

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Monday March 28, 2022, 3:30-5:00pm

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

Guests: Mark Stanley, Anne Langendorfer and Loretta Link

1. **Approval of the Minutes:** [February 14, 2022](#) -- approved
2. **Report from Beauvais Lyons**

Beauvais presented a couple examples of [pending and proposed handbook changes](#) at the March 21 Faculty Senate Executive Council meeting in an effort to address the challenges that involved in getting timely action on handbook proposals.

- In the meeting Chancellor Plowman seemed especially receptive to the issues raised through the discussion regarding working with the Office of General Counsel, and she will be looking into having the campus pay for a dedicated person with OGC to address UTK legal needs.
- Provost Zomchick said that he would look to have a better workflow system so items would not be delayed.
- Beauvais said he was reluctant to bring any [pending or proposed](#) handbook revisions forward without better involvement of the OGC, asserting handbook revisions that are consistent with BOT policy should be able to approved without presenting them to the BOT.

Discussion:

- DK – need to continue to be persistent in spite of discouraging situation. Changes may take longer than we want. It would be nice if there were some things over which faculty has control (and doesn't go through OGC). Can we carve out things that do not have to go through this pathway?
- BL – in past, when nothing proposed is “inconsistent with board policy” it can be approved without presenting it to the board. A guide for what this means would be useful. Key conversation has to be with OGC about what is in the interest of the institution, e.g., modeling best practices of academic freedom.
- GD – agrees that such a guideline would make sense for FS and OGS
- MS – can faculty with legal expertise help?
- AL – OGC is certainly large enough the do the work, correct? Do we need more staff in OGC?

He also said the [Bylaws Audit](#) does not reflect any new changes, but deserves more attention, as many units do not have criteria for rank for NTTF and still reference the MFE.

3. Report from Diane Kelly

- Interfolio for evaluation and promotion of TT roll out will go live May 2
 - Trying to put in more guardrails, reminders of processes and policies
 - Hopefully will streamline and make process more compliant with Faculty Handbook
 - Plan to develop NTTF module in the summer
 - Planning to transition the APPR processes to Interfolio
 - Working with UTIA, moving onto this platform as well

- Will provide education across entire campus
- This is part of reunification effort
- UTIA will be rolling out Elements as well

Discussion:

- BL will criteria for NTTF rank be reflected in Intefolio? He expressed concern that some units still do not have this criteria defined in their bylaws.
- DK: Not sure where we are in compliance re: bylaws. Trying to make NTT and TT processes more symmetrical, e.g., promotion.
- BL: can we fold in aspects of department head mentoring training into this process?
- DK: Lots of new heads being appointed and need for training will increase. Opportunity to resolve diversity of practices across campus. Sees interfolio as a tool that will help train and scaffolding in software.
- BL to DK: Can you report on the outcomes of the PPPR process this year at the next meeting? DK indicated yes.

4. New Business from the NTTF Issues Committee, Anne Langendorfer and Mark Stanley

Chapter 4 Proposed Revisions (see attached documents)

Proposed changes to chapter 4 of the FH present by NTTI members, AL and MS.

- BL: how do these changes results from the work of the NTTF Task Force established by the Office of the Provost?
- MS: Not all aspects of the task force report are represented in these changes. FS leadership presented to the Provost. Many of these changes have been vetted during these conversations.
- Changes to FH reflecting issues highlighted in the task force report include : title changes; hiring; promotion; non-renewal
- MS walks through suggested changes

Discussion:

4.1.

- BL could be challenges for OGC;
- MM suggested language change;
- MS using language already in the FH; Use “tenure line” to mean “tenured and tenure track faculty”;
- GD raised the issue of the role of NTTF in the hiring process, and there was discussion of the service expectations of NTTF;
- MM CAS assumes some service;

Appointment letter:

- MS describes reasons for changes;
- DK process as described in changes may need to be adjusted; working on a process to track renewals (currently managed in unit not in Provost’s office);
- DK: appointment letters from Provost are consistent; renewal letters inconsistent;
- BL: will new budget model change this process?
- DK: no.
- BL: on available funding, deletion of: request for clarification for decision;

- MS: clauses re contingency for funding throughout Chapter Four amounts to existential threat. Replacing with “needs of the department.”
- MM: Budget changes up to the beginning of the term. Fully support changes. At “in concurrence...”, what does this mean?
- MS: “at the same time as” ;
- MM Why not take this out and keep the language that NTTF have the same opportunities?
- BL or are you proposing that opportunities be offered at the same time in the term:
- MS confirms, change to “on the same schedule”

