

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
2019-2020 Faculty Governance Committee

The next meeting of the 2018-2019 Faculty Governance Committee will be held on **Wednesday, March 25**, at 3:00pm in Rawl 142.

MINUTES OF MEETING DATE: February 26, 2020

PRESIDING: Jeff Popke (vice-chair)

REGULAR MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Tracy Carpenter-Aeby __, Stacey Altman X, Michael Duffy X, Brad Lockerbie X, Jay Newhard X, Jeff Popke X, Marianna Walker X, David Wilson-Okamura X

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS (X IN ATTENDANCE):

Crystal Chambers, Rep. of Chancellor X; Don Chaney, Rep. of Chair of the Faculty __; Mike Van Scott, Interim VCREDE __; Grant Hayes, Acting Provost / VCAA __; Mark Stacy, VCHS __; David Thomson, Rep of Faculty Senate X

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Rachel Baker; Linda Ingalls for Office of the Provost; Lisa Hudson for Mark Stacy, VCHS

I. Call to Order, 3:00 pm, Rawl 142

II. Minutes

The minutes of Feb. 12 were approved.

III. Continuing Business

A. For some time, the three VCs have been rotating informally.

1. Popke asked, should we redefine the committee's ex officio membership to formalize that rotation, or formalize the use of delegates?
2. Walker: a problem with delegates is that, under Robert's Rules, they can't vote.
3. Ingalls clarified that she attends as a guest, and has never voted on behalf of the provost.

B. The committee resumed discussion of the regulation "Resolving Allegations of Discrimination," changes to which were recently approved by the Faculty Senate.

1. At its January 22 meeting, the committee adopted a suggestion from Chambers to change the term "preliminary inquiry" to "preliminary assessment" throughout the regulation, but omitted to change the heading. The committee agreed now to change the heading, editorially, from "Preliminary Inquiry" to "Preliminary Assessment."

2. Popke flagged an inelegant sentence in this section, which the committee declined to revise since the language had already been approved by the senate and was not dangerously ambiguous.
- C.** What survey options for gender identity should be available to participants in the annual survey of administrator performance?
1. Popke, after consulting with the LGBTQ Center's Mark Rasdorf, proposed a number of formulations.
 2. Walker moved to adopt the first formulation: "To which gender identity do you most identify? (a) Female (b) Male (c) Transgender Female (d) Transgender Male (e) Gender Variant/Non-Conforming (f) Prefer not to answer." Carried.
 3. Chambers asked again: should the survey include a second question, about sexual orientation?
 - a. Altman asked: if we ask a question about sexual orientation, what other demographic information should we request? For example, should we also ask disabled participants to identify as such?
 - b. Wilson-Okamura suggested that we could ask a different demographic question each year. That would enable us to capture and analyze demographic data without changing the emphasis of the survey, from administrator performance to demographics.
- D.** Membership of fixed-term (FT) faculty on senate committees
1. At its previous meeting, the committee adopted a motion from Chaney, to revise the By-laws as follows: "~~A majority of the members of all committees must be tenured or tenure-track faculty members, and in no case shall more than two elected members of each committee be fixed-term faculty members.~~"
 2. As required by the By-laws, comment on the proposed change was invited from the faculty. A former member of this committee emailed the chair to approve the sentiment, of expanding roles for FT faculty, but expressed concern that the proposed change would undermine a principal justification for tenure, that it protects faculty "from administrative reprisal and coercion based on expression of ideas, either in scholarship or university governance."
 3. Wilson-Okamura seconded this concern: are we undercutting the case for future tenure-track positions by turning everything over to people without tenure's protections?
 - a. Chambers responded: those tenure-track positions aren't coming back anyway. The practical danger, now, is

paternalism: deciding for another person what his or her service can be.

- b. Wilson-Okamura argued: paternalism would be telling someone, “Your FT status disqualifies you from serving on this committee at all.” What we’re talking about here is something else: the balance of members who have the protection of tenure.
 4. Altman asked: is there an accreditation issue here?
 - a. Ingalls explained: the distinction SACS cares about is full-time versus part-time, not FT versus tenure-track.
 5. Thomson offered: the real issue is whether tenure matters.
 6. Popke observed: some of our committees are already in violation of the existing rule on proportion (for example, the Budget committee, which has a high number of ex officio members).
 7. The committee affirmed the value of FT service on senate committees, with Chambers noting that FT members volunteer for senate committees at high rates, and Altman that FT members have specialized, essential knowledge.
 8. Chambers’ moved the following amendment of the current By-laws: “A majority of the elected members of all committees must be tenured or probationary (tenure track) faculty members, ~~and in no case shall more than two elected members of each committee be fixed-term faculty members.~~”
 - a. Popke: even with this change, tenure-track members might still be outvoted; at most, it would allow three elected FT members, up from the current limit of two.
 - b. Thomson: another solution would be to specify a minimum number of tenure-track faculty instead of a majority.
 - c. Chambers’ motion carried.
- E. Faculty Manual (FM), Part IV, Section II: “V. Use of ‘Guidelines’ by a Code Unit.”**
1. Prior to the meeting, Popke circulated suggested unit code language, developed by Ingalls and Popke, to enable and implement amended criteria for tenure and promotion: “These Guidelines become effective upon approval by the Chancellor. Assistant Professors who are in at least their second year of employment and who desire additional time to meet revised criteria for tenure and promotion may seek a maximum one-year extension of their probationary term under the ‘compelling personal circumstances’ provisions of the ECU Faculty Manual Part IX, Section I, subsection II.C.4.”

