

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Monday October 26, 2020, 3:30-5:00pm

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

Members Not Present: Elizabeth MacTavish (recurring conflict)

Guest: Diane Kelly, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Approval of the Minutes: [September 28, 2020](#) were approved by consensus.

Business:

1. **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/duties.

Diane reported that this group is almost ready to launch. Members for the Faculty Senate include Jessica from our committee and Anne Langedorfer from the NTTF Issues Committee. The composition of the task force was discussed. The understanding is that any recommendations that impact the *UTK-UTIA Faculty Handbook* would come back to the Faculty Senate, but there may be initiatives that address NTTF needs that could be accomplished through HR policies or new initiatives to support their development and success would be good. Beauvais asked Diane to keep us updated on this work, and that it may be something to report on at a future meeting of the Faculty Senate.

(c) create a working group focuses on the review and promotion of tenure-line faculty.

This is continuing as reported at the September meeting. Beauvais noted this has direct bearing on the PPPR issue to be addressed under item 3.

(d) strive to address the hiring and retention of under-represented faculty. Diane reported that Javiette Samuel, assistant vice chancellor for diversity and engagement and director of community engagement and outreach is the point-person in Office of Diversity and Engagement for under-represented minority faculty recruitment and retention. She also mentioned a new mentoring program and an initiative to educate majority faculty on the challenges faced by those on underrepresented groups. Beauvais said that the newly initiated faculty cohort groups was an excellent idea and offered an opportunity to support diverse faculty retention. It was noted that Stride 2.0 was started to address some of our retention challenges. Cheryl said that a recent Stride 1.0 training session for which she signed up was to capacity. Diane also said that they continue to have (A&D) Geier funds, roughly 1 million a year to support diversity efforts,

and that deans are aware of target of opportunity resources. She said they are also pursuing retention offers as well. Tom mentioned the network through Oak Ridge Affiliated Universities as a resource for recruiting diverse faculty.

2. **Bylaws Audit**

[October 12, 2020 Bylaws Audit:](#)

[Remaining Portions of the Manual for Faculty Evaluation](#)

Discussion focused on the link to “remaining components of the *Manual for Faculty Evaluation*.” This link, hosted on the Office of the Provost website, needs to be updated. Diane reported that Part VI.A is now integrated into Chapter 4 of the handbook. She said the other parts are administrative processes that can exist as resources on the faculty affairs section of the Office of the Provost website, and that they are in the process of doing this. There was discussion whether bylaws references to the MFE should refer people to both the *UTK-UTIA Faculty Handbook* and the website of the Office of the Provost. Diane stated that including reference to the handbook were sufficient.

3. **Update on the new PPPR policy:** UT Board of Trustees Education, Research and Service Committee [Report on PPPR](#) from October 22-23. [ERS Committee meeting webcast](#) (see 8 - 54 minutes).

Mary, who watched the broadcast of the ERS meeting presented a summary, quoting ERS Committee chair Donnie Smith who asserted that annual reviews need to be done with rigor, and that the prior board had justified concerns so implemented the PPPR policy. Beauvais said he was disappointed that Vice President Martin said there was not a “comprehensive review for tenured faculty,” which he thinks is a misrepresentation of Enhanced Post-Tenure Performance Review (EPPR) triggered by low rankings on APPR. Despite efforts by Chancellor Plowman as well as the other chancellors to advocate for the discontinuation of PPPR as redundant and an inefficient use of faculty and administrative time, some members of the board believe that it can serve as a check on, and improve the APPR and EPPR processes. Beauvais also said that there is significant variation on the thoroughness of annual reviews on the different campuses, and that UTK and UTIA are being subjected to an administrative process by the system that may have value for other campuses. He said that if there are ways that the annual review processes can be improved at UTK and UTIA, the Provost should work with the deans to address them, and to document these efforts for the Board of Trustees. There was discussion on the consistency and thoroughness of annual reviews, and Diane shared thoughts on considering ways of sampling reviews to help assess equity in the process. Beauvais noted that an EPPR is currently taking place and that this indicated that post-tenure review can take place without PPPR. Julie expressed concern that PTSD, mental health and physical health can impact low faculty performance. Mary remarked that dismissal of faculty pre-tenure or post tenure presented challenges for departments if they thought they might not retain the faculty line. It was agreed that there are lots of factors to be considered. Beauvais asked Diane if she would report back to the committee this spring after she had a chance to review APPR materials from this year.

4. **Review “[Other Policy Documents](#)”** from Section 1.11 and [Appendix I](#) of the *Faculty Handbook*. (recommendations were attached with the meeting agenda). The committee discussed the proposed changes, with many items proposed to be removed in Section 1.11 and pushed to Faculty Central. Diane Kelly indicated that some updates to Faculty Central have already been implemented to reflect these proposed changes. Jessica suggested a link to the Faculty Affairs section of the Office of the Provost website be included. In Appendix I, several editorial revisions were suggested by Justin and Beauvais, and that the current policy listed in Appendix I should be current. Justin and Beauvais will work with Diane Kelly to prepare a draft for the November meeting with the hope that these may be brought to the senate in the new year.

5. **Adjournment** by consensus at 4:58pm

Final Meeting of the Semester:
Monday November 23, 3:30pm