

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
2020-2021 Faculty Governance Committee

The next meeting of the 2020-2021 Faculty Governance Committee will be held on **January 27**, at 3:00pm via video conference.

MINUTES OF MEETING DATE: Dec. 2, 2020

PRESIDING: Jeff Popke

REGULAR MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Stacey Altman X , Cynthia Deale X , Michael Duffy X , Edwin Gomez X , Jay Newhard X , Jeff Popke X , Anne Ticknor X , David Wilson-Okamura X

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Crystal Chambers, Rep. of Chancellor X ; Grant Hayes, Acting Provost / VCAA ___; Purificación Martínez, Chair of the Faculty X ; Aundrea Oliver, Rep of Faculty Senate X ; Mark Stacy, VCHS X ; Mike Van Scott, Interim VCREDE ___

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rachel Baker; Linda Ingalls for Office of the Provost; Lisa Hudson, Associate VCHS and Human Resources Administration Director; Wendy Sergeant, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Personnel and Resource Administration; Rachel Roper, vice-chair of the Unit Code Screening Committee; Kenneth Ferguson, chair of the Unit Code Screening Committee; Derek Maher, associate dean for undergraduate studies in Arts and Sciences

I. **Call to Order, 3:00 pm.**

II. **Minutes**

The minutes of Nov. 11 were approved.

III. Continuing Business

- A. Changes proposed by the grade appeal subcommittee (Altman, Maher, Oliver).
1. Altman presented the proposal on behalf of the subcommittee. The goal of this overhaul is to make the appeals process fairer to students by reducing the time required for a final resolution.
 2. Discussion identified two areas for the subcommittee to consider further: mechanics of the revised policy; and whether to extend the work of responding to grade appeals into the summer, when many faculty members are off-contract. A third issue, whether to require all instructors to use an electronic grade book, will probably require separate discussion.
 3. Mechanics of the proposed policy
 - a. Popke pointed out some ambiguities in the timeline.
 - b. Wilson-Okamura suggested collapsing “relevant documents” and “relevant materials” in the list of items that students must provide in an appeal.
 - c. Chambers asked: when the policy says that chairs must relay materials “immediately,” how soon do we really mean? Oliver suggested “within 48 hours.”
 - d. Gomez: we need to clarify what happens when instructors do not respond within 7 days and a unit administrator takes their place in the appeals process.
 - 1) Altman: in this proposal, chairs still don’t make final decisions; they are merely transmitting information.
 - 2) Martínez, Chambers, and Gomez affirmed the usefulness of letting chairs appoint a “designee” to serve in lieu of an absent faculty member. Chambers added: ideally, the designee should already be an administrator, because of FERPA concerns. Oliver suggested the phrase “administrative designee.”
 - 3) Ticknor asked how the process would work when meetings can’t be held face to face.
 - 4) Popke and Chambers: the policy needs to clarify what happens when the chair meets with the instructor. Is it the chair’s job to change the instructor’s mind? Or just to make sure the instructor has considered the situation from all angles?
 - 5) Martínez: in a hearing, questions should come from the panel, not the instructor.
 4. Many of the year’s grade appeals occur at the end of spring semester. Should we extend the work of responding to these appeals into the summer, when many faculty members are off contract and unpaid?
 - a. Altman, speaking for the subcommittee: part of teaching a class is handling grade appeals. It’s not unreasonable to ask instructors to make themselves available by email for 7 days after grades are submitted.

- b. Chambers and Hudson: we could solve the issue of what counts as “off-contract” by extending the academic calendar a week.
 - c. Chambers: but once an appeal begins, that 7-day period of “availability” can stretch more than 40 days into an unpaid summer.
 - d. Several committee members anticipated possible side-effects if we require instructors on 9-month contracts to participate in the appeals process during the summer.
 - 1) Wilson-Okamura: it would establish a precedent for other forms of unpaid work during the summer.
 - 2) Chambers and Popke: we’ll see more grades assigned by unit chairs instead of instructors.
 - 3) Chambers: we’ll see more grade inflation, because instructors who hold the line will be on the hook to defend their grades over the summer, when they aren’t paid.
 - e. Chambers proposed moving the deadline for an instructor’s initial response to the first 7 days of the next semester.
 - 1) Martinez, Gomez, and Baker explained why some appeals are too urgent for that: if an appeal in the student’s favor comes too late: it can delay graduation; or, in a sequenced curriculum, it can make students fall behind their cohort.
 - f. Chambers asked: how many meetings are we going to require instructors to attend during the summer? By the time a dean overturns their grade, instructors have already provided whatever explanation they have to offer. Popke and Gomez concurred.
 - 1) Altman expressed sympathy: in this proposal, there are several people who have to participate but can’t make a decision, including the chair.
 - g. Chambers suggested a solution to the problem of students who need a resolution during the summer: if the course in question is prerequisite for a sequence, allow students to enroll in the next course on a provisional basis, pending the outcome of the grade appeal.
 - 1) Martínez asked: would a student’s success in the next course prejudice the appeal in favor of the student?
 - 2) Wilson-Okamura: Chambers’ solution deals with a limited problem on a limited scale, and doesn’t incur the side-effects that we discussed earlier.
 - 3) Gomez observed: we are already doing something similar when a student appeals an academic integrity sanction: while the appeal is pending, a student is allowed to attend class, take exams, etc.
- B. Changes to the Faculty Manual (FM) that would enhance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- 1. Initial discussion focused on revising the template for unit codes. Ferguson noted that the terms *diversity*, *equity*, and *inclusion* are already defined in the UNC policy manual.
 - 2. FM Part IV: Academic Units, Codes

- a. Prior to the meeting, Popke proposed a briefer statement of the unit administrator's DEI responsibilities. Martínez reported no objections to the revised statement from university counsel.
 - b. Ingalls noted: a unit's budget needs to support all of the unit's programs, which is not always compatible with equal distribution of resources between individuals.
 - 1) Chambers: the word *equitable* is broad enough to accommodate this requirement.
 - 2) Wilson-Okamura: we need to anticipate how this term might be interpreted when we're gone or just not on the committee.
 - 3) Ticknor suggested: "The Unit Administrator is responsible for faculty evaluation, for assigning duties to the unit's faculty members, for recommendations regarding initial faculty salaries and salary increments, for the use of the unit's budget, for fundraising, for maintaining the unit's contracts, records and reports, for managing the unit's support staff, for the unit's compliance with all university policies, rules and regulations and for the unit's compliance with all actions required by higher administration."
 - 4) Ferguson: the UNC policy manual prefers the term *equal opportunity*, but does offer a definition.
3. FM Part IV, Section II, IV: Minimal Unit Code Requirements
- a. Popke asked Ferguson and Roper: must units address DEI in a separate section, or can they address it through other, existing sections?
 - 1) Roper: the Unit Code Screen committee would actually like to see DEI in multiple sections.
 - 2) Ingalls spoke to the practical complications of adding another required section to all codes.
 - 3) Chambers asked: can we address DEI in the section's preamble?
 - b. Discussion was inconclusive. Popke suggested that Chambers' group consult directly with Ferguson and Roper.

IV. Adjourned at 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted, David Wilson-Okamura.