

Approved

UNIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, March 10, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Location: Hovey 401D

Members present: Chad Buckley, Tom Buller, Craig Gatto (non-voting member), Kevin Edwards, Miranda Lin, Randall Reid, Julie Schumacher, Susan Sprecher (via Zoom)

Absent: Erin Reitz

Opening Issues

The first order of business was to approve of the minutes from the Feb. 10 meeting. One abstained, and the remaining members present approved.

No agenda for this meeting had been sent out.

The meeting began with a brief discussion of the recent exit of the ISU President.

It was also discussed briefly that committee members had received emails about upcoming meetings with the four candidates for the Associate VP for Academic Administration. Kevin encouraged the URC members to attend, if possible.

Discussion of the ASPT Equity Review Cycle

Then, the discussion turned to the ASPT Equity Review Cycle (a document that is included in our Teams website, and was an agenda approved of by the Faculty Caucus of the Academic Senate on May 8, 2019). Kevin raised the question about whether we should take up the additional equity issues beyond what has been done in the past. As explained by Kevin, the review task had been divided into five phases. Phase 1 covered everything that we think of as equity, including compression and every other possible inequity issue related to salary. A lot of big issues were covered in Year 1, along with data from PRPA. Then the committee stopped its work on this review, and never proceeded to Phase 2/Year 2. Roberta Trites (who was acting Associate VP for Academic Administration for a year) talked about it in the 2021-2021 academic year, but nothing further was done with it (URC was busy in that year with other issues).

Craig noted the data were not given to him, but that in the recent COACHE survey (on faculty job satisfaction), conducted in spring of 2022 in a partnership with the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education), of the major concerns identified by faculty, compensation was one of them. Five groups are handling the COACHE survey data, and Craig and Ryan Smith are leading the compensation (action) team. The compensation team may have upcoming forums. The team is in the process of getting data from Cooper Cutting and HR so that salary comparisons can be made with other R2 universities, at assistant, associate, and full professor levels. The team analyzing the COACHE data would also like to look deeper into the data, such as for separate disciplines because departments such as Business can skew the results.

The mean and median may be very different depending on what groups are included. Craig will be reporting back to this group.

As noted by Craig, those who responded to the COACHE survey seemed happy with promotion, but not with salary. We can potentially break the data up by department with our own university data, and possibly from other universities in the state (by looking at faculty lists), but not other states.

Kevin noted that this document (ASPT Equity Review Cycle) was approved by Senate as our job, and that we can assume that what has been done was Phase 1. We would next need to look at Phase 2 (tenure & first promotion). Once we get the new data, we could make recommendations. We can't look at data for any one individual, but can look at general data.

Craig expressed that we are probably competitive in salaries at Assistant level prof positions (the rate for starting salaries tends to increase 4-6% a year). On the other hand, once here, we have been getting 2% raises or 0% raises. So, compression is the big thing.

It was discussed which schools are unionized, and it was noted that only U of I and ISU in the state are non-unionized.

It was asked what is task of Phase 2. Kevin replied that we have to initiate it, get the data, and then make a recommendation.

As noted by Craig, our tenure rates are incredibly good. However, this occurs because some faculty members who are not doing well (particularly in teaching) in their first few years are not reappointed and thus never reach the stage of being considered for tenure. Such reappointments are not considered tenure denials. Research is the main reason one doesn't get tenure. If a faculty member fails to do research, such failure doesn't affect their colleagues. However, if they are dropping the ball on teaching, this affects colleagues (burden is laid on colleagues and that is less survivable). When it's scholarship, it doesn't affect others and it just gets evaluated at tenure time. Therefore, as the URC evaluates numbers being tenured, we need to also consider the number of those who are not reappointed as a type of "tenure failure".

A question was asked: If 90% of assistants are tenured, does that reflect poorly or good on us? Craig noted a glaring (crazy) thing resulting from the COACHE survey is that we (ISU) scored high on satisfaction with getting promoted to full prof. The question was worded about difficulty of attaining full prof, and people replied generally "no problem." Respondents were also positive about scholarly expectations (suggesting we are doing great). However, does that mean we are all great or is it the case that the bar is too low? This is being discussed in the groups.

It was then noted by a committee member that each department can be different. A member from one college noted that some departments in their college seem to have low bars.

Craig then discussed the request from some departments for early P&T. The book says only in "unusual circumstances" will early recommendations be made. When requests are made, Craig is going back and asking what is the unusual circumstance? Departments may respond, "Met our bar two years early." Craig wonders, then, whether the bar should be raised? Craig is holding

firm on tenure – tenure is not early. A person might make promotion early but not tenure. Craig is not sure how this will all play out. A department may respond, “unusual is not defined” but then Craig is responding, “it’s up to you to define” and the case needs to be made very different from all other cases. If a department puts two faculty members up for early promotion in the same year (which has occurred), that would suggest that neither case is unusual or different.

In regard to Phase 2 of the ASPT Equity Review Cycle, Kevin noted that Sam Cantanzaro (previously in the position of Assistant Provost for Academic Administration) and the URC seemed to write it as directions for PRPA. Therefore, perhaps we should wait for PRPA to look at this issue. We can then look at their data, and if all is okay, we can just indicate that. Or, if we identify a problem, we can indicate that. It’s not that we have to do something immediately. Until we have the data, we don’t know whether there are any glaring issues.

