

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Monday September 28, 2020, 4:00-5:00pm

Zoom Address: <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/4604281435>.

Members Present: Beauvais Lyons, Julie Andsager, Thomas Berg, Cheryl Greenacre, Justin Jia Brian Krumm, Mary McAlpin, Kai Sun, and Jessica Westerhold.

Member Absent: Elizabeth MacTavish (recurring conflict)

Guest: Diane Kelly, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Approval of the Minutes: [August 31, 2020](#) approved by consensus

Business:

1. **Update:** Beauvais noted that Mary McAlpin has agreed to serve as a liaison from our committee to the Diversity and Inclusion Committee.
2. **Update from Diane Kelly:** regarding her faculty affairs goals including:
 - (a) review of systems, process and work-flow related to faculty affairs is ongoing.
 - (b) establish a task force to examine non-tenure track faculty titles and types of duties (with consideration of replacing the “lecturer” title with “teaching professor.”), etc. Diane said that she is hearing compelling reasons why such a task force is needed, and has concerns regarding faculty titles, equity and pay, workload, consistency of conducting annual reviews, family leave, and promotion processes for non-tenure track faculty. Beauvais said that the Faculty Senate is prepared to assist in any way, and that Mary McAlpin and Jessica Westerhold from this committee are prepared to serve on the task force along with Anne Langendorfer from the NTTF Issues Committee. Diane said she envisioned the task for being mostly if not all NTTF. There was discussion of the broad range of NTTF, including clinical faculty, some who have a 100% research commitment.
 - (c) create a working group focuses on the review and promotion of tenure-line faculty. Diane indicated that this task force will be comprised of three sub-groups, each of which includes an associate dean, a department head and faculty members:
 - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in promotion and tenure and annual review processes,
 - PPPR
 - The impact of COVID-19 on faculty teaching, research/scholarship, and service.
 - (d) strive to address the hiring and retention of under-represented faculty was not discussed due to limited time, but will be discussed at our October 26th meeting.

3. **Second review consideration of *Faculty Handbook* changes:** following the first reading to the Faculty Senate on September 21:

3.11.4.2 Extension of Probationary Period

For good cause that is either related to procedural error or results from a significant disruption of University operations that has impeded the faculty member's opportunity to conduct required research or other scholarly activity, teaching, and/or service, the university and a tenure-track faculty member may agree in writing to extend a six-year probationary period for a maximum of two additional years. The proposed extension must be approved in advance by the chief academic officer, the chancellor, and the vice president for academic affairs, the president (or designee), and the General Counsel (or designee).

Reason for change: This change updates our policy in order to bring it into agreement with Board policy (BT0006), which was revised at the Board meeting on March 27, 2020.

Comments in FS meeting Zoom chat questioned the 2-year maximum, especially in contexts where factors may force delay of research agenda. This something that Diane Kelly has discussed with Vice President Linda Martin, but does not expect change in the near term, and not before it is an action item at the Faculty Senate in October. Beauvais suggested that they consider text that states "Requests for further extensions of the tenure-clock require approved of the UT system president."

4. **Update on the new PPPR policy:** UT System Vice-president Linda Martin has reported that the cost estimate report from last spring will be presented as part of UT Board of Trustees Education, Research and Service Committee agenda on October 22-23.
5. **College and Department Bylaws:** Steps needed to bring the bylaws of all colleges and departments into compliance with the *Faculty Handbook* since the [October 25, 2019 audit](#). Beauvais reviewed some of the progress that had been made in bylaws compliance, and that the audit is a working document that can be updated. He said he would work on updating the audit categories to include expurgating references to the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*, which was discontinued last year as a result of handbook changes. Cheryl and Jessica had conducted initial audits of their department bylaws looking for references to the manual and handbook and noted some challenges. While references to the manual could be redirected to the appropriate chapter of the handbook, Cheryl observed that when bylaws reference a specific section number of the handbook, it is not always correct since the handbook numeration is often revised. After some discussion, it was agreed that such listings in department or college bylaws should not be hyperlinked and should only cite a given chapter of the handbook. Jessica suggested that it would be helpful to create a cross-referenced list to assist in the audits. Beauvais asked members of the committee to examine their own unit bylaws, and he will compile a first draft of the new audit template for the October meeting.

6. **Review “[Other Policy Documents](#)”** from Section 1.11 and [Appendix I](#) of the *Faculty Handbook*.

Beauvais noted that there was an initial discussion of these sections of the handbook at the February 2020 meeting. From that meeting, John Zomchick indicated that, based on his conversations with the Office of General Counsel, that these reference sections could be revised without board approval.

From Section 1.11, the following sections were considered worthy of retaining:

- [Charter and By-laws of the University](#) (contains statement of legal establishment of the university, including charter provisions and by-laws).
- [Policies on Research and Intellectual Property](#)
- [UT Search Procedures: Guidelines for Conducting Upper-Level Faculty and Staff-Exempt Searches](#) (describes procedures for conducting upper-level faculty and staff-exempt searches), and
- [Faculty Central](#) covering all other related topics.

With Appendix I, only the most important UT Board Policies should be included such as:

- [Charter and By-laws of the University](#) (contains statement of legal establishment of the university, including charter provisions and by-laws)
- [UT Policies](#) (all current official Board, Fiscal, HR, IT, and Safety policies, including the *University Code of Conduct* and the *Conflict of Interest Policy*)
- [Financial Exigency Plan](#)

However, there are links to policies that do not appear to be current, as the [Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#) does not include protections for sexual orientation, and other sections should be dated and or indicate the source of the documents.

Justin Jai and Beauvais Lyons will review both sections and propose a preliminary set of recommendation for the committee at the October 26th meeting.

7. **Handbook 5.6:** Work with the NTTF Issues committee on issues related to handbook policies (5.6) regarding the termination of non-tenure-track faculty members. The NTTF Issues committee is working on potential handbook language, and Diane Kelly indicated that this is something that will be part of the charge of the Non-Tenure Track faculty Task Force.
8. **Early Retirement:** Explore options for early retirement incentives to avoid furloughing faculty if this became necessary. Cheryl noted that UGA had developed a policy to incentivize faculty retirements, but they did not have to furlough anyone. Given the strong enrollment of the university and the unlikelihood of any furloughs, the committee agreed that pursuing such options is not needed.

9. **Adjournment:** after briefly sharing ideas of what members of the committee were planning to make for dinner, the meeting ended at 5:03pm.

Future Meetings:

Monday October 26, 3:30pm

Monday November 23, 3:30pm