

Faculty Standards Committee of the University Senate

Monday, December 7, 2020 (2:00 – 3:30 PM, WebEx) Minutes

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
Lewis Gordon, Philosophy
Kathleen Holgerson, Women's Center
Girish Punj, Marketing
Martina Rosenberg, CETL
Jeffrey Shoulson, Senior Vice Provost, Ex-Officio member
Spencer Sonnenburg, Graduate Student

- 1) Introduced our new Student Government member: Sam Dorman: Likhita Athina has resigned due to her other Senate committee commitments.
- 2) Old Business
 - a. Nov 2020 Minutes approval – were not included with meeting materials so sent out after meeting for email approval
 - b. Report to Senate on Enforcement of Deadline for Research Proposal Submissions Policy – status (report sent to Senate attached) – Between November and December meetings, the SEC charged the FSC to create a report on their work on this matter. An email discussion ensued that created a proposed amendment requesting formation of working group of faculty and staff to discuss further. This was sent out with the University Senate Agenda on 12/3/20. The SEC further made recommendations to the FSC via email on 12/7 AM asking for more clarification on timeline for working group's completed recommendation and who would form the working group. Additionally they encouraged removing any language that was specifically about the policy, to facilitate discussion of motion rather than policy. The committee agreed that providing

more clarification as suggested was helpful to ensuring that this moved along to facilitate identifying reasons for the bottlenecks that is occurring with the pre-award process and solutions. Although the committee understands the merits of not discussing the policy at this time, without all of the information for causes of bottlenecks, that it was important to “pause” the implementation of the policy enforcement until the working group has completed their work. A revised motion was created as such:

Motion:

The Faculty Standards Committee moves that the University Senate endorse the following recommendation.

The Faculty Standards Committee (FSC) recommends the formation of a faculty-staff-OVPR working group, formed and charged by the President, to identify impediments to the expeditious review of proposals in advance of deadlines and propose solutions, to be presented to the University Senate and the OVPR, that enable all parties to work together effectively to support the University’s pre-award operations. A report including the proposed solution will be presented to the University Senate at the March 2021 meeting. The FSC requests no changes in enforcement of the policy until the working group recommendations have been received and evaluated.

- c. Emeritus By-Law Revision – finalized motion for University Senate Feb meeting
- Lisa provided a recap of discussion with Lesley Salfia, JD, of General Counsel’s office – the By-Laws should not include entire process as that allows for flexibility to change process as new considerations come to light without requiring a by-law change that needs approval from BOT. Current By-Laws include the statement “may be awarded” Emeritus status. This statement already then allows the Provost’s office and BOT the ability to approve, deny, or take away emeritus status, thus an additional statement about revoking isn’t required, but could be included. Removal of emeritus status could be tricky legally because the benefits (University issued email, library access) would have to consider whether the property right of state was violated in alleged misconduct. A policy could be developed for revoking status but would have to mirror what would be done for a university employee and thus working with Provost’s office, General Counsel and Labor Relations would be recommended.
 - Lisa also provided feedback from SEC. Some SEC members were concerned that by allowing associate professors and less time required of faculty member serving UConn that it would “lower the status” of this title and were concerned with the statement about the possibility of revoking status without description of how that could occur. The comparison of peer and aspirant university emeriti policies (n=16) was summarized. Five comparative universities have an automatic emeritus status, 15 allow associate professors emeriti status, 2 allow other titles (eg, staff) emeriti status.
 - Committee discussion ensued that faculty at Associate and Professor level already undergo review for promotion and through hiring into UConn. Additionally discussion regarding the need to be explicit that this is privilege and that it may be awarded or revoked, not completely automatic process. Additionally discussed that some CIRE faculty positions (eg, lecturer) do not have a rank associated with them and would not be included in the group of those who do not have to be recommended by President and Retirement Committee. However, a process already exists that these type of faculty as well as staff and administrators, can obtain emeriti status if recommended by Retirement Committee and President and voted on by BOT or Health Center Board of Directors. Committee voted to submit the attached recommendation to amend the University By-Laws at the February

University Senate meeting (see attached).

d. New Distinguished Professor titles

- *Dean's Level Distinguished Professorship Titles* – Lewis Gordon presented a draft proposal that would grant the deans offices in each school (1) the ability to confer the title “Distinguished Professor” on faculty who meet a determined set of criteria by those deans’ committees of evaluators, (2) to be able to include the title of “distinguished professor,” through evaluation from their relevant committees, to recruit faculty who hold distinguished chairs elsewhere or whose achievements warrant that title as part of their recruitment package, and (3) to be able to offer that title, through evaluation from their relevant committees, to extant faculty offered distinguished chairs elsewhere or as part of a retention offer for faculty offered appointments elsewhere. The relevant committee’s charge for (1) and (3) could include soliciting external and internal letters of evaluation similar to a PTR process for promotion with a focus on research and, if preferred, the addition of teaching and service. These distinguished professorships will not bar faculty from being subsequently considered for the Board of Trustees Professorships (should they choose). They would also add to the prestige of the faculty and also play important roles in recruitment and retention. Recruited faculty often negotiate discretionary funds and competitive salaries. The addition of the distinguished professor title would in those instances not add any costs to the recruitment budget. For the retention packages, the situation would be similar since they often include discretionary funds and reduced teaching load. For faculty who simply petition for the designation, the addition to the title could be a modest discretionary fund. The final approval for all these professorships would take place at the levels of the Provost and the President, similar to the promotion process.
- Discussion ensued that Administration is supportive of the idea but concerned that title may be too similar to BOT Distinguished Professor so recommend a different title. Committee members had concerns that self-nomination by current faculty may not be best approach as this process may exacerbate inequities among underrepresented groups on campus, who tend not to self-nominate. Instead another approach is needed to encourage under-represented groups to receive these types of titles. Perhaps encouraging Department Heads to nominate if appropriate as they are most familiar with success of faculty members. Because of the limited time available for discussion, further discussion was tabled until February 2021 meeting.
- a. Provost Titles Faculty Alignment with Strategic Initiatives – tabled for next meeting

e. BOT Distinguished Professor process review

- a. Lisa announced that a workgroup formed of FSC and Diversity Committee members - Besty McCoach is leading this group which includes Marysol Asencio and Linda Pescatello from our committee and Edith Barrett and Anastasios Tzingounis from the Diversity Committee. Their first meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2020.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm and the remainder of the December agenda will be discussed at the February 2021 meeting.