Craig asked whether we should get a PRPA person on our committee. Kevin noted that the committee in the past had a visit from them two times. Kevin further noted, though, that it might be good to invite them again and ask them about the feasibility of Phase 2.

Craig noted that there may be mining of the data going on with the strategic planning committee for educate, connect, and elevate.

Concerning Phase 1, long-term committee members of URC expressed that they could remember only vague descriptions of the data, perhaps because if a particular group is too small, it cannot be identified. Craig is going to look to see if he can obtain any data from his team analyzing the COACHE data. He stated that if there are data that can be shared, he will share everything openly (unless someone tells them not too).

A committee member asked about the timeline. Kevin suggested that we initiate the process to obtain data for Phase 2. Craig noted that the relevant data are collected from Nov-Feb, and so the data should be compiled soon.

A committee member asked whether it is feasible to request the data for both phases 2 and 3. Craig and Kevin thought it should be possible to get the data together, and it makes sense to ask for the data.

Then, the committee discussed whether a person could be tenured and still be an assistant professor. Craig noted that it has happened in the past, but does not happen any more.

Kevin noted that, by the current plan, we should ultimately be looking for 20 years of data.

Chad noted that in a May 4 faculty caucus meeting, Roberta and PRPA presented relevant information.

The Issues of Disciplinary Action and Collegiality

Disciplinary action material is relatively new and has just made it into the PRPA book. Craig would like to consider discussing collegiality. He notes that we talk about it all of the time, and it is supposed to be an evaluative part of every aspect of our job, but because it is not codified in

the book, when a DFSC/SFSC tries to call someone out on it, it is overturned. It ends up being a futile exercise.

URC discussed that unacceptable behavior of faculty can be an issue and needs to be spelled out in ASPT.

As Craig noted, Martha Horst (Chairperson of Academic Senate) stated that ASPT book trumps all policies. A sanction (which can be any time of year), goes through DFSC/CFSC. Kevin noted that we should look at this issue, and make sure the policies line up.

Discussion of How Raises are Determined in Departments

Another issue that came up is the satisfactory/unsatisfactory stamp in the year-end ASPT letter in some departments. As noted by a committee member, a faculty member could have a stellar year, and someone else could just be above average, but both receive a satisfactory and potentially the same salary raise in the department.

As noted by Craig, departments have flexibility in their demarcations of “satisfactory” and decisions are made within departments. He gave Department of Psych as an example; they use a 1 to 10 scale for teaching, service, and research, with higher scores receiving higher salaries. However, in some departments if faculty members get satisfactory, all members get the same raise, apparently.

Then, there was a brief discussion by the URC that in some departments, too much discretion is used by the Director/Chair to decide on raises without consulting with the DFSC/SFSC. According to Craig, if any department is doing this, it is inappropriate. Chair/Director is supposed to have discussion about raises with DFSCs/SFSCs. Craig suggested that whoever is in Craig’s position in the fall could be called into such departments to have the process explained.

The protocol is that DFSC/SFSC wouldn’t be asked at the evaluation stage about raises, but when raises are announced, the DFSC/SFSC should be called back in and consulted with related to raises.

Departments vary on how they distribute the 80% of the raise money (the performance-evaluated increment). For example, in Biology everyone gets the standard increment (tied to the 20%) and then the remaining dollar amount (performance-evaluated increments) is shared among the faculty differently as a function of placement in different evaluation ranks but discussed with DFSC/SFSC.

Kevin noted that maybe we should be looking at this issue; however, our committee doesn’t get reports on salary distribution. The College offices approve of the department raises. It could be assumed that the College offices would notice discrepancies or oddities, such as every faculty member receiving the same raise. However, it was then noted by the committee member that brought up this issue that there would have still been variation in the raises, but what might not be obvious to the College office is that the decisions were made by the Director/Chair without consultation with the DFSC/SFSC.

It was noted that an issue like this is falling between the cracks. Perhaps the process needs to be emphasized in the retreats.

Then, it was asked whether there is another group that looks at actual raises. Craig responded no, that it was just the DFSC/CFSC and then approved by the College office. Craig noted that for 8 or 9 times in past 20+ years it was 0% raises. Chad suggested that maybe the URC should suggest some best practices for departments/Schools. Kevin suggested we look into this.

It was discussed further about the 20% raise increase from the university, and then what happens to the other 80%. There is variation across departments on how the 80% is divided up. Some departments actually give part of the 80% based on percent and part based on dollar amount.

Other Issues to Consider in the Future

Kevin then went on to discuss that when the book was being re-done, some suggestions didn't make it in it. One was for increments for promotion be scaled (instead of flat sum). On a to-do-list is to look again at whether the flat sum is the best way to go.

Craig mentioned that another issue that could be discussed is whether there should be further salary bumps after achieving full professor, such as \$1500 bump on a good 5-year review. In some departments the post-full professor 5-year reviews are not even being done. A financial bump could be an incentive for doing the 5-year reviews. Apparently, there was general support for this idea in the past, but unclear whether the money was there to do it.

Craig noted that he will search for Roberta's data (that she shared) for next meeting. Will talk to PRPA about the issue of number hired but didn't get to the tenure decision stage.

Adjournment