AS&E Committee on Faculty Work/Life
May 4, 2015

The full committee had regular meetings seven times during the Fall 2014 semester and eight times in the Spring 2015 semester; in addition, we hosted a meeting of the faculty work/life liaisons each semester, met with Provost Harris three times, and met in smaller groups on numerous other occasions.

**Dependent Care Needs Assessment Survey.** The main item on our agenda for the year was constructing and administering a dependent care needs assessment survey. With the assistance of two graduate student interns, OIRE, and Mills Consulting, we put together our own original survey instrument asking about child care and elder/adult care during the fall semester. In late February and early March, we administered the survey to all faculty, staff, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students, and select undergraduates on the Tufts Medford Campus. The survey was funded by the Deans of Arts & Sciences and Engineering, and by the Office of the Provost. By the end of the Spring semester, analysis of the data was underway, with the hope of having a completed report and specific recommendations by Fall 2015.

**Issues surrounding the outsourcing of TEDCC.** The committee devoted a considerable amount of time during the summer and fall of 2014 responding to the administration’s decision to outsource the Tufts Educational Day Care Center to Bright Horizons. We did research for and subsequently wrote an open letter to the central and A&S administrations to protest the move. We presented the letter to the administration at the AS&E faculty meeting on 17 September 2015 (http://ase.tufts.edu/faculty/meetings/2014-2015/ase/09-17-2014/index.htm). With unanimous support from the faculty members present, we requested that the Provost chair a university-wide task force on child care in order to plot a course for the future. Provost Harris kindly agreed to do so, and after much discussion he and the committee members agreed that a more broadly conceived university-wide task force on work/life issues for faculty, staff, students and postdoctoral fellows would be preferable. The first meeting of the university-wide group, now called a committee, is slated for 2 June 2015. It will include representatives from this committee as well as faculty, staff, and postdoc and/or grad student representatives from each of the other schools on all three campuses.

**Faculty Work/Life Liaison Program.** Each semester we held a meeting with the faculty work/life liaisons from each department or program. We used this as a way to share information about policies and programs with the faculty and also as a way to solicit input from liaisons about issues arising in their departments/programs.

**Work/Life Concerns for Graduate Students.** We initiated discussions with Deans Barker, McMahon, Cook, Panetta, and Sahagian about work/life policies and programs for graduate students, meeting once in Fall 2014 and once in Spring 2015. The discussions were primarily in response to faculty concerns about how to deal with the problem of grant-funded grad students and postdocs who go on nonacademic leaves, leaving PIs shorthanded or short of funds. AS&E has made progress on putting a mechanism in place to fund such leaves. Faculty members also expressed concerns about funding replacements for their Tufts-funded teaching assistants,
research assistants, and lab members as well. Dean McMahon's office began a benchmarking project about our peer institutions' grad supports as a way to understand what our peers are doing to support students who become parents or have family illness responsibilities, or who have medical problems. All parties agreed to collect data and work in anticipation of our meeting slated for 13 May 2015.

**Faculty Work/Life Webpage for Secretary of the Faculty Website.** One of the key recommendations of the AS&E Faculty Task Force on Work/Life Balance report from February 2012 was that the university improve communication about work/life policies and programs so that potential users can find out about them more easily. The only website at present outlining all of those policies and programs for faculty is this committee's rather informal wiki, [http://go.tufts.edu/worklife](http://go.tufts.edu/worklife). In order to improve communication with faculty members and to create a formal source of information, members of the committee spent the academic year writing content and designing a webpage centralizing the relevant information. The Secretary of the Faculty has kindly agreed to host the page on her site. We hope it will be up and running by Fall 2015.

**In addition to these activities,** committee members also:

- maintained elists devoted to elder care, child care, and support for faculty mothers of young children, and started a new elist for students with families.
- participated in the job interviews for Chief Diversity Officer and Vice President of Human Resources positions.
- acted as informal ombudsperson/sounding board/go-between for faculty, staff, and graduate students with work/life concerns.
- at the request of the Dean of Arts & Sciences, started work with Julien Carter, VP of Human Resources, and the Office of Equal Opportunity to increase the number of lactation spaces on the Medford campus and to develop a communication plan for them.
- met with representatives from the post-doc association
- met with Julien Carter, the new VP of Human Resources
- met with Dean Jim Glaser and Dean Linda Abriola every semester

Three of the six faculty members on the committee will be rotating off at the end of the year. We have requested that the Secretary of the Faculty and the Committee on Committees appoint new members with staggered terms so that we can have more membership continuity in future years. At least one of the new committee members must be a full-time non tenure-track faculty member.

**Goals for 2014-2015:**

- Producing the report and recommendations stemming from the dependent care needs assessment survey. This will likely take up much of our time.
- Holding a Faculty Work/Life Liaison meeting once per semester.
- Continuing progress on the campus-wide network of lactation spaces and improving communication about the existing spaces.
- Continuing discussions with administrators about work/life issues for graduate students.

Submitted by John McDonald (Music) and Elizabeth Remick (Political Science), co-chairs