

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Friday September 27, 2021, 3:30-5:00pm

Members Present: Beauvais Lyons, Thomas Berg, Cheryl Greenacre, Justin Jia, Judson Laughter, Mary McAlpin, Kai Sun, and Jessica Westerhold

Members Absent: George Dodds

Guests Diane Kelly, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch, Ombudsperson

Approval of the Minutes: August 27, 2021 (reviewed electronically in advance and approved by consensus)

Report from Committee Chair Beauvais Lyons

Beauvais reported that he is still working with the Office of the Provost regarding a special meeting to discuss the case of Dr. Anming Hu.

He discussed a report he shared with the committee on a September 13th meeting with on Vice Provost Kelly in which the various goals of the committee were discussed with a summary of topics and a timeline as listed below:

General Items:

1. Changes initiated by revisions to BOT initiated policies (if any).
2. Review proposed changes to the Ombuds section (5.2) proposed by Lisa Yamagata-Lynch (9-27-21)

Promotion and Tenure:

3. From the Equity and Fairness Report to the Provost, review the practice of conducting retention votes for tenure-track faculty placing more emphasis on qualitative assessment. (9-27-21)
4. Clarify retention reviews and APPRs following a tenure-clock suspension as a result of the new parental leave policy. (9-27-21)
5. PPPR Report to the Provost and proposed policy revision (10-25-2021)

Policies Related to Tenure Termination:

6. Review handbook language (3.12) on the termination of tenured faculty members for cause regarding the meaning of "consultation with the president of the Faculty Senate or the Faculty Senate Executive Council" (timeline to be determined)
7. Review handbook policies stemming from the case of Dr. Anming Hu, including (1) the requirement for a subpoena or FOIA request before information about a faculty member is released, and (2) the requirement of notification if such a disclosure takes place. (timeline to be determined)

Diversity and Inclusion:

8. Implement more inclusive language for the handbook. Diane will be sending this document soon for committee review. (10-25-21)

9. Continue to review a draft policy on bullying for the *Faculty Handbook* and sample department bylaws language on conflict resolution. (Task Force is still working on this) Mary Lucal and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch are co-chairing this effort, and they have a draft definition and suggestions for wording policies that apply to both staff and faculty. (timeline to be determined)

Non-Tenure Track Faculty Issues (all items are referred to NTTF Faculty Issues Committee):

10. Assess the process for appointing NTTF. The Faculty Handbook states that faculty votes are needed for all NTTF appointments (with some exceptions for last minute appointments). However, some units run open searches in a fashion similar to TTF searches, so there is no vote necessarily – rather the search committee and faculty input is advisory. Concern is that the current policy has limited flexibility to address all hiring situations – such as open searches, and issues with reappointing part-time faculty.
11. Work with the NTTF Issues committee on issues related to handbook policies including (5.6) regarding the termination of non-tenure-track faculty members.

Other Matters Before the Faculty Affairs Committee

12. Work with the Office of the Provost and the new Faculty Senate Administrative Assistant to improve workflow for handbook changes. (pending)
13. Help to bring the bylaws of all colleges and departments into compliance with the Faculty Handbook since the October 12, 2020 Audit. Beauvais said that he had added two fields to the audit (1) criteria for rank for NTTF, and (2) removing references to the Manual for Faculty Evaluation. Beauvais thanked Jud Laughter for an initial review of the bylaws links, and would be updating the audit document soon for presentation to the Faculty Senate on October 18, 2021.

Old Business:

Report to the Provost from the Equity, Fairness, and Inclusion Working Group, Faculty Review and Promotion. The discussion focused on the retention review process, considering the following two recommendations:

- The outcome of retention votes (retain versus not retain) should be shared with Assistant Professors, but the exact vote count should not be shared for those being retained.
- A clear case should be made for casting a “no” vote for retention, tenure, or promotion and a discussion of such a case must be included in the department tenure or retention letter. “No” votes should be discarded if there is no clear explanation for a vote against retention, tenure, or promotion in the department tenure or retention letter.

Discussion focused on the importance of having a process that allowed faculty to give clear, constructive input into the pre-tenure faculty members development. There seemed to be consensus that voting was important, but that the faculty member under review would not need to see the specific vote count. While justification of a no vote seemed reasonable, there was concern that this would undermine the confidentiality of the vote. Beauvais said he would share his reflections on the importance of retention reviews during a global pandemic that were part of the September 2020 senate meeting. The committee will continue to take this up, and welcomes specific handbook revisions from the Office of the Provost.

New Business:

1. Review proposed changes to the Ombuds section (5.2) proposed by Lisa Yamagata-Lynch. The committee reviewed a set of proposed changes to align the handbook with the current structure of the Ombuds Office. A few small revisions were proposed, and Diane Kelly agreed to send the

text to the Office of General Counsel for initial review.

2. Diane Kelly reported that the *Appendix to the Faculty Handbook: Assembly of the Tenure and/or Promotion Dossier* needs to be updated since we are no longer asking people to submit paper copies (pg. 131). Item three describes “Number of copies required,” and instructs people to provide “four copies of the original.” She recommended to just delete this item since it contains submission instructions which might change. The Office of the Provost can provide submission instructions on their FA website. Revised handbook language will be presented for consideration. The committee agreed.
3. Draft of Guidelines for Retention Reviews Following a Clock Suspension

After initial discussion during the meeting, the following proposed language was part of an email thread initiated by Vice-Provost Kelly:

Retention Reviews and Clock Suspension

A tenure-track faculty member should not have a retention review in the year following a clock suspension. The faculty member should have an Annual Performance and Planning Review (APPR) in the year following a clock suspension.

A faculty member’s progress towards tenure should not be judged during the suspended period. The faculty member can use accomplishments during the suspended period for the APPR, subsequent retention reviews, Enhanced Tenure-Track Review, and/or their promotion and tenure application. Suspension of the probationary period does not add an additional year to faculty work expectations. Instead, there is no change to what is expected to be accomplished at the end of the 5th year of the probationary period when faculty submit their application to promotion and tenure.

Comments expressed through the email thread indicated that this language was clearer than the text presented at the meeting. Beauvais has asked Vice-Provost Kelly to prepare this for presentation to the Faculty Senate.

Adjournment: at 5:03pm

Future (Regularly Scheduled) Meetings this Semester:

Monday October 25, 3:30-5:00pm

Monday November 22, 3:30-5:00pm