Timeline on para 4 of 4.1:

- BL may be tricky with OGC.
- MM agrees with language, but does not see budget approved by March 1;
- MS it is reasonable to ask institution to plan ahead to allow for this; BL cited cases in past when budget was not renewed by state legislature until July; because types of NTT are defined, may be best to add “regular” at this point in the chapter; NTTF deserve respect of early communication about their appointments and careers;
- DK looked at other institutions’ handbook; in one: probationary period defined of 1 year; there is a 3-month advance notice; as promotions accrue, notice of reappointments become earlier, appointment lengths increase; agree with spirit of changes, but TT model here at UTK might not work for NTTF.
- BL: Should spousal accommodations be addressed in this section?
- MM: Top of page 3, para 4;
- MS: comes from chapter 3;
- BL: following sentence regarding assumed renewal;
- MS: in some cases, heads wants to renew and there is no further work necessary;
- BL: also protects institution as a way of retaining good people;
- DK: would like to consider the grammar of the FH by comparison to other institution; opportunity to be more clear and precise with the terms and especially to signal part-time faculty members;
- MS: agrees, esp. with visiting faculty; 4.1.1 presented the most challenging section; NTTI wanted these positions to feel more secure to the individual faculty;
- GD: Adjunct title used to allow NTT to serve on thesis committees
- DK: This is no longer a rule with the Graduate Council.

MM question on page 4:

- NTTF title series does not seem to reflect preferences from task force report
- MS: titles in revision were those reported back by Pres. Gross from conversations with administration; HR would have a problem separating Assistant from Professor.
- DK: would be interested in that technicality
- GD: Asks further clarification for the titles and HR
- BL: of Teaching parallels other titles like “of Practice”
- Task force recommended: Assistant Teaching Professor, Associate
- DK: Q. re: Professor denoting terminal degree in their field; came up in FH’s in other institutions
- MS: This is a problem for terminology; teaching does not require terminal degree; “Instructor” is used for TT not yet obtained terminal degree

MM on 4.5.1

- last sentence of 1st paragraph; this language “may be recognized...” is this language from Chapter Three
- MS that is current language in FH for Chapter Four
- MM it should be an automatic raise
- DK can we take the “may” out since the raise is practice?
- MM suggests it should be the same as Chapter Three
- BL years in the past, there were cases of a promotion with no raise due to the budget; policy in FH may be a remnant of this; worth pushing for raises being policy not practice and change the language in FH

MM page 6 addresses degree (see conversation above on titles)

- MS This is the original FH language
- Discussion between MM, DK: “Discipline specific” definition may clarify the “Professor” title

BL, Next Steps for NTTI FH proposals:

Discussion:

- May have to return to this in the next FAC meeting to be held on April 11. these changes will probably not come around again until Fall 2022. We need to be able to submit for board policy review.
- MS: Ideally we would like these submitted to FS this year for approval. NTTI hopes the committees will do their best to move this to FS by the May meeting.
- AL: Can we consider prioritizing handbook changes in order to streamline the process. Are there changes that are ready to go now?
- BL: These are big changes— but between now and April 11 FAC meeting, we get this to place where it can be posted for May meeting and work so that everything is cued up for the fall. Even in the May meeting, it will require second reading? Can we get OGC buy in on the front end?
- DK: BoT will need to approve many of these changes (noting that BOT meetings are scheduled for June and then October). Recognize the timeline is discouraging.
- MS: Request clarification
- BL: Everything requires two readings. Do not want to propose changes that OGC rejected and we had to rewrite. Want to get this to a finished form, post on Senate website with a link to this document of pending changes. Shows what work is waiting for approval and what needs to get through the senate in September with possible discussion at retreat in August.
- MM: Proposes first reading at the May meeting. If we prioritize this for FH changes, this would be ready for second reading at retreat. This would make the most difference to the most people.
- J Laughter: Can OGC read between 1st and 2nd reading. Changes can be made between the two readings. This offers a deadline for OGC.

1. Incorporate suggested changes for Chapter Four
2. DK will provide input. DK will meet with MS, AL and JW to follow up on suggestions.
3. April 11, new draft considered and submit through Executive Council on April 18.
4. It was agreed that the committee would prepare proposed changes to Chapter 3, as well as Chapter 3.1.2 for May Faculty Senate meeting

5. Final Meeting

Monday April 11, 3:30-5:00pm (10-minute annual report from Ombudsperson)

6. Adjournment

Minutes taken by J. Westerhold