

UNIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE
Thursday, October 2, 2014
3 p.m., Hovey 401D

MINUTES

Members present: Diane Dean, Joe Goodman, Doris Houston (via telephone), Sheryl Jenkins, Bill O'Donnell, David Rubin, Sam Catanzaro (non-voting)

Members not present: Angela Bonnell, Rick Boser, Phil Chidester

Others present: Bruce Stoffel (Recorder)

I. Welcome and introductions

Sam Catanzaro welcomed committee members, and members introduced themselves.

Catanzaro explained that he would preside over the meeting until the committee elects a chairperson.

II. Orientation/overview of committee responsibilities

Catanzaro described the purpose of the committee and its key functions, including review of ASPT policies every five years resulting in adoption of a new edition of the ASPT policies document by the Faculty Caucus of the Academic Senate. The next edition of the document is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2017. Consequently, a key task before the URC in the coming year is review of the ASPT policies document that took effect January 1, 2012.

III. Election of officers

Doris Houston expressed her willingness to be considered for the office of vice-chairperson for 2014-2015.

Diane Dean expressed her willingness to be considered for the office of secretary for 2014-2015.

Sheryl Jenkins agreed to be considered for the office of chairperson for 2014-2015.

Houston asked how frequently URC officers are asked to attend Academic Senate committee meetings or Faculty Caucus meetings. Catanzaro responded that the chairperson may be asked to attend a few times this academic year due to committee work on ASPT policies and on the suspension/dismissal policy.

Catanzaro asked if there were further nominations for any of three offices. There were none.

By voice vote, committee members elected Sheryl Jenkins chairperson for 2014-2015.

By voice vote, committee members elected Doris Houston vice-chairperson for 2014-2015.

By voice vote, committee members elected Diane Dean secretary for 2014-2015.

[At this point Jenkins assumed the role of chairperson and presided over the meeting.]

IV. Approval of minutes from the May 1, 2014 meeting

Dean moved, Rubin seconded approval of minutes from the May 1, 2014, meeting as distributed with committee meeting materials. By voice vote, committee members approved the motion.

V. Review of potential agenda items for 2014-2015

Catanzaro reviewed issues likely to come before the committee in 2014-2015.

Review of ASPT policies

Catanzaro explained the process for periodic review of the ASPT policies document. The next edition of the document is scheduled to become effective January 1, 2017. In 2013-2014 URC began its comprehensive review of the current document and agreed on several recommendations that will eventually be communicated to the Faculty Caucus. The URC review will continue this coming year. To have the new edition in place by January 1, 2017, the edition needs to be approved by the Faculty Caucus during calendar year 2016, preferably by spring 2016. Meeting that target will leave time for colleges to review their college ASPT standards in fall 2016 and to make any changes necessary to conform to the new ASPT policies document prior to its January 1, 2017, effective date.

For the Faculty Caucus to approve a new edition in spring 2016, URC will need to submit its recommendations for changes to the current document to the Faculty Caucus in fall 2015. Consequently, URC will need to conclude its review of the current edition and finalize its recommendations by May 2015.

Catanzaro summarized changes to ASPT policies recommended by URC during the 2013-2014 academic year. Recommendations relate to the nature of evidence acceptable in ASPT processes; timelines for non-reappointment appeals; deadlines for notice of non-reappointment in the case of a one-year appointment; rules of evidence appropriate to appeals processes; the role of the Office of Equal Opportunity, Ethics, and Access should a faculty member seek relief from that office; and clarification of differences among an information conversation, formal meeting, and an appeal.

Bill O'Donnell asked if it is most common that recommended revisions to ASPT policies involve refining refinements made previously. Catanzaro said that has mostly been the case, although there also may be external factors to address and provisions that are no longer relevant.

Houston asked that URC consider how evaluation of faculty members' administrative activities should be handled in the ASPT system. She stated that such duties are not clearly addressed in current ASPT policies. Catanzaro said that administrative duties are considered service activities in the current edition of the ASPT policies document but that discussion of the matter would be appropriate as part of the ASPT policies review. Houston asked how other universities address such duties in their tenure policies. Catanzaro said that he could research this and report back.

