

Approved

UNIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, Feb. 10, 2023

10:30 a.m.

Location: Hovey 401D

Members present: Craig Gatto (non-voting, via zoom), Kevin Edwards, Miranda Lin, Randall Reid, Erin Reitz, Julie Schumacher, Susan Sprecher

Absent: Chad Buckley, Tom Buller

The first order of business was to approve of the minutes from the Dec. 2 meeting. Prior to the meeting, Randall Reid informed Sue Sprecher of a minor editing suggestion (a word missing in a sentence), a correction that will be made before the final version is submitted. A motion was called to approve the minutes, and the vote was 5 members (of the 6 voting members present) approved and 1 abstained.

The next order of business was to return to an issue introduced at the Dec. 2nd meeting (see Dec. 2nd notes), which was the Mennonite School of Nursing asking for approval of change in their language for the composition of their SFSC from a maximum of 1 non-tenured track member to a maximum of 2 non-tenured track members. We had discussed this issue at the Dec. 2nd meeting and had been accepting of the change but had not officially voted on it. A motion to vote was made by Sue, which was seconded by Erin. All 6 voting members who were present in this meeting voted in favor of the change.

The next issue discussed (which had been initially discussed at the Dec. 2nd meeting; see notes from that meeting) was the discrepancy in the policy book concerning the number of years of credit a person is allowed to bring in. In one location of the policy book (p. 25, F.1.b), it states two years. In another location (p. 27, B2), it states three years. In practice, it has been three years. Among the members of URC present on Dec. 2nd, there had been unanimous agreement that the two years on p. 25 should be replaced with three years:

p. 25 (F.1.b; **Promotion** Policies) states: *A candidate may bring in up to **two** years of full-time service at the rank of assistant professor at the college or university level in consideration for promotion to Associate Professor.*

However, on p. 27 (B2; **Tenure** Policies), it states, “*A newly-appointed faculty member with prior full-time service may be credited with up to **three** years of service and shall be notified in writing how many years of probationary service credit is being given and how long...*”

It was suggested at the Dec. 2nd meeting that Kevin present it as a friendly amendment as a typographical error and have the change made now (rather than waiting for another cycle of review of the policy handbook).

In this Feb. 10th meeting, Kevin shared the outcome of making that suggestion to Dr. Horst and the Senate. Dr. Horst replied that Senate could not make the change for 2023, and that Senate likely "needs to consider what number of years is the correct/appropriate amount." Thus it will not be treated as a friendly amendment.

In our discussion today of this issue, Craig (who was on Zoom) shared his screen and displayed a form that new faculty members sign when they are hired which is titled "Tenure Year Designation". In this form, there is a spot to check prior experience and it gives up to 3 years. The form has existed for many years and is what is transferred to HR.

Kevin suggested that this (the form) should be the tiebreaker, but acknowledged the issue is back in Senate at this point, and will likely come back to the URC after they discuss it.

The next issue discussed (which had been initially discussed at the end of the Dec. 2nd meeting; see notes), was the oddity in the following statement in the policy book:

"The decision concerning tenure must be made at least twelve months before the expiration of the probationary period."

As reiterated from the discussion from the past meeting, decisions occur 3 months (not 12 months) before the end of the probationary period. The decision is made by the President on May 15th. A hypothetical faculty member who is receiving tenure will hear on May 15th, and then be tenured/promoted to associate by August 15th (3 months later). A hypothetical faculty member who is denied tenure will hear on May 15th and can then receive a terminal contract for the following year (but it will not be considered an extension of a probationary period, as the probationary period cannot be more than 6 years).

Craig informed us that he emailed Sam Catanazaro (who had been in Craig's position in the past) to ask about this. Craig reported that Sam was also confused about why this statement was in the policy book. We discussed a few issues including whether the sentence needs to be in there at all. After discussion, Kevin made the motion that we change the statement (p. 28, 9.B.4) to say 3 months rather than 12 months, to reflect what is actually done. All 6 voting members present in the meeting approved of this change.

It was concluded that Craig would write to Martha and summarize this change as well as to follow-up on our recommendation that faculty members can bring up to 3 years of credit.

Kevin then raised some issues that we will likely need to consider in Spring 2023:

- Approving changes in ASPT documents from Colleges
- Review and approve the summary data on promotion and tenure decisions.
- Every 5 years, URC is supposed to oversee an equity review and develop an appropriate equity distribution review plan. This was discussed by URC over the past 3 years. Kevin will post the provisional 5-year plan for us to review. Concerning this, Craig mentioned that the Provost office is planning to deal with this as one theme that came out of the COACH survey, and that an action committee will be looking at this. Also, the PRPA (Planning, Research, and Policy Analysis) is looking into this and will be obtaining data,

including comparisons of salaries with comparative universities, and these data can be shared with URC in the future. Other issues mentioned briefly by Craig and/or Kevin included:

- If our salaries are lower than other similar universities in the Midwest, there will be discussion of how to rectify that, and there are many options
- All of this is complicated by the fact that many of the comparative universities have unionized faculty.
- There is also the issue of certain demographic groups within a university may have lower (or higher) salaries. However, it can be difficult to obtain the relevant data, especially in cases when there are only 3 or fewer representatives of a particular group.
- Some information about salaries presented last year to Senate was presented in a fashion that was hard to interpret.
- Provost wants to do something about compensation issues.
- Salary compression/inversion issues are not fully accounted for in the existing 5-year plan, so this issue should be discussed further
- Kevin encouraged us to talk to people in our departments and areas to get some early feedback and stories on this issue.

In terms of future meetings, both Craig and Sue will be at conferences in our next potential Friday meeting (Feb. 24th). If a meeting is held, someone else (other than Sue) will need to be the note-taker.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15