

Faculty Standards Committee of the University Senate

Monday, November 2, 2020 Minutes

1) Following members were in attendance:

Lisa Holle, Chair, Pharmacy Practice
Marysol Asencio, El Instituto
Dan Burkey, Engineering
Elizabeth Jockusch, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Betsy McCoach, Neag
Linda Pescatello, Kinesiology
Paula Philbrick, EEB, Waterbury Campus
Cristina Wilson, School of Social Work
Sarah Woulfin, Educational Leadership
Likhita Athina, USG Representative
Spencer Sonnenburg, Graduate Student
Lloyd Blanhcard, OIRE
Lewis Gordon, Philosophy
Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center
Jeffrey Shoulson, Senior Vice Provost, Ex-Officio member

2) New Business –

- a. Optional SETs for Fall 2020 (background document attached) - The Senate Executive Committee asked the Committee to consider whether SETs should be made optional in the Fall of 2020 like what was done in Spring 2020.
- b. Discussion on this topic included that although the effects of the pandemic have impacted faculty, that it also has impacted the method and type of instruction being delivered and as such getting student feedback and understanding their learning experiences is important. Student voice is an important component of SETs and it also can be a vehicle to receive feedback on success of particular teaching approaches. The SETs can be useful not only for instructor formative feedback but also so that Department Heads and Deans can review and provide faculty who need support with such a support or determine if the instructor-course match is not a good one and a change is needed. Vice Provost Shoulson provided some insight that the Provost's office has received some unanticipated responses from faculty after the decision was made not to include Spring 2020 SETs in 2020 PTR packets. Faculty who administered Spring 2020 SETs and felt they did well with their Spring 2020 teaching were disappointed not to be able to be acknowledged for their efforts. Additionally, Vice Provost Shoulson emphasized that the Administration understands that demands on faculty during the pandemic and would view the SETs during this time with that lens.
- c. **Action Item:** Committee agreed to proposed recommendation to Senate to continue SET administration during Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 but to encourage Administration to consider the SETs during this time in light of the pandemic impact on teaching and instruction – see attached proposal submitted as New Business for University Senate Meeting on November 2

3) Old Business

- Oct 2020 Minutes approved
- Emeritus By-Law Revision – revisit and adopt language to submit as a resolution to the University Senate approval which then gets forwarded to Administration and voted on by BOT (attached revision)
 - F/u from Provost's office
 - Does emeritus status can go to staff and administrator currently – Yes, it can to any staff or administrator (eg, Emeritus coach). Essentially emeritus title goes after whatever title is present at retirement. Current process is the Emeritus Committee would determine when a title is warranted with President and BOT agreeing.
 - Frequency of staff/administrator emeritus status – data unavailable; has not been tracked in HR or Administration
 - SEC asked us to consider including language that would allow emeriti who have this privilege revoked to challenge the revocation
 - Discussion on this topic included that this title is suggestive of university staff leaving in good standing (although not explicitly stated in By-Laws) and how might we develop a process that would be in place for staff who have accusations of misconduct during employment or emeriti status and what options do these staff have to appeal a potential revocation of emeriti status. It was recommended that we seek input from General Counsel as this may have legal implications.
 - **Action item:** Minor word changes to revision to clarify Associate Professor and Professor (see attached). Lisa Holle will contact General Counsel for input
- New Distinguished Professor title discussion
 - Current BOT process – regulated by the By-Laws (see pg 34, ARTICLE XIII, D.3.d Special Title: Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor). Some flexibility exists such as changing from single process for evaluation to 2-stage first-round/second-round process as happened this year
 - Discussion included clarification of the process for BOT Distinguished Professor selection committee, which currently is appointed by Vice Provost Bradford and is composed of recent BOTs Distinguished Professors and a student. Members indicated it might be helpful to ensure that representation from broad disciplines be included in the committee to ensure a better understanding candidate applications that might be from disciplines that are very different from make-up of selection committee members. Additionally, a request for data on BOTs awardees was made so that committee can better understand if there is implicit bias and if such, would this be a discussion to have jointly with Diversity Committee as concern that under-represented groups are in the minority of recipients.
 - **Action items:** 1) Lisa Holle to contact Diversity Committee to determine interest in collaboration; 2) Jeffrey Shoulson to provide us demographic and discipline data on recipients
 - SEC requested consideration of endowed chair mechanism, termed professorships (common at UConn Health and Engineering), Presidential professorship (one with focus on teaching and one with focus on research) and

tied to strategic focus

- Discussion included considerations of the above suggestions and in addition to “named professorship” that could perhaps have a lower donor amount than an endowed chair or endowed professorship and that in the past a Philip Austin professorship for community engagement had been available. Committee would like pursue consideration for 2 types of distinguished professorships: 1) one made available for top-tier new hires and retention of faculty, that would include a process that is transparent and did not propagate existing gender/ethnicity/other under-represented disparities and 2) one that would be associated with current University strategic alignment for existing faculty. This could be for a defined period of time with some funding for the contribution to the strategic goal (eg, travel money, funds for graduate or teaching assistants).
- **Action Items:** Lisa Holle to ask Lewis Gordon to draft a proposal to further discuss at last meeting for 1st professorship above and Lisa to draft a proposal for 2nd professorship above

