

## Minutes

### Faculty Standards Committee of the University Senate

Monday, February 8, 2021 (2:00 – 3:30 PM, WebEx)- rescheduled from 2/1/21 due to University snowday closure

#### **Committee charge:**

*This committee shall continuously review University policies and practices relating to tenure, academic freedom, workloads, rank and promotion, remuneration, retirement, and other matters affecting the faculty and shall propose any desirable expression of Senate opinion on these matters, including proposals to the Trustees for modifications in their rules and regulations on these matters.*

#### **Following 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  
Preston Britner, Human Development & Family Sciences  
Sam Dorman, USG Representative  
Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center  
Martina Rosenberg, CETL  
Jeffrey Shoulson, Senior Vice Provost, Ex-Officio member  
Spencer Sonnenburg, Graduate Student

#### 2) Old Business

- a. Dec 2020 Minutes approved
- b. Report to Senate on Enforcement of Deadline for Research Proposal Submissions Policy status – Lisa reported that motion for the University Senate to endorse the recommendation of the President appointed workgroup to identify impediments to the expeditious review of proposals in advance of deadlines and propose solutions, with a report including the proposed solution to be presented to the University Senate at the March 2021 meeting was approved by the Senate. The working group with staff and faculty from UConn Storrs and UConn Health began meeting in January and continues to meet regularly. The report likely will go just to the Senate rather to FSC prior to Senate. Kathleen Holgerson stated she was on this working group and is able to answer any questions the committee may have.
- c. Emeritus By-Law Revision - motion for University Senate Feb meeting (document attached) – Lisa reviewed the proposed motion to be presented at the Senate meeting later that afternoon and invited members to provide any additional suggestions for talking points. No

additional points were added.

- d. BOT Distinguished Professor process review status – Betsy reviewed the charge of the working group that included members from both FSC (Betsy McCocah, Marysol Asencio, Linda Pescatello) and Diversity committee (Edith Barrett, Anastasios Tzingounis) see attached report. They have identified 4 initial areas to focus recommended improvements: 1) diversify selection committee in regards to demographics but also disciplines/all schools, colleges, centers etc, more than prior winners including staff, community members; 2) providing guidance to nominators, such as a template; 3) providing individualized, developmental and supportive feedback to those finalists who are not selected; 4) recommend record keeping of process for transparency/future improvement (see document attached). Committee members were in agreement with these recommended areas for improvement and also recommended that a larger University commitment to increase the pipeline of students, staff and faculty that have diverse demographics is needed. Plan will be for working group to develop more specific guidance by end of spring semester to share with committee and Provost's office.
- e. New Distinguished Professor titles
  - a. Titles used for Recruiting – postponed until March meeting
  - b. Provost Titles Faculty Alignment with Strategic Initiatives – Lisa presented the idea of having a provost distinguished professor type program that would recognize faculty that have completed work with strategic initiatives of inclusion/inclusivity or life transformative education and some peer/aspirant university similar programs (document attached). Discussion ensued about the desire to have a such a program that is separate from the possibility of a recruitment type “distinguished professorship.” A program like should showcase the value current faculty bring to the university and have the responsibility of sharing their work with the University community in a coordinated way. Recommended a working group be formed of FSC members to propose components of the program that the FSC could then further discuss. Volunteers were requested. Lisa to follow-up to identify a working group.

## 2) New Business

- a. Tenure clock extension discussion – Vice-Provost Shoulson shared that the Provost's office is planning to recommend to the BOT to amend the University By-Laws to allow faculty, including new faculty starting in Fall 2020, to take up to 3 total tenure clock extensions for FMLA (if eligible) or COVID-19 reasons. This would be different from previous change last year that prohibited stacked extensions, did not include faculty beginning in Fall 2020; only those beginning Spring 2020 and later. The committee inquired about whether this would be an opt-in vs opt-out. BOT in past favored opt-in only. Jeffrey indicated that the Administration would encourage opt-out or at a minimum communicate to faculty that they should consider opt-in and then can decide at later date not to use. A question was raised about retroactive use of extensions (likely not). Discussion ensued that we need to consider the long-term financial impact of extensions, whether this should apply to associate to full and that should be parallel for CIRE faculty. Committee was in favor of the Administration's plan to recommend the amendment for tenure clock extensions as listed above as well as exploring other long-term solutions that address COVID-19 impact on faculty.
- b. SET+ - a working group was formed of FSC members (Martina Rosenberg, chair; Paula Philbrick, Dan Burkey, Sarah Woulfin, Betsy McCoach) and other university members (Melina Pappedemos, Simon Cheng, Sherry Zane) to discuss challenges with SET, SET+ and possible solutions.

