to determine whom to ask to run for the Elected Standing Committees. Using these nominations would help persuade faculty members to run. Flattery does work.

No doubt there are other ways to build faculty interest in supporting the nominating process, but making outside nominations a regular part of faculty culture would help ease the Committee's work and increase School-wide commitment to faculty governance. Admittedly seeking outside nominations may not help recruit faculty who do not typically serve the School because these people are unlikely to be nominated by their peers. But making the expectation of standing for election a commonplace in Faculty Assembly and department meetings might help motivate even these holdouts.

My final recommendation concerns the rule in the by-laws that "No committee may have more than two members from the same academic department." In the interests of ensuring diversity on the Elected Standing Committees and distributing this service equitably across the School, future Nominating Committees should feel free to nominate two candidates from large departments, such as English. In these cases it makes sense to draw faculty from different divisions within a single department, e.g., Creative Writing, Linguistics, Literature, and Writing and Literacy in the case of English. This doubling of representation from large departments is necessary to ensuring equity and diversity on the Elected Standing Committees.