

Minutes

Faculty Standards Committee of the University Senate

Monday, September 14, 2020 (2:00 – 3:30 PM, WebEx)

The following FSC members were in attendance.

*Lisa Holle, Chair, Pharmacy Practice
*Marysol Asencio, El Instituto
*Dan Burkey, Engineering
*Elizabeth Jockusch, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
*Vicki Magley, Psychological Sciences
*Betsy McCoach, Neag
*Linda Pescatello, Kinesiology
*Paula Philbrick, EEB, Waterbury Campus
*Sarah Woulfin, Educational Leadership
Lloyd Blanchard, OIRE
Preston Britner, Human Development & Family Sciences
Lewis Gordon, Philosophy
Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center
Martina Rosenberg, CETL
Amanda Pitts, Executive Assistant to Vice Provost for Academic Affairs (present on behalf of Vice Provost for Faculty Staff Affairs and Development)
Likhita Athina, Undergraduate Student representative

1) Welcome and Introductions

2) Old Business – approved last year; provided for benefit of review

- April 6, 2020 Minutes
- 2019-2020 Annual Report

2) New Business

a. Research Grant Deadlines proposed enforcement policy

Committee members agree we understand the SPS staff concerns but also value the need for faculty investigators to have the best possible grant submissions to be competitive and to benefit UConn, and expressed concerns that imposing such a deadline could contribute to decrease in the ability for faculty to remain competitive and also work towards achieving the President's goal of doubling research. Allowing the faculty the ability to update the science sections is essential for competitive grant funding. Additionally concerns about the impact of collaborative grant submissions

(multiple PIs, schools and universities) as well as small grants or those with very short grant timeline announcements were expressed. Faculty desire very explicit information about what “draft” form of narrative documents to ensure that faculty understand what will be considered as suitable for review and what triggers the review.

Bottlenecks in the process were discussed. Is it only at the SPS level – faculty getting in grants at last minute vs at the college/school level grant support staff vs appropriate staffing either at college/school or SPS to handle grant submission #s? What do junior faculty need to be successful? Examples were provided such as SPS flagging items that internal college/school staff signed off on; substantive feedback given to investigator by SPS an hour before deadline; and early submitters not benefiting from early submission. It might be helpful to discuss the potential bottlenecks with all involved in grant process. A suggestion for incentivizing faculty who meet deadline and penalizing those who do not (perhaps with % of indirect costs returned) was proposed but concerns were voiced about how do you consider those situations where it is out of the faculty member’s control (eg, multiple university proposals).

Concerns about imposing this deadline in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic was discussed and how this might impact faculty who are not only adapting their teaching and research programs may be doing so in a less than ideal environment because of family situations also dealing with pandemic. Concerns about how this might affect pre-tenure faculty and other underrepresented groups expressed and committee recommends this should be considered.

The committee recommends to the SEC that this needs further discussion from all stakeholders to identify the reasons for bottlenecks and consideration for the concerns addressed above.

b. Emeritus By-Law Revision

Background was provided for committee members who were present during the discussion and by-law amendment proposal that was Approved by Senate in 2017. The FSC was tasked with creating a by-law change for automatic professor emeritus status if retiring at rank of professor with 5% years of service. However, after Senate approved, a new administration was in place and they chose to not move it to the Board of Trustees for approval. Also, a question about what emeritus status provides was discussed. library privileges, parking option, email and a title. All peer and aspirant schools have a similar policy to the by-law revisions.

In general, the committee agreed that we are supportive of “endorsing” this Senate by-law amendment but we need to know the process; can we just endorse or is another amendment needed to be proposed? Discussion ensued about what is done for an employee who was not in good standing – what process is available to remove emeritus status?

Having raised these concerns, the FSC will discuss further at October meeting.

c. SET+

Briefly discussed plan for future discussions. Faculty have reached out to CETL about concerns: about best practice guidance for faculty in departments who don't have any guidance in place; the external reviewer requirement for those who are undergoing PRT and are in a 100% teaching position. Provost's office has included discussions for at faculty orientation, deans/department head meetings to set-up a teaching portfolio and SET+ plan. Plan to discuss best practices and how to best support faculty.

d. Lewis Gordon recommended agenda item for next meeting: discussion of a distinguished professor rank at UConn (which could help with recruiting)

Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm