

UNIVERSITY REVIEW COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 26, 2015
3 p.m., Hovey 209

MINUTES

Members present: Rick Boser, Phil Chidester, Angela Bonnell, Diane Dean, Joe Goodman, Doris Houston, Sheryl Jenkins, David Rubin, Sam Catanzaro (non-voting)

Members not present: Bill O'Donnell

Others present: Bruce Stoffel (recorder)

I. Call to order

Chairperson Sheryl Jenkins called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

II. Approval of minutes

A. Diane Dean moved, Phil Chidester seconded approval of minutes from the February 5, 2015, meeting as distributed prior to the meeting. The motion carried.

B. Joe Goodman moved, David Rubin seconded approval of minutes from the February 12, 2015, meeting as distributed prior to the meeting. The motion carried.

III. Draft ASPT policies on faculty discipline

Jenkins reminded committee members that they had decided to review the draft ASPT policies on discipline again, aided by a flow chart. Sam Catanzaro reported that the flow chart was not yet ready. Jenkins said she would schedule the discussion for a future committee meeting once the chart has been completed.

IV. Discussion of ASPT subgroup reports

Jenkins asked that subgroups review with the committee the report each made to the committee on February 5, 2015 (see minutes of the February 5, 2015, meeting), in the process discussing issues and recommendations point-by-point. Jenkins asked that subgroups report in the following order: Subgroup 1, Subgroup 3, Subgroup 4, and Subgroup 2.

A. Subgroup 1

Phil Chidester and Joe Goodman reported.

Chidester noted that the comment marked "p1" in the subgroup report (should XIV.A.1 be written to allow "unsolicited anonymous communications") is the only substantive issue raised by the subgroup. Chidester suggested that the committee consider changing this passage to cover situations similar to the one in Milner Library (discussed by the committee at its December 4, 2014, meeting).

Angela Bonnell noted that prohibition of anonymous communication has been included in ASPT policies back to 1979. The issue was discussed at length during the last comprehensive five-year review of ASPT policies, she said, and the decision was made then to retain the prohibition. Bonnell reported that Milner Library faculty has initiated discussions regarding alternate ways to provide feedback for use in evaluating tenure-line administrative coordinators. One approach being considered is solicitation of anonymous feedback regarding a program or service rather than the individual coordinating it. Thus, there would be no need to change XIV.A.1 to accommodate Milner Library, she said.

Catanzaro stated that the issue of anonymous communication in faculty evaluation is an issue only at Milner Library. Doris Houston offered that the instance at Milner Library might be the only one that has come to light. Catanzaro said that the only other situation he can think of in which the issue of anonymous communication might be raised is with centers, but there have been no such instances to his knowledge. Chidester said that there may be an intersection with law to the extent that anonymous communication would be allowable only for a small percentage of faculty.

Jenkins offered that it would be reasonable to retain XIV.A.1 as it is, since Milner Library has found an alternate means of obtaining feedback. The consensus of committee members was to not modify XIV.A.1.

B. Subgroup 3

Angela Bonnell and Sheryl Jenkins reported.

Jenkins asked if it is yet known whether the University still hires faculty at the rank of “instructor.” Catanzaro said he was to check with Human Resources and will do so.

Referring to the note in VI.G about possibly allowing virtual communication in lieu of a campus visit, Houston asked if the subgroup has language it is proposing. Bonnell responded that the subgroup does not have specific changes to recommend but thought the change might make sense. Rubin asked about spousal hires. Catanzaro said there is flexibility in part of the hiring process but when hiring for a tenure track position the final interview needs to be in person. Chidester asked about the meaning of the word “candidate” in the passage. After further discussion, committee members decided that the passage is acceptable as it is.

Jenkins asked Bonnell about the comment marked “alb14” (plan for remediation not included in DFSC responsibilities in V.C.2.c – should it?). Bonnell explained that V.C.2.c, which describes the membership and responsibilities of DFSCs/SFSCs, does not provide for a DFSC/SFSC developing a remediation plan in connection with cumulative post-tenure reviews. Catanzaro said that V.C.2.c is worded broadly enough to accommodate development of a remediation plan.

Referring to X.A.5 (comments marked “alb12” and “alb13”), Bonnell said that quotation marks were first used in the 2005 edition of the ASPT policies book and have been carried forward in subsequent editions.

Jenkins noted that all other comments made by Subgroup 3 are editorial.

C. Subgroup 4

Diane Dean and Rick Boser reported.

Dean circulated a color copy of the Subgroup 4 report to aid committee review of subgroup notations. She explained the color coding, noting that changes suggested by the subgroup are intended to make the narrative more consistent and logical. She noted that amendments made since approval of the current ASPT policies book have been incorporated. Jenkins asked if the subgroup found a problem with the text as it is. Dean responded that the subgroup found no substantive problems.

Dean asked if an appellant is allowed to meet with the Faculty Review Committee (FRC) in person. She noted that the ASPT policies book is not clear with regard to that matter. Catanzaro noted that another section of the policies book states that FRC may invite the appellant to meet with the committee but does not have to do so; thus, the appellant does not have a right to appear.

Dean explained that the subgroup has recommended changes to the order of the text, to bring together definitions and types of appeals and the nature of promotion and tenure and the initiation of a promotion or tenure request. Dean asked if those changes should be made or if the text should be left as it is. Houston asked if Dean could present the committee with a side-by-side comparison of versions or place reworded passages to the side of the existing text, to aid committee discussion of the matter. Dean said she could do so.

Houston asked for clarification regarding the approach the committee should take with respect to its review. She asked if the committee is to retain as much of the existing text as possible or if the committee is to make changes suggested by the subgroups. Houston said that if the committee can revise the text so it is clearer, that would not be bad. Jenkins responded that the committee should do both, depending what is appropriate in each instance, but that reorganizing sections can get confusing.

Boser said he does not want to rearrange everything if there is not a problem to solve. He added that it would not make sense for the committee to get too specific, since others are likely to rewrite parts of the text anyway. Goodman suggested that the committee focus on processes to make sure they make sense.

Dean asked that all dates and deadlines in the text be checked against the current ASPT calendar. There is at least one item not in the current calendar that should be, she said. She noted that some passages define deadlines according to calendar days in relation to some event, while other passages set forth specific dates. Dean asked if the policies should be consistent in the use of one form or the other. Catanzaro explained that because some deadlines are based on the number of days following receipt of a letter by the faculty member and dates of receipt may vary, it is not possible to specify a date. Dean agreed but noted that only the post tenure appeals process cites dates. Catanzaro pointed out that XIII.I.2 (top of page 52 of the ASPT policies document) refers to X.D, which also cites dates. Dean suggested that all dates in the document be reviewed for appropriateness of format and for consistency.

Houston asked when the committee is expected to report its recommendations. Catanzaro responded that the committee is scheduled to do so at the end of the spring semester.

V. Other business

There was none.

VI. Adjournment

Dean moved, Goodman seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Jenkins adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Dean, Secretary
Bruce Stoffel, Recorder

Attachments: None