

Faculty Affairs Minutes

Monday, September 30, 2024

4:00 PM

BHP 203

Present: Elizabeth Gurnack, Jonathan Hobbs, Ellen Cotter, Jesse Russell, Michael Moir, Robert Bennett, Suzanne Conner, Alaina Kaus, Debra Palmer, Benjamin Meador, Paige Long

Business:

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 pm.

1. **USG Core Value Statement:**

The USG Core Value Statement was presented for informational purposes.

Discussion ensued about the handling of such statements, with it being clarified that directives from USG go directly into Section 5 of the handbook without the need for committee approval. The committee discussed the process and reaffirmed that no action was required unless rewording was necessary.

2. **Probationary Credit Policy:**

The committee had an extensive discussion on the probationary credit policy, specifically focusing on the confusion created by blending the processes for tenure and promotion. Concerns were raised about the existing draft of the policy, as it appeared to merge different concepts related to probationary credit in an unclear way.

- a. **Placement of New Text:** The current policy introduced text about probationary credit in the middle of an existing, cohesive paragraph, which led to confusion. The committee agreed that the new text was inserted inappropriately and did not align with the logical flow of the existing material.
- b. The committee discussed splitting the policy into **two separate sections:** one for **tenure** and one for **promotion**. The rationale behind this division was to ensure clarity, as these are distinct processes with different criteria and implications.
 - i. A subcommittee, led by Meador was formed to revise the wording of the probationary credit policy to ensure clarity and consistency. The revised draft will be circulated among the members for feedback before being finalized at the next meeting.

3. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45pm

Respectfully submitted by

Jonathan Hobbs

Secretary to the Faculty Affairs Committee

Faculty Affairs Minutes

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

3:30 PM

BHP Conference Room

Present: Elizabeth Gurnack, Jonathan Hobbs, Ellen Cotter, Michael Moir, Robert Bennett, Suzanne Conner, Alaina Kaus, Debra Palmer, Benjamin Meador, Paige Long, Morgan Whaley, Jessica Watson, Jason Franklin, Jill Drake

Business:

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 pm.

1. Tenure and Promotion Policy Discussion

- **Key Question:** The group discussed whether tenure and promotion policies, especially concerning probationary credit, should be considered the same.
- **Decision:** The committee agreed that tenure and promotion should be treated as separate policies. Even if this results in some redundancy, it ensures better clarity for faculty and administrators.
- **Policy Clarification Process:**
 - **Who to Consult:** Members discussed which stakeholders or authorities should be approached to refine and validate the policy process.
 - **Next Steps:** Dr. Meador will lead a subcommittee tasked with drafting clear language on probationary credit for both tenure and promotion. This draft will be reviewed and voted on in the next meeting.

2. Withdrawal Policy and Academic Dishonesty

- **Issue Raised:** Dr. Meador highlighted a lack of clarity in the current withdrawal policy related to academic dishonesty. The question focused on defining the official start of the academic dishonesty/disciplinary process and whether students who admit to cheating and receive a zero should still be allowed to withdraw from the class.
- **Committee Discussion:**
 - There was consensus that adding clarity to the policy would be beneficial.
 - Dr. Drake mentioned that this is a delicate issue, which may generate some contention among stakeholders due to its implications on student rights and disciplinary actions.

3. Action Items

- **Subcommittee Formation:** Dr. Meador will spearhead the subcommittee to formalize the proposed changes to the probationary credit policy for tenure and promotion.
- **Future Steps:** The draft policy will be circulated for feedback, discussed, and voted on in the next committee meeting.
- **Withdrawal Policy Review:** Further exploration and potential proposals for clarifying the withdrawal policy related to academic dishonesty may be developed for future discussion.

3. Adjournment:

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 4:23pm

Respectfully submitted by

Jonathan Hobbs

Secretary to the Faculty Affairs Committee

Faculty Affairs Minutes

Wednesday, March 26, 2025

4:00 PM

Present:

Robert Bennett, Benjamin Meador, Jamie MacLennan, Debra Palmer, Paige Long, Michael Moir, Jason Franklin, Ellen Cotter, Jesse Russell, Suzanne Conner, and Jessica Watson.

Business:

Meeting called to order by Robert Bennett at 4:01 PM.

1. Faculty Evaluation Task Force Update

Jamie MacLennan shared where the Faculty Evaluation Task Force stands. The group includes reps from every college and is focused on improving how we handle evaluations—both annual and for P&T. A survey went out to faculty to get honest feedback, and while the response rate is still low (about 30+), they're planning to nudge folks again.

The team is also reviewing policies from peer institutions and asking questions we've all had, like how annual evaluations should factor into promotion and tenure decisions, whether we need clearer standards for moving from assistant to associate versus associate to full, and how we could implement fair rubrics or even a point system. Jamie also mentioned the complications of work profiles and how those should inform evaluations.

Timeline-wise, the group is hoping to present something to faculty in early fall, get feedback, and maybe move it through governance before the end of the semester, though that's admittedly ambitious.

2. Faculty Handbook Edits

Benjamin Meador walked us through a series of edits to the handbook. In short:

- Cleaned up outdated language (like how major changes are processed)
- Removed a duplicated paragraph
- Moved the lecturer section to a more logical place
- Fixed a bunch of small formatting issues

Probationary Credit Policy

The bulk of the edits focused on clarifying probationary credit language for promotion and tenure. Benjamin kept the existing structure but refined the language to better reflect BOR policy and align with our discussions with Dr. Drake. The changes create clearer distinctions between promotion and tenure and ensure the credit policies are understandable and compliant.

The committee voted unanimously to approve the revisions.

3. USG Core Value Statement

The Faculty Senate requested we formally approve the USG Core Value Statement. A motion was made, seconded, and approved without opposition.

4. Faculty Awards Reminder

Debra Palmer reminded us that our committee is responsible for reviewing faculty award nominations. Only two had been submitted so far. The deadline is Friday, and Robert plans to circulate the nomination packets by email so we can vote electronically.

5. Open Discussion

There was a concern raised about lecturer workloads—specifically the 12 to 15 credit hour expectation—and whether that's being applied consistently. The point was made that a more formalized approach to work profiles might help create a more balanced and fair workload distribution across departments.

6. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Jonathan Hobbs