2) New Business

- 2021 PTR Forum (Lisa)
 - Every other year FSC has hosted a PTR forum for faculty in conjunction with Provost’s office. Discussion included whether we should do this year or postpone given pandemic. It was discussed that this discussion is still very relevant and important this year and some members suggested that this really should be an annual event. It was discussed that it had in the past been an annual event but that attendance was so low, it was switch to every other year.
 - **Action item:** Lisa to work with Vice-Provost Shoulson to schedule the date for Spring 2020 – to be held virtually and recorded. It was decided to make an annual event but to be reassessed if turn-out is low.
- New SEC/Administration workgroups affecting faculty – Lisa informed committee of several working groups that have been formed and will continue to update the committee on this work
 - Work life balance workgroup
 - Post-Covid Teaching workgroup
 - Civility workgroup
 - Pay Equity workgroups – retention, dual-hires
 - COACHE survey workgroup
- SET Discussion - plan for next month – Lisa updated group that this will be a discussion for next month that will be about consideration of revising teaching evaluation process.
- Other – USG member Likhita Athina asked to discuss recent USG student data on learning experiences for discussion at December meeting.

3) Announcements – Next meeting is December 7, 2020

SET Optional Fall 2020

Background:

Senate Executive Committee asked FSC to consider this recommendation;

- What is needed is for faculty Senate to weigh in as to whether faculty can make SETs optional for the Fall 2020 semester, in a similar manner to the Spring 2020.
- Spring 2020
 - The SEC had considered sending a motion to the full Senate when online voting was done for the fall calendar and p/f grading. Because the SETs are not part of our by-laws, the SEC considered the matter in a special meeting (of the SEC) and sent the following note to (then) Vice Provost Volin:
 - “Spring 2020 only, the University Senate requests that the administration allow individual instructors to decide whether or not SETs should be administered in their courses. The administration will remind students that they should consult department heads if they find a course problematic.”
 - *The Provost’s office took this approach: change to the PTR process for SET reports that they have put into effect for this current cycle.*
 - *By the University Senate’s request, SET reports from the spring 2020 semester will not be utilized for administrative purposes, and are for faculty personal use only. All faculty members should include a page in lieu of a spring 2020 SET report, as is the case for any courses missing reports, stating that the report is not included due to the University’s removal of the SET survey requirement for spring 2020.*
- At the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester, the general thinking was there was no need to carry over what had been done for the Spring because
 - instructors had a choice of mode
 - more time to prepare.
- That thinking has changed in response to
 - growing feedback about the differential impacts of the pandemic on instructors
 - new information (compared to the beginning of the semester) that Spring will also be online
 - the worsening of cases on a national and global level
- This somewhat ties to the Work-Life Balance working group which they appreciate has not yet begun its work.
- One SEC member thought it may be wise to consider if SETs should be optional for the full academic year.

Thus we are charged with discussing this today and decide whether we want to bring up a recommendation today at Senate (needs to be today because of semester timing)

- If the FSC feels it appropriate to recommend a SET-optional semester, the motion can come before the Senate this evening under new business at 5:15 pm (after Scott Jordan’s report and before SG new business)
- Below is a recommendation that we can use, edit, build upon or totally rewrite.
- Justification will need to be provided as well

Justification:

Recommendation:

For fall 2020, the University Senate requests that the administration allow individual instructors to decide whether or not SETs should be administered in their courses. The administration will remind students that they should consult department heads if they find a course problematic.

Faculty Standards Committee
Official Recommendation to the University Senate
November 2, 2020

Justification:

The Senate Executive Committee asked the Faculty Standards Committee to consider whether SETs should be made optional in the Fall of 2020 like what was done in Spring 2020. The committee discussed the different impacts of the pandemic on the faculty and students as well as the importance of the student experience on teaching.

Recommendation:

For Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, the University Senate requests that SETs should continue to be administered. Additionally, we request that the Administration take into consideration the impact of the current pandemic on faculty as they review Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 SET results.

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:
 - a. The faculty member holds the rank of full professor or equivalent title (e.g. Senior Extension Educator) at the University of Connecticut.
 - b. 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. Proposal to Senate: Motion (Note this was proposed and approved motion March 2017)
To recommend amending the University By-Laws, Section IX.K.2 as follows:** (Deleted items in strikethrough; new language underlined).

Article XIV.K.2

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

C. Proposal to Senate: Motion (New proposed motion November 2020)

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

Article XIV.K.2

- a. 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]).
- b. 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.