Houston suggested that some administrative duties rise above service and might instead be evaluated separately from teaching, research, and service. O'Donnell asked Houston if that might then involve release of faculty from some research responsibilities. Houston said this could be one of several policies to be examined.

Rubin reported that he has a joint appointment in Chemistry and Biological Sciences and that faculty members in those units are allowed to negotiate the balance among teaching, research, and service. Catanzaro suggested that administrative duties might be offset by course releases. Perhaps the new edition of the ASPT policies document could provide college faculty status committees and department/school faculty status committees guidance with such offsets, he added.

Catanzaro reported that he has been compiling a list of ASPT-related questions he has been asked since he has been in his current position. He said he will add the issue regarding administrative duties and will circulate his list to URC members. He stressed that his list is not meant to be inclusive and encouraged URC members to suggest other matters.

Approval of 2015-2016 ASPT calendar

Catanzaro explained that URC is responsible for annually approving a calendar of ASPT activities and deadlines. URC typically reviews the ASPT calendar in October or November, he said. The calendar is then distributed to all colleges for use by CFSCs, DFSCs, and SFSCs as well as by administrators, shared governance committees, and faculty members.

Review of CFSC annual reports

Catanzaro explained that each college is required to submit a report of its ASPT activities to URC by May 1 each year. URC is charged with reviewing the reports for accuracy, consistency, and clarity before they are accepted by the committee and entered into official university records. URC also reviews the reports to identify trends that suggest the need for ASPT policy changes.

URC is also charged with annually reviewing college ASPT standards pursuant to a standards review calendar adopted by URC. College of Applied Science and Technology standards are scheduled for review in 2014-2015. Catanzaro will check the deadline for submission of CAST standards to URC and the deadline for URC review of the standards.

Suspension/dismissal policy

Catanzaro reported that URC and the Faculty Affairs Committee reviewed and commented on a draft suspension and dismissal policy in 2013-2014. That was done at the request of the Academic Senate. In conjunction with its review of the document, the Faculty Affairs Committee suggested adding a provision for minor sanctions, such as reduction in pay, as alternatives to suspension and dismissal. Catanzaro reported that he has been drafting language regarding minor sanctions, working with legal counsel. He plans to send the draft to the Faculty Affairs Committee, which will review the draft and then forward it with comments to URC for its review.

Joe Goodman asked about the role legal counsel plays in such matters. Catanzaro explained that legal counsel reviews draft provisions for their consistency with federal and state laws.

Legal counsel typically completes its review before draft language is considered by committees or by the Faculty Caucus.

Rubin asked about the role of the Provost in establishing a suspension/dismissal policy or related ASPT policies. Catanzaro explained that he serves on URC as the Provost's representative and consults the Provost throughout the policy review and approval process.

VI. Other business

Houston mentioned the hiring controversy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. *[Professor Steven Salaita was offered a tenured position in the American Indian Studies unit at UIUC, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees. The offer was withdrawn shortly before the start of the academic year. While no reason was provided, the decision appears to be related to statements made by Salaita on social media criticizing Israel.]* Houston asked how Illinois State University would handle such a situation. Catanzaro responded that the Board of Trustees at Illinois State hires only one staff member, the President, who, in turn, is responsible for faculty hiring. Consequently, the board would not be involved in faculty hiring decisions. At Illinois State, faculty search committees comprised of faculty members are responsible for vetting candidates. Through the vetting process, any questions regarding a candidate's online presence would be addressed.

A proposed URC meeting schedule for fall 2014 was disseminated to committee members and will also be sent to all committee members via email. Catanzaro asked that members provide feedback regarding their availability on the proposed dates. Unless the schedule needs to be changed based on members' responses, the next URC meeting will be held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, October 23.

VII. Adjournment

Dean moved, Goodman seconded adjournment of the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Dean, Secretary
Bruce Stoffel, Recorder