Annual Report of the Committee on Faculty Scholarship and Promotion
2011-2012

The members of the Committee for this year were President Ronald Crutcher (for Promotions only), Provost Linda Eisenmann, David Wulff (Chair), Mary Beth Tierney-Tello, and Mark LeBlanc. The Committee met 4 times during the year and consulted frequently by e-mail to discuss and vote on funding requests for faculty scholarship and travel projects.

Scholarship and Travel Awards

A total of $125,209 had been budgeted for the year to support faculty scholarship and travel. The amount for travel was set at $77,741; as of May 9th, $69,049 was allocated to finance travel grants to 71 faculty members. The scholarship budget was $47,468, of which $21,349 had been spent by May 9th to support research grants to 22 faculty members. Fiscal year 2011-2012 was the second year during which faculty members were allowed to apply for two years' worth of scholarship and conference-travel funds ($2400) at one time. Thirteen faculty members took advantage of this opportunity, 10 for travel and 3 for research. End of the semester funding requests are likely to exhaust the budget.

NEH Summer Stipend Nomination

The Committee voted to recommend that Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus and Shawn Christian be nominated for an NEH Summer Stipend for Summer 2012.

Summer Grants

This year, 20 summer grants were supported by regular funding, including 10 Provost Faculty Research Awards, 4 Arnold Awards, and 6 Faculty-Student Research Awards (Mars, Hood, and Clemence). The new, three-year Mellon grant to support faculty scholarship made possible the addition of 11 grants this year: four for faculty research, five for faculty-student collaborations, and two for curriculum research. Altogether, the Committee awarded 11 Faculty-Student Summer Research Awards, 14 Faculty Summer Research Awards, 4 Arnold Awards, and 2 Mellon Curriculum Research Awards. Of the 35 unique applications that were submitted for one or another of these awards, the Committee funded 31.

Faculty – Student Summer Research Awards 2012

Mars: Timothy Barker with Emerald Bresnahan, Jani Benoit with Joe Campbell, Barbara Brennessel with Carolyn Decker, and Kathy Morgan and Shari Morris with Kathryn Mason and Alexandra Lund

Hood: Michael Drout with Leah Smith

Clemence: Evelyn Staudinger with [TBD]
Mellon: Shawn Christian with Courtney LaBrie, Beverly Clark with Haley Fisher, Hyun Sook Kim with Heather Wilson, Rolf Nelson with Xue Gong, and Dana Polanichka with Alex Cilley

Provost’s Faculty Summer Research Awards Recipients 2012:

Alberto Bianchi, Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus, Meg Kirkpatrick, Tessa Lee, Yuen-Gen Liang, Jake Mahaffy, Kim Miller, Mary Lee Prescott-Griffin, and Alireza Shomali

Mellon Faculty Summer Research Awards Recipients 2012:

Tom Armstrong, William Goldbloom Bloch, Delvyn Case, Edward Gallagher, and Shawn McCafferty

Arnold Award Recipients 2012:

Touba Ghadessi, Donna Kerner, Lisa Lubduska, and Josh Stenger

Mellon Curriculum Research Awards 2012:

Vicki Bartolini and Peony Fhagan-Smith

In discussion subsequent to the selection of award recipients, the Committee decided to simplify the application process by issuing a single call for proposals. Furthermore, applicants will no longer need to identify the specific funds—Mars, Hood, or Clemence—to which they are applying for faculty research; rather, the Committee itself will determine which funds are most appropriate. Beginning in 2013, students who are co-applicants for faculty-student awards must use any named or merit scholarship they have before they may receive Provost’s Office funding; the Committee will consider granting exceptions only if there are compelling reasons for deferring the scholarship for use during the summer following the faculty-student collaboration.

Given that the number of available awards will be larger than usual for at least the next two years, thanks to the Mellon grant, the Committee wishes to encourage more members of the faculty to apply for them. Proposals for support that is needed to complete ongoing work (e.g., travel or research expenses) are especially invited, but applications for stipends only are also welcome. The Committee urges applicants to follow the guidelines carefully, as one would for an outside agency, and to explain one’s project in terms that are comprehensible to colleagues outside one’s field.

Promotions

On October 21st, the Committee held an open meeting for all potential candidates and their representatives to discuss the promotion process.

The Committee, constituted as the Committee on Promotions, reviewed the materials and recommended the promotion to Full Professor of the following two faculty members: Geoffrey Collins of the Physics and Astronomy Department (April 12) and
Gerard Huiskamp of the Department of Political Science (April 13).

This was the first year that the Committee on Promotions took on the responsibility of soliciting letters from outside evaluators rather than leaving the task to the candidates themselves. This change in procedure, indicated in section 3.C.3 of the Committee’s guidelines, was announced to the faculty in a memo dated September 26, 2012 and brought to the floor for discussion at the October 7th faculty meeting. Paralleling the practice of the Committee on Tenure, the new procedure conforms to the practices of other institutions, eases the burden for candidates, and provides a common set of guidelines for evaluators. The Committee also began a discussion regarding how best to support faculty members at the Associate Professor level as they progress toward promotion to Full Professor. We will invite others to join us in this discussion in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

David M. Wulff, Chair