

MINUTES

Faculty Affairs Committee

Monday April 11, 2022, 3:30-5:00pm, via Zoom (the last meeting of the academic year).

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

Member absent: George Dodds (teaching obligations)

Guests: Diane Kelly, Mark Stanley, Anne Langendorfer, Lisa Yamagata-Lynch, and Loretta Link

Notes: Due to meeting conflicts, Diane Kelly could only attend until 4pm and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch joined the meeting at 4pm.

1. **Approval of the Minutes:** [March 28, 2022](#) – approved by consensus.
2. **Old Business from the NTTF Issues Committee, Anne Langendorfer and Mark Stanley**
Second Review of Chapter 4 Proposed Revisions of the Faculty Handbook.

There are two goals: 1) make more inclusive and respectful; 2) make the chapter more usable for both administrators and faculty members.

Discussion regarding how much more work needs to be done before it can be presented for first reading to the Faculty Senate. The draft they are currently working on with Vice-Provost Kelly includes input from both Deans and Associate Deans for Faculty Affairs. It is expected that the process will continue to involve the NTTF Issues Committee working with Diane Kelly to bring a draft for Senate review in the fall of 2022. Issues raised included wording choices such as “continuation” being better than “reappointment”, information on percent effort, reaching consensus on title nomenclature, clarifying job expectations (what is teaching?), and “senior” versus “distinguished.” Given that the process will extend into the next academic year, concern was expressed that some of the goals of achieving greater uniformity of process, especially as it relates to details of letters of appointment and continuation address expectations regarding job expectations and percentage of effort.

3. **New Business:** Draft of 3.12 from the Office of General Counsel

These minutes reflect email communications from Beauvais Lyons on April 12th following the discussion. The committee discussed a draft that reflected review by the Office of General Council. In October as part of a meeting about the case of Dr. Anming Hu, the committee believed there was consensus about the need to reform this section of the handbook to (1) more clearly define the meaning of consultation and (2) to revise the policy to involve consultation by the Chief Academic Officer with “representatives of the Faculty Senate consisting of the Faculty Senate President, the immediate-Past President and the President-Elect.” While the proposed changes from OGC also bring this section in alignment with current BOT Policy, they do not apply the same consultative processes to all cases of tenure termination or suspension. Specific concern is with regard to “3.12.3.8 Expedited Procedure for Termination or Suspension without Pay in Certain Cases of Misconduct.” If this concern can be addressed, the committee supports advancing these proposed changes, including a suspension of a second reading at the May 2, 2022 Faculty Senate meeting to have this proposed change ready for UT BOT approval in June.

4. 2021 Fiscal Year Report from Lisa Yamagata Lynch (attached)

Report from October 14, 2021 from the Office of Ombuds Services. A new link was provided to access the report at: <http://ombuds.utk.edu> providing a thorough report of activities. The workload has been steadily increasing with 401 visitor experiences in 2021 as well as other duties, and allowed for the hiring of an Associate Ombuds, Brooke Wichman. The most common concerns brought to the Ombuds related to job security, evaluative relationships, and safety, health, and physical environment (such as work-life balance). We suggested perhaps changing the timing of the Ombuds report to the FAC from April to November next year, right after the report comes out, and also suggested that at least 15 minutes be allowed at the FS Retreat in the Fall for the Ombuds Services to present.

5. Discussion of [pending or proposed](#) UTK Faculty Handbook Changes in 2022-2023 and goals for next year.

Beauvais presented the March 1, 2022 with pending or proposed upcoming changes to the Faculty Handbook that can be a guide to our next Chair, Jud Laughter. Based on the review of this document it will be updated and serve as a component of the committee's final report. Future area of focus include: (1) continue to encourage the UT System Code of Conduct includes wording regarding bullying, (2) continue to monitor Interfolio for meeting the needs of faculty, and (3) continue to evaluate the cost-benefit of PPPR.

Beauvais noted that the second reading of the "Re-appointment and Probationary clock" handbook revision was left off of the April 4th meeting agenda, and has made arrangements for it to be presented for final approval at the May 2 meeting.

Beauvais thanked Jud for his willingness to chair the committee next year. We have 3 members rolling off the FAC (Greenacre, Lyons, Berg), so 3 of the 9 positions will need to be filled. Votes for next year's senators will be occurring soon.

Beauvais said he would circulate a draft of our final report for the year by email. The FAC thanked Beauvais for his work, guidance, and leadership chairing this committee.

6. Adjournment at 5:04pm

Minutes compiled by Cheryl Greenacre