- The working group has met a couple of times and have identified 5 problems areas: 1) equity; 2) marketing/leadership signaling; 3) validation; 4) impact for professional development; 5) administrative utility and recommended some short-term improvements to consider 1) incentivized/mandated holistic approach to teaching evaluations and 2) improve SET response rates and emphasize means as metric or rely on other student feedback and long-term (a thorough revision of institutional evaluation philosophy and practices)
  - Discussion ensued about issues with SET response rates (differences when switched from paper to online, during COVID-19 online teaching); differences in department practices for teaching evaluations (survey results from Administration to Dept Heads/Deans will be forthcoming) and need to work together on practices/changes; need to consider what do we want to learn from evaluations and then tailor questions from the end goal; make SET questions shorter and value of educating students about purpose of SETs.
  - Plan is to have the working group continue their work to develop some more specific recommendations and engaging with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Life-Transformative Education, and Future of Learning committees
- Update from Working Groups – Lisa
    - COACHE Survey – developing plan to release survey information in Jan 2021
    - Faculty Equity Retention workgroup – creating a survey to understand faculty who had retention offers and outcome as well as those who left university without retention offers
    - Civility Workgroup – initial meeting to discuss past efforts and how to consider moving ahead
    - COVID-19 Related Work Issues Workgroup – meet in early December; aligning idea developed during work group meeting as and suggestions placed under three umbrellas:
      - a. Ideas we can put into place without financial recourses. (short term)
      - b. Ideas that face cultural/policy/organizational barriers (long term)
      - c. Ideas that require resources (funding, time, people) (long term)
 This information and recommendations for the spring will moved to the Provost and the HR Governance Council for review and then to the Deans and other divisional leaders.
    - Future of Learning Committee – purpose will be to draw on what we’ve collectively learned from the dramatic shift to online and distance-learning modalities in response to the pandemic as we begin to plan for a post-COVID UConn
- Senate By-Laws update – proposed by-law changes to wording and style were sent via email to Senators for review and will be voted on at future Senate meeting

### 3) Announcements

#### Reminder of Future Meetings

- March 1, 2021
- March 19, 2021 3-5 pm PTR Forum
- April 5, 2021
- April 26, 2021

## Senate Faculty Standards Committee Report to the University Senate February 1, 2021

Recommendation to update University By-Laws, Article IX.K.2a and Article IX.K.2b

### A. Background

The SEC charged the Faculty Standards Committee to examine the current University By-Laws language on emeritus status. At the March 2017 meeting, the University Senate approved a motion to recommend changes to the University By-Laws regarding emeritus status (see below). The recommended change would have automatically awarded emeritus status to Associate Professors as well as Professors who have served the University at that rank for at least five years. Previously, the award of emeritus status to associate professors always required approval of the Retirement Committee. The recommended change did not have the support of senior administration at the time, and was not moved forward for consideration by the Board of Trustees. The FSC recommends a change in the relevant By-Laws.

### Proposal and Approved by University Senate In March 2017: Motion

To recommend amending the University By-Laws, Section IX.K.2 as follows: (Deleted items in strikethrough; new language underlined).

Article XIV.K.2

1. The faculty member holds the rank of Associate Professor or full Professor (or equivalent title, such as e.g. Senior Extension Educator, Cooperative Extension Educator, Associate Cooperative Extension Educator, Extension Professor, and Associate Extension Professor) at the University of Connecticut.
2. The faculty member has served at the University of Connecticut for at least five years. at this rank.

### B. Current Relevant By-Laws

By-Laws of the University of Connecticut Article XIV – The University Staff

K. Retirement

1. A faculty member's decision to retire is understood to be an individual one, but in the interests of continuity and proper academic planning, it is expected that the faculty member will give notice of his/her plans at the earliest opportunity.
2. Any member of the faculty, who at the time of retirement is at the University of Connecticut and either retires under the provisions of the State Retirement Act or the Alternate Retirement Plan, may be awarded emeritus status. Also eligible is any member of the faculty who retires from an affiliated institution and whose promotion to rank of Professor in the School of Medicine or School of Dental Medicine was based on scholarship after review by the Senior Appointments and Promotions Committee, Dean, and Provost.

