

UNIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, March 21, 2014

9 a.m., Hovey 401D

MINUTES

Members present: Angela Bonnell, Phil Chidester, Doris Houston, Sheryl Jenkins, Domingo Joaquin, David Rubin, James Wolf, Sam Catanzaro (ex officio non-voting)

Members not attending: Diane Dean, Bill O'Donnell

Others present: Bruce Stoffel (recorder)

I. Call to order

Chairperson David Rubin called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

II. Approval of minutes from the March 6, 2014, meeting

James Wolf moved, Doris Houston seconded approval of minutes from the March 6, 2014, meeting. Chairperson Rubin declared the minutes approved.

III. Discussion item: ASPT Policies review

Committee members reviewed Section XI.A, Section XIII.J, and related sections of ASPT Policies to identify changes the committee might recommend to Faculty Caucus when the current ASPT Policies document is formally revised. The next edition of ASPT Policies is tentatively scheduled to take effect January 1, 2017.

Regarding XIII.J, Rubin suggested that point 5 be more explicit as to the outcome. He suggested adding a sentence indicating that the Office of Equal Opportunity, Ethics, and Access will pursue an investigation in accordance with usual procedures and in a timely manner.

Houston asked if Section XIII.J.2 should explicitly refer to tenure track faculty. Sam Catanzaro said that he does not think clarification is necessary, because reference to tenure track faculty is implicit throughout the document.

Rubin noted that there are no timelines for appeals in the beginning of Section XIII (Appeals Policies and Procedures). Catanzaro said that timelines are instead embedded in the processes described throughout the document, except for non-reappointment appeal. Perhaps document review and revision provides an opportunity to address this omission. Catanzaro will draft a passage to do so with wording consistent with wording used elsewhere in the document.

Rubin asked for clarification of dates in XI.A.2. Catanzaro explained the dates of termination notice. There was discussion about wording used to describe termination dates in the case of one-year appointments. Catanzaro will draft a replacement passage that is lengthier and clearer.

Rubin asked if XIII.J.3 should be modified to define the term "evidence," perhaps incorporating the same definition recommended by the committee at its last meeting for the proposed faculty dismissal and suspension policy. Perhaps the definition might incorporate the concept of

“verifiable.” Catanzaro noted that the concept of evidence appears in multiple sections of ASPT Policies. He suggested adding a new part E to Section I (Committees: Policies, Selection, Organization, and Responsibilities) that sets forth standards for evidence applicable to all ASPT processes. Committee members agreed.

Houston asked if “preponderance of evidence” is the appropriate standard. Catanzaro expressed support for using the “preponderance of evidence” test, because it is the standard recommended by the American Association of University Professors. Requiring a more stringent test may erroneously imply that ASPT processes follow and are subject to rules of a court of law. That is not the intent, Catanzaro said.

Domingo Joaquin suggested revising XIII.D.4, particularly the phrase “will not be followed.” That phrase may be perceived to mean that the University chooses not to abide by laws, he said. Committee members agreed to replace XIII.D.4 with a passage like, “the formal meetings are not bound by the formal rules of evidence as required in a court of law.”

Phil Chidester suggested that the dismissal process, discussed in recent committee meetings, should not be incorporated into the ASPT calendar set forth in ASPT Policies. Instead, the policy regarding dismissal needs to be flexible, he said.

Catanzaro asked the committee for guidance with XIII.A and XIII.B. XIII.A encourages informal resolution of issues prior to formal meetings or appeals. XIII.B then describes the nature of formal meetings but does not address the nature of informal resolution. He asked if the committee feels that adding guidance regarding informal discussions might be helpful.

Chidester said he is unsure whether reference to informal resolution is needed, because it is unclear to him whether any meeting between a faculty member and a SFSC can be informal. Rubin suggested that, even though informal meetings may not be encouraged in some units, the possibility should be retained in ASPT Policies but explained. Joaquin suggested listing examples of information appropriate for clarifying via informal discussions.

Angela Bonnell asked if it is the intent of the policy that changes to performance evaluations can only be made through formal meetings. Catanzaro responded that changes to performance evaluations can be discussed informally, however a formal meeting is required if a faculty member wants to appeal a performance evaluation to CFSC. Perhaps the policy needs to distinguish between an informal meeting and an appeal, he said. Catanzaro will ponder committee members’ comments and will draft replacement text for committee review.

Catanzaro then summarized the recommendations made by the committee at this meeting.

- XIII.J. Clarify timelines for non-reappointment appeals.
- XIII.J.5 Describe what action the Office of Equal Opportunity, Ethics, and Access should take if a faculty member seeks relief from the office.
- XI.A.2 Rewrite this passage to clarify deadlines for notice in the case of a one-year appointment.
- Add I.E that provides guidance regarding the nature of evidence acceptable in ASPT processes.

- XIII.D.4 Reword to more positively describe rules of evidence appropriate to appeals processes.
- XIII.A. and XIII.B. Add a passage to clarify differences among an informal conversation, a formal meeting, and an appeal. Perhaps such a passage could be added near the beginning of XIII to summarize a faculty member's options for contacts with DFSC/SFSC: optional informal conversation, formal meeting, and written appeal.

At its next meeting, the committee will discuss alignment across sections related to performance evaluations.

IV. Other business

There was no new business.

V. Adjournment

Chidester moved adjournment. Chairperson Rubin adjourned the meeting at 10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Bonnell, Secretary
Bruce Stoffel, Recorder

No attachments