

Faculty Affairs Committee 2019-2020 Final Report

Members: Beauvais Lyons (chair), Eliza Fink, Todd Freeberg, Cheryl Greenacre, Nathalie Hristov, Brian Krumm, Elizabeth MacTavish, Jon Shefner, and Jessica Westerhold.

Posted Minutes from 2019-2020:

- [September 30, 2019](#)
- [October 21, 2019](#)
- [November 11, 2019](#)
- [February 10, 2020](#)
- [March 9, 2020](#)
- [April 13, 2020](#)

Initiatives and Outcomes:

1. Help to bring the bylaws of all colleges and departments into compliance with the Faculty Handbook. Prior to this year, the audit was completed in October 2018. Through efforts initiated by Beauvais Lyons, several academic units did address issues in their bylaws. The more recent audit, dated October 25, 2019, is posted at: <http://senate.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2019/10/10-25-2019-Bylaws-Audit.pdf> At this point, one college and five departments are not in compliance. Because of continued changes to the *Faculty handbook*, particularly as it relates to changes on faculty evaluation and promotion in both chapters 3 and 4, and with the elimination of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, more work is expected next year to address handbook compliance in college and department bylaws.
2. Review the list of [“Other Policy Documents”](#) from Section 1.11 and [Appendix I](#) of the *Faculty Handbook*, some of which might be removed and listed elsewhere. This goal was identified by Vice-Provost Zomchick for attention this year. It was the subject of the February 10, 2020 meeting, but more work needs to be done to complete this task.
3. The committee worked with the Non-Tenure Track Issues Committee on finalizing text for an appendix to Chapter 4 of the *Faculty Handbook* on the hiring, evaluation and promotion of NTTF, which represents the final section of the MFE needing to be incorporated in the *Faculty Handbook*. We also proposed to establish an emeritus/emerita designation for NTTF in Chapter 4.2.9 of the *Faculty Handbook*. These changes were accomplished in a resolution passed by the Faculty Senate at the [January 13, 2022 meeting](#) and was adopted by the UT Board of Trustees at the March 2020 meeting. These are the signature accomplishment of the Committee this year.
4. Building on groundwork by Nathalie Hristov and Todd Freeberg over the prior two years, the Committee proposed a [Resolution on Bullying](#) that was approved by the Faculty Senate on November 18, 2019. It was supported by a [Report on Policy on Bullying](#) and a

document with [Bullying Language from Multiple Universities](#). Provost Manderscheid established a Task Force on Bullying (on which Nathalie Hristov and Todd Freeberg serve) to develop policy language, which will allow the policy-setting and educational outreach subcommittees to continue their work in the Fall.

5. Work with the Office of the Provost to review the of the outcomes of the new PPPR policy. This assessment will be initiated by Beauvais Lyons over the summer and will be reported to the Faculty Senate at the first meeting in September 2020.
6. At our November 18 meeting the Committee discussed our designation as a [Carnegie Community Engaged Institution](#) and how this is reflected in the *Faculty Handbook*. Based on an audit of the *Faculty Handbook*, it was clear that principles of engagement are integrated into performance criteria for scholarship/research, teaching, and service in the general criteria for faculty performance. No further action is planned.
7. In coordination with the Appeals Committee, the Committee met with University Ombudsperson Lisa Yamagata-Lynch at our March 9, 2020 meeting to consider areas where university policies may need to be addressed based on her experience. Lisa presented the committees a report provided a lot of useful information on her service to the university:
 - <https://ombuds.utk.edu/ombudsperson-faq/>
 - <https://ombuds.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2019/08/519379-Ombuds-Annual-Report-accessible.pdf>It is proposed that both committees continue to work with the University Ombudsperson to make sure systemic issues can be addressed.
8. Brian Krumm served as a liaison from the Committee to work with the Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Issues Committee on revision of the last sentence in the *Faculty Handbook* 5.6 which states: “The University may, at any time, with or without notice, terminate the appointment of a non-tenure-track faculty member without cause upon payment of the remaining salary due during the appointment.” In conversations with the Office of general Counsel, the University Ombudsperson, and the Office of the Provost, a useful document was compiled by the NTTF Issues Committee that identifies broader set of issues related to due process and termination of NTTF including: (1) Dismissed without-cause under 5.6, (2) Dismissed for cause under “Code of Conduct” Section 3.12.3, (3) Non-renewed for poor performance for NTTF, and (4) Non-renewal for budget changes, program flexibility, specifically “Reduction in Force” rules, which may have particular currency in the current budgetary uncertainties. This work will need to be pursued through the summer and into next year.
9. The Committee reviewed its membership and charge in the Faculty Senate Bylaws and submitted a set of proposed changes.

10. The Committee was engaged in advising Beauvais Lyons, who worked with Bonnie Ownley (Faculty Senate representative on the AOG2 team), to affect revisions to TN Voice end-of-semester course evaluations for Spring 2020. These efforts led to the formation of a special task force that implemented changes to the course evaluations that would hold faculty harmless in their next annual reviews (presented at the April Faculty Senate meeting). One outcome of this effort was to charge the Faculty Senate with developing a survey instrument to assess the experience of instructors of record with the transition to remote instruction, which was headed up by President Skolits.

Areas of Continued Work for 2020-2021:

1. Work with the Office of the Provost to ensure college and unit bylaws remain in compliance with the *Faculty Handbook*. Recent changes eliminating the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation* will require all bylaws to remove these references.
2. Work with the Office of the Provost to revise Appendix I and the "Other Policy Documents" links from Section 1.1 of the *Faculty Handbook*.
3. Advocate for progress by the Bullying Task Force.
4. Work with the Office of the Provost to review the of the outcomes of the new PPPR policy.
5. Work with the NTTF Issues committee on issues related to handbook policies regarding the termination of non-tenure-track faculty members.
6. Maintain strong communications with the University Ombudsperson.

Committee Membership in 2020-2021:

Beauvais Lyons has agreed to continue to serve as chair. Nathalie Hristov and Todd Freeberg are rotating off of the Faculty Senate, but will hopefully remain engaged with the Bullying task Force. Jon Shefner has expressed an interest in possibly having another committee assignment for next year. Jessica Westerhold was elected to a second term on the Senate and wishes to remain on the Committee. The Committee will need at least three new, motivated members.