Appointment to emeritus status requires a positive vote of the Board of Trustees or Health Center Board of Directors (for faculty members with primary appointments in the School of Medicine or School of Dental Medicine). Candidates may be presented to the appropriate Board when both of the following conditions are met:

1. The faculty member holds the rank of full professor or equivalent title (e.g. Senior Extension Educator) at the University of Connecticut.

2. The faculty member has served at the University of Connecticut for at least five years at this rank.

There shall be a standing University of Connecticut Retirement Committee. Faculty members who do not meet both conditions described in Section 2a and Section 2b above may become emeriti by vote of the Board of Trustees or the Health Center Board of Directors following recommendation of the

President and the Retirement Committee. Other professional staff are also eligible for this designation following recommendation of the President and the Retirement Committee.

3. It is in the interest of the University that faculty emeriti continue their scholarly, teaching, and/or service activities. The University encourages the maintenance of informal and scholarly contacts between retired faculty members and their active colleagues and may provide working space, equipment, library facilities, and the like to all who can demonstrate reasonable need. Such support will be contingent upon availability of resources. Deans and department heads, where appropriate, may invite emeriti for professional activities such as lecturing, serving on academic committees, and advising students.

**C. Current Proposal to Senate: Motion**

**To recommend amending the University By-Laws, Section IX.K.2 as follows:** (Deleted items in strikethrough; new language underlined).

Article XIV.K.2

1. The faculty member holds the rank of Associate Professor or full Professor (or equivalent title, such as e.g. Clinical, In-Residence and Extension Faculty [CIRE]) Senior Extension Educator, Cooperative Extension Educator, Associate Cooperative Extension Educator, Extension Professor, and Associate Extension Professor) at the University of Connecticut.
2. The faculty member has served at the University of Connecticut for at least five years. at this rank.

**To recommend amending the University By-Laws, Section IX.K as follows:** (Deleted items in strikethrough; new language underlined).

Article XIV.K

4. Emeritus status is a privilege, not a right, and can be revoked at any time at the request of the President and/or Retirement Committee with approval of the Board of Trustees.

## Provost's Office Distinguished Professorships

**Distinguished Professor in Inclusion** (or Inclusivity?) and **Distinguished Professor in Life Transformative Education** recognizes faculty whose have already completed work in this area but will have dedicated time to continue this work

- Open to both Full and Associate Professors for three-year terms
- Some sort of course release attached to them in exchange for intensive work on the designated strategic area.
- Other benefits?

Develop process for nominations/applications

Review of some other university programs

Institution name	Type of Title	Benefits	URL
Purdue University	<p>Distinguished and Named Professors - Recognizing faculty who have made a unique contribution to the University through discovery, learning and/or engagement.</p> <p>University Faculty Scholar- 5yr award developed by each college/school - Recognizes outstanding faculty who are on an accelerated path for academic distinction.</p> <p>Several other awards</p>	<p>Discretionary Allocations</p> <p>Distinguished Professors: The initial minimum annual Discretionary Allocation should be \$20,000, including the PRF Distinguished Professor Salary Allocation. The Discretionary Allocation is continued each year subject to satisfactory performance reviews</p> <p>Named Professors and Named Term Professors: The initial minimum annual Discretionary Allocation should be \$10,000. The allocation is continued each year subject to satisfactory performance reviews</p> <p>University Faculty Scholars: An annual allocation of \$10,000 for the five-year award period is provided under the program for University Faculty Scholars and may be subject to satisfactory performance reviews</p> <p>Salary Supplements:</p> <p>Distinguished Professors: Up to the equivalent of one-ninth of the base academic year salary or up to the equivalent of one-twelfth of the base fiscal year salary (base salary excludes the PRF Distinguished Professor Salary Allocation). The PRF Distinguished Professor Salary Allocation is considered part of the Salary Supplement and counts toward the maximum allowable payment.</p> <p>Named University Professors, Named Professors and Named Term Professors: Up to the equivalent of one-ninth of the base academic year salary or up to the equivalent of one-twelfth of the base fiscal year salary.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.purdue.edu/provost/faculty/named-professorships.html">https://www.purdue.edu/provost/faculty/named-professorships.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.purdue.edu/provost/faculty/internalawards.html">https://www.purdue.edu/provost/faculty/internalawards.html</a></p>

