

Faculty Handbook Revisions Committee June 12, 2013

Members Present: Lisa Jones, Cynthia Waskowiak, Carol Vogel, Randy Pembrook, Laura Stephenson, Steve Angel, Richard Martin, Matt Arterburn, Nancy Tate

Discussion:

Lisa presented a proposed definition of General Faculty to add immediately to the handbook. Currently, General Faculty is undefined and clarification is needed, as some use membership in General Faculty to mean membership in “faculty”. Certain rights are granted in the handbook for “faculty” that should not be granted to all in General Faculty. For instance, the VPAT is in General Faculty; one benefit of being “faculty” is the opportunity to apply for a sweet sabbatical. No one intends, nor would anyone grant, for the VPAT to get a sweet sabbatical. This is obviously a less serious example, but there are many others with legal implications.

General Faculty refers to a governing body, not a group or category of people. It’s a body to which some categories belong, while others do not. We discussed whether the proposed definition would make departments feel like only those able to vote in General Faculty should be able to vote in department matters. We wondered if the General Faculty inclusion was a minimum standard, but it is not, as some departments only allow tenure-track/tenured faculty to vote. The Committee would like departments to make their own guidelines as to voting privileges on department matters.

A member proposed re-naming General Faculty; suggestions are Faculty Assembly, General Assembly, or Academic Assembly. We decided to change the name to Academic Assembly. We removed the VPAT and VP for Student Life from the definition as they’re not academic. All Deans are included and we discussed whether all are academic. We’ll keep all except the Dean of Students as his role is not academic. The new name would include more appropriate members and eliminate confusion.

We then discussed the next step in approving this name change. The pertinent sub-committee of Faculty Senate is Faculty Affairs. We’ll take a group of changes to give to them periodically to analyze and approve.

Next, Richard presented Section Three of the Handbook, which is the section on tenure and promotion. The current language requires the Board of Regents to approve all recommendations and that the Board makes the final decision on promotion and tenure. So if a candidate receives a negative recommendation, the final decision should still be left to the Board, after hearing both positive and negative recommendations. Since Randy has been VPAA, the candidate has withdrawn his or her application for tenure if there was disagreement as to recommendation. This is likely because the Board would hear the application in a public meeting (the discussion could be held in executive session, but the vote would be in public), which the candidate would not desire.

Richard recommends that the decision be made by VPAA or President with appeal to the President or Board. The By-laws state that the Board makes P&T decisions. We considered deleting paragraph F of Section 3. 1.

Decisions:

- We'll change the name of General Faculty to Academic Assembly.
- We'll submit a proposed definition of General Faculty to Faculty Affairs for consideration.

Next Meeting: June 26, noon in Baker Conference Room (BTAC)