2. Ingalls explained that this was a restatement of existing policy and noted that, under the existing policy, the provost or health sciences VC can make a decision about probationary-period extensions that disagrees with a tenure committee's recommendation.
3. Ingalls and Popke clarified that they were suggesting language for unit codes, not proposing it as a requirement.
4. Duffy queried the phrase "a maximum one-year extension," since (as Chambers noted) candidates can request an additional year. The committee agreed with Duffy's suggestion, that "maximum" was confusing.
5. Hudson described how the Brody School of Medicine has applied changing criteria. Its tenure and promotion committee ran into difficulty when units within the school had different criteria. Their solution was to establish baselines for closely-related units. Some of the baseline changes were material, and therefore were not applied to probationary faculty members who had come in under different criteria.

F. Should FT faculty members be allowed to vote on unit codes?

1. Last year, the senate adopted this committee's recommendation that FT faculty members should be able to vote on unit codes if they have been full-time members of the unit's faculty for at least six years.
2. The committee has been asked to reconsider that recommendation or make an exception for Dental Science, which has a core faculty of around 40 full-time FT faculty members.
3. Popke was hesitant: after 12 months, full-time FT faculty members can vote on personnel matters, so why not (after six years) unit codes?
4. Wilson-Okamura agreed: this seems like a local, short-term problem. Rather than revise the procedure for the university, let's find a local, short-term solution.
5. Ingalls reminded the committee that current practice, in many departments, is to accept input, including amendments, from all faculty members; only the final vote, on approval of a unit code, is restricted.
6. Since this practice, of accepting input from faculty members at all levels, is working in many departments across the university, the committee declined to recommend a revision.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Which unit determines tenure and promotion?

1. Popke explained the background: Dental Medicine is almost entirely FT, so they can't populate a promotion committee without going outside of the college. Dental Medicine is therefore seeking sanction for its existing practice, of designating a college not a department as the unit determining tenure and promotion and tenure, either by revising the FM or issuing an interpretation.
2. Duffy noted: there is already precedent for this in Music.
3. Ingalls explained: the university's broad intention, as well as the SACS expectation, is for scholars in a discipline to determine the criteria in that discipline.
4. If an interpretation is issued, what should it say?
 - a. Wilson-Okamura cautioned: an interpretation should be careful not to push the authority for criteria *out of* departments, up to the college level, across the university.
 - b. Thomson added: Dental Science and Nursing may grow; we don't want to foreclose development at the department level.
 - c. Ingalls clarified: we don't want to force colleges to create departments solely for the purpose of tenure and promotion. If we did that in Dental Medicine, all of its tenure and promotion committees would have to be external committees – and that, in turn, would become an accreditation issue.
 - d. The committee entrusted drafting of a suitable interpretation to Ingalls and Popke.

B. New requirements for unit codes

1. On Feb. 20, the Unit Code Screening (UCS) Committee emailed Popke to propose several new requirements for unit codes, ones that would advance the university's strategic plan goals for equity and diversity.
2. Ingalls clarified: UCS is already suggesting the proposed language for new and revised codes; the question is whether it should be required.
3. Initial discussion was of individual proposals (e.g., "For consideration of salary increases, equity may be a factor in addition to considerations such as compression and merit").
4. Popke, though, brought the committee back to a more general question, of what kinds of things should be required in all unit codes.
5. The committee declined to recommend new requirements for unit codes and endorsed Popke's suggestion, that requirements should address the structure of unit codes rather than content.

C. Written comments in student opinion of instruction surveys

1. Popke reviewed recent developments. In response to concerns from student government, that instructors can choose to withhold student comments from their supervisors, the faculty senate and its leadership have (a) educated students to make formal complaints in venues where they can be investigated; (b) explored the use of Blue Text Analytics to identify patterns in student comments; and (c) drafted a “Best Practices” document, which Popke circulated before the meeting and invited comment on here.
2. Wilson-Okamura opined: these practices address but don’t solve the well-documented difficulties with student opinion surveys. Rather than codify them as “Best Practices,” perhaps the senate might disseminate them as “Suggestions.”
3. Altman and Lockerbie shared a chair’s perspective: peer observations are almost universally positive, which limits their usefulness; as for student comments, it’s good to recommend that, when comments are shared for a section, all of that section’s comments must be shared, not just the flattering ones. But how does a chair know when someone is really sharing all of the comments?
4. Popke recalled a suggestion from past Chair of the Faculty and recipient of the Board of Governors Award for Excellence in Teaching John Stiller: student comments should be used to improve teaching but not in evaluation.
5. Popke added: numbers are just as easy to abuse as written comments, and have the disadvantage of seeming objective.

V. Adjourned at 5:00.

Respectfully submitted, David Wilson-Okamura.