		University Faculty Scholar – Up to \$5,000, not to exceed the equivalent of one-ninth of the base academic year salary or up to the equivalent of one-twelfth of the base fiscal year salary. This allows up to one half of the University Faculty Scholar Discretionary Allocation to be used as a Salary Supplement.	
University of Georgia	<i>Professorships</i>  Distinguished Professors  Research Awards	University Professorships: significant impact beyond typical academic responsibilities – receives permanent \$10k salary increase, yearly academic support of \$5k and 5-yr appointments	<a href="https://provost.uga.edu/resources/faculty-resources/professorships/regents-professorships/">https://provost.uga.edu/resources/faculty-resources/professorships/regents-professorships/</a>  <a href="https://research.uga.edu/research-awards/">https://research.uga.edu/research-awards/</a>
University of Michigan	Diversity and Social Transformation Professorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duration of appointment</li> <li>• Annual fund for 1<sup>st</sup> 5 years</li> <li>• Faculty fellows for 1<sup>st</sup> 5 years at National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) – 1 semester with no teaching/admin to focus on developing goals related to this in scholarship/teaching/service/engagement and then remaining 2 years with 50% required annual teaching and administrative duties</li> </ul>	<a href="https://lsa.umich.edu/ncid/fellowships-awards/distinguished-diversity-social-transformation-professorship.html">https://lsa.umich.edu/ncid/fellowships-awards/distinguished-diversity-social-transformation-professorship.html</a>
University of Wisconsin	The Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professorships	The Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professorships recognize professors whose distinguished scholarship has advanced the confines of knowledge, and whose excellence has also included teaching or service. Faculty members receiving this award carry the title of Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor for the duration of their careers at UW-Madison. The professorships provide \$75,000 in flexible funding as a one-time award. Of this amount, \$50,000 is provided by the Vilas Trust, and should be expended in the first two years of the award (the year in which the professorship is awarded, and the year immediately after), with remaining funds reverting to the Trust; the other \$25,000 is provided by the school/college, and can be paid out at the rate of \$5,000 each year for five years	<a href="https://provost.wisc.edu/2019/09/03/2019-20-vilas-awards-and-professorships/">https://provost.wisc.edu/2019/09/03/2019-20-vilas-awards-and-professorships/</a>

Minutes: BOT Distinguished Professor Working Group Report to FSC  
January 27, 2021

Members: D. Betsy McCoach (Chair), Marysol Asencio, Edith Barrett, Linda Pescatello, and Anastasios Tzingounis

**Our charge:** Review the current BOT Distinguished Professor process to consider at least the following:

- 1) increasing diversity of candidate pool and hopefully then BOT awardees
- 2) increased diversity, including more broad representation of disciplines, on the selection committee

Additionally there was discussion at the FSC meetings about whether the entire selection process needed to be evaluated to ensure that it was fair and allowed for the above to occur.

**Report:** The BOT Distinguished Professor working group has met three times. We have spent considerable time collecting information and data about the BOT selection process, guidelines, and awardees. We have begun to discuss potential recommendations for 1.) Diversifying the selection committee, 2.) Providing additional guidelines to nominators, 3.) Providing individualized, developmental and supportive feedback for finalists who are not selected for BOT, and 4.) Record keeping of the entire BOT process. We are planning to meet again in February. We are seeking clarification about the timeframe for delivering recommendations to the FSC and Diversity Committee if we hope to have some of the recommendations implemented in the coming academic year.

Below, I have included some of our current thinking in these 4 areas.

1. Diversify Selection Committee --
  - Representative of the University as a whole—across depts, colleges
  - Should be representation for Centers, etc.
  - Has to be more than prior winners
  - Consider outside members—staff, community members, BOTs
  - 3 year appointments--- 1/3 rotate every year
  - Associate Professors and above, regardless of “track”
  - People on the committee need to appreciate teaching, service, research
  - Representation from every school/college
2. Providing additional guidelines to nominators: The nominators should be given explicit instructions or a template for the nomination packet so that the success of the application is not dependent on the nominator’s prior experience/knowledge of the application process for BOT Distinguished Professor.
3. Providing individualized, developmental and supportive feedback for finalists who are not selected: A more detailed letter from the BOT selection committee should outline the

applicant's strengths and note areas for further development. We believe that this would have the added benefit of improving accountability and transparency.

