

Faculty Handbook Revision Committee
August 12, 2015

Members Present: Nancy Tate, Randy Pembroke, David Sollars, Cynthia Waskowiak, Monica Scheibmeir

Discussion:

The Committee began by discussing the current reasons listed to terminate a tenured faculty member. We talked about where bullying would fit into the existing reasons, as well as someone who does not perform to expectations over an extended period of time despite warnings. (Like not meeting accreditation expectations, poor teaching performance, or bad service.) We also need to think in terms of online courses too, like what is not showing up for those courses? Someone wondered if we let units define a bar or if that is a university standard.

Another member asked about failure to meet Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) as a reason for termination. If that was a reason, we would need good guidelines for doing a PIP, reasons for getting a PIP, and so on. How to do a PIP is set out in WUPRPM, but performance standards are left to a unit. We talked about how some guidelines for performance are already in the Handbook in the Roles and Responsibilities (R&R) sections and in the Promotion and Tenure sections for tenure-track.

Several aspects of the PIP were mentioned, like it needs to be substantive, not used capriciously, and needs a timeline for completion. The Handbook maybe should have a range of minimum and maximum timelines, like 6 months and 12 months, respectively, to allow adequate time for improvements. Having the PIP reviewed by the VPAA and/or legal counsel would lend some consistency to the use and prevent it from being used capriciously by a dean.

We wondered if adding two more reasons for termination, failure to meet R&R and unsuccessful completion of a PIP, would also cover online teaching concerns. Someone thought that R&R should cover online issues as long as R&R is communicated to faculty. Perhaps an online teaching manual with expectations could be created and CTEL could even help disseminate or demonstrate proper online teaching. It would definitely help to have some guidance as we will have more online classes and more adjuncts teaching online.

Next the new termination procedures. We all agree that for termination of tenured faculty, the decision is by the president with appeal to WUBOR. For non-tenure, the decision is made by the dean, with appeal to VPAA. For tenure track, who are the players? The logical combination is VPAA makes decision and with appeal to president.

We discussed if we should only have two timelines instead and have tenure-track decisions made by the dean with appeal to the VPAA. This would simplify things and remove the president from an operational decision. The counter argument is that you hire tenure track

employees for different roles than non-tenure track (e.g. Lecturers) so you should treat them differently. The decision has more weight if the president is involved.

Lecturers would probably like being in same category as tenure-track, but tenure-track probably would not like being in the same category as non-tenure track employees. There is a property right in tenure, but not in tenure-track. If we think of it as probationary status, tenure track is closer to non-tenure, but do they deserve the extra protection? They do get the benefit of more notice of a non-renewal. Those groups look very different, different R&R. What do faculty think? They probably want review by highest authority possible.

Decisions:

- Add failure to meet R&R and unsuccessful completion of a PIP to list of possible reasons to terminate a tenured faculty member.
- We need to add guidelines about doing a PIP.
- Prepare a draft of the termination procedure and to take to Dr. Farley for his review, then get FAC input.
- The non-renewal edits with timelines added also need to be reviewed by Dr. Farley and FAC.
- Consider an online teaching manual

Next Meeting: September 9, noon, Shawnee Room