

Faculty Senate Meeting
Monday, October 8, 2018
Minutes

Present: Nick Brody, Gwynne Brown, Andrew Gardner, Megan Gessel, Alison Tracy Hale, Robin Jacobson, Kelly Johnson, Kristin Johnson, Chris Kendall, Andrew Monaco, Collin Noble, Sarah Shives, Heather White, Peter Wimberger

- I. Gwynne Brown called the meeting to order
- II. Announcements:
 1. The trustees approved the strategic plan at the business meeting on October 5.
- III. **M/S/P** approval of the minutes from the meeting for September 24th
- IV. Updates from Student and Staff representatives:
 1. Jacobson and Hale attended the Board of Trustees Academic & Student Affairs Committee meeting. The trustees approved the phased implementation change to the Code and the *Leadership for a Changing World 2018-2028 Strategic Plan* goals and objectives.
- V. Reports from Standing Committees
 1. The LMIS committee would like help from the senate to engage other faculty committees for feedback regarding the sensitive data protocol document LMIS developed last year. The LMIS committee would like the document examined by the FAC, ASC, and PSC by January 2019. After discussion, the senate decided to have the senate liaisons for each committee reach out to the committee to initiate this work.
 2. The SLC chairs are Nila Wiese (fall) and Mike Valentine (spring)
- VI. Revision of Language regarding tenure and promotion, based on the full faculty meeting discussion of October 3, 2018
 1. Feedback was submitted anonymously to the senate regarding the discussion at the October 3rd faculty meeting. The comments included the following:
 - It is unclear whether or not the change is attempting to make promotion to full professor harder to achieve.
 - A suggestion to have two tracks for promotion, one based on service and one based on scholarly work.
 - A desire to change the culture to encourage faculty members to pursue promotion when they feel ready, rather than on an artificial timeline.
 - A suggestion to include letters from outside the university, to endorse one's scholarly work from the members of his/her field

- A suggestion to move to a 3:2 load if the university is serious about making a change about what it means to be a professor at PS.
- A request to eliminate professional and community service from promotion language
- An objection to the word “excellence” only being applied in the language for promotion to full, rather than to all promotion language.

2. Impressions of the Oct 3 faculty meeting were noted:

- The suggestion to change scholarly achievement to scholarly activity seemed to be widely liked
- There is a desire to keep service central to promotion
- There is a concern that the language concerning service may mean that those who are promoted to Professor may no longer be held accountable for service to the university.

3. A discussion ensued and the following points/comments were made:

- The language does do a good job of clarifying the role of service in promotion to full. The language makes university service more prominent and better emphasizes its importance.
- Overall, there was agreement that the revised language was still broad and open to interpretation.
- The discussions around the change to language have brought up a number of other points of discussion about the University’s promotion and review process:
 - The new language continues to be open to interpretation by individual departments. Sometimes department requirements are more rigorous than campus-wide requirements and/or may vary in a way that creates more/different types of work for faculty in certain departments. Moreover, teaching, service, and scholarly work are tied to each other in different ways in different departments. This creates challenges for evaluating bodies outside of the departments (e.g. FAC, trustees) and may create inequities among faculty members from different departments.
 - The relationship between the salary scale and promotion must be considered when discussing changes to promotion. This is especially true for groups who are traditionally more involved in service, possibly at the expense of other areas, such as scholarly activity.
 - There is a sense that there is a general interest from some faculty members to make the criteria for promotion to professor more rigorous. In conversations with colleagues across campus, it seems

that this interest is mostly held by those already holding the rank of professor. The new language may be interpreted different ways, although it was *not* designed in a way to change the rigorousness of promotion language.

- Whatever they are, the criteria for promotion should be expressly articulated so that those who are under review clearly understand the requirements. Evaluators should only use the written criteria for decisions regarding promotion and tenure. There was a concern that the bar may be moving, without changes to the code. There was also a concern that if language passes to change requirements for promotion, that even during the transition period, the new criteria may be unintentionally applied/not ignored.
- Changes to teaching, service, and mentoring/advising roles, especially with regards to the strategic plan need to be considered in any discussion of changes to promotion.

After the discussion, senate members agreed that the proposed draft of revised language was appropriate with respect to its clarification of service. Reaching a consensus with the faculty regarding aspirational changes for promotion requirements will be much more challenging and may not be resolved in the proposed language. These discussions may be more appropriate after the language clarifying service requirements is approved.

VII. Preparation for the October 10, 2018 session with President Crawford at the University Club

Brown solicited framing questions or topics for the October 10th meeting. Suggestions included the following:

- When discussing and planning changes to the curriculum, when will faculty and staff workload become part of the discussion? Additionally, how will contingent and visiting faculty be included in the workload discussion?
- How will the traditional disciplines that make up a liberal arts education be incorporated into the vision of the new strategic plan? How can we ensure that we keep the foundation of these disciplines, while also altering our curriculum to meet the goals of the strategic plan?
- Considering the idea that the strategic plan may not be “budget neutral,” what types of financial support are available for faculty with new ideas for courses or curricular activities?
- How can junior faculty be included in novel curricular changes (e.g. newly designed courses) while also acknowledging the associated risks for the faculty who are under review for tenure and/or promotion?

VIII. Discussion of Provost Search process

The President has requested 6 faculty members to serve on a committee for a search and hire of a new provost. The president has requested that the faculty senate create a process to select 4 faculty members for the committee, while another two will be chosen by him. After discussion, the senate decided to solicit nominations (including self nominations) from the faculty and the senate will chose members from this list with the intent to ensure diverse representation on the hiring committee.

M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 1:29pm

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Gessel