4. Record keeping of the entire BOT process: Someone in the Provost's office should be tracking information related to demographic and disciplinary composition of applicants, selection committee membership, awardees, etc.

We welcome feedback from the FSC, and we look forward to providing a more detailed set of recommendations at a later meeting.

## **On the Way to Equitable and Meaningful Evaluation of Teaching Excellence at UConn**

Ideally, an evaluation system for teaching and learning would

- inform instructors about strength and opportunities for improvements in their teaching practice (developmental, formative purpose)
- enable reliable valid judgment on teaching effectiveness/course quality for decisions on retention and merit based on transparent and equitable metrics (administrative purpose)
- support units to make programmatic decisions based on student outcomes

### **Problem statement**

Challenges with the SET as currently formulated, as well as with the SET+ system enacted to help address SET weaknesses result in current evaluation practices\* that do not promote a culture of engagement in ongoing professional development in teaching, or improve the student learning experiences at UConn, but create inequity -both for PTR decisions and in the classroom. By evaluating faculty comparatively within the current system, interpretations of the SET and SET+ measures do not account adequately for consistent bias and inferences, or resolve the tension between the developmental and documentation purposes of the evaluation.

The working group identified 5 problem areas, each with several contributing factors (examples given):

#### **1) Equity**

- a) Faculty of Color and/or faculty teaching contentious issues face double/triple bind influencing SETs and additional burden as well as challenges in this social-cultural moment.
- b) Immediate issue: lack of guidance and for APIRs and adjuncts; process and requirements unclear (e.g.: forms and requirement for outside evaluators),

#### **2) Marketing/Leadership Signaling**

- a) Messaging relying on SET averages reinforce and implicitly validate SET as the main tool for evaluating teaching. SET is not branded as student feedback of their learning experience. Teaching is not presented as a joint responsibility, and low or underperforming scores are typically attributed to the faculty alone. The tendency to be reductionist and try to capture all teaching feedback in one or two numbers fails to realize potentially complex phenomenon in teaching evaluation and a growth mindset.
- b) The stated relative weights of the evaluation of research, teaching and service are not perceived to be aligned with faculty experiences.

#### **3) Validation**

- a) For students, factors such as timing, format, motivation, doubt that their feedback is actually reviewed by anyone, and lack of awareness of how SETs are used in faculty evaluation, all work against necessary high response rate for SET (and other student input)
- b) Lack of calibration in implementation, interpretation (both students, faculty) contributes to disconnect between consequential validity and desired teaching enhancement

#### **4) Impact for professional development**

- a) Numeric SETs do not provide specificity to improve, comments can be conflicting. SET prompts bias against active learning or innovative learning
- b) Other aspects of faculty work that could be rightly perceived as “teaching” (i.e., first point of contact for personal problems, advising, recommendation letters, community building,

mentoring of students or peers) are not included in the evaluation process. Educators' support for students outside of the classroom are not recognized as teaching related and impact capacity for productivity.

#### 5) Administrative Utility

- a) SET/SET+ is not consistently reflective of teaching modalities and individualized context (i.e., restricted to components under instructor control)
  
- b) Alignment with LTE\* and DEI values, pedagogy and goals should be improved as evaluation of teaching excellence is a lever for change, especially when combined with reward structures that elevate contributions to UConn's teaching mission.

**Recommendations** for short term improvement are:

- Incentivized /mandated holistic approach to teaching evaluations with a minimum of 3 *equally weighted* components: some form of student feedback focused on learning context, some form of peer review relevant to teaching context and modality, and instructor reflections based on those or other evidence (including setting goals for the next evaluation period).
- Improve response rates to SET and deemphasize means as metric; or rely on other form of student feedback.

*Going forward, a thorough revision of current institutional evaluation philosophy and practices is suggested to address systemic shortcomings, including but not limited to explicit decoupling of formative assessment and summative documentation of teaching excellence.*

#### **Working group members:**

Paula Philbrick, Sarah Woulfin, Betsy McCoach, Sherry Zane, Dan Burkey, Simon Cheng, Melina Pappademos, Martina Rosenberg

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#### \*Definitions

**SET**, Student Evaluation of Teaching, is the survey students fill out at the end of every course and is administered by OIRE. [link](#)

**SETPlus or SET+** is the current evaluation system; it includes SETs along with additional forms of evidence of excellence in teaching. [link](#)

**LTE**-Life Transformative Education, [link](#)

**DEI**- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [link](#)