

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee: December 5, 2008

Present: Bodine, Christoph, Edgoose, Goldstein, Haltom, Tomlin, Woods

The meeting was convened at 11:05 AM

There were no announcements.

The minutes of 11/21/08 were approved as circulated.

PSC members agreed to have the final meeting for this semester on 12/12/08.

PSC then discussed sub-committee updates and the adjustment of target dates. Using the numbered designation on PSC's "matrix," target days for the following charges were modified:

Item # 6: Dual department appointment/ Evaluation criteria; Edgoose/Goldstein  
New Target date: December 08

Item # 3: Informal and formal challenges to evaluation; Goldstein/Haltom  
New target date: January 09

Item # 14: Status of colleague letters in a closed file; Edgoose/Haltom  
New target date: January 09

Item # 7: Harassment in student evaluations: Christoph/Wood  
New Target date: February 09

Item # 2: Definition of tenure-line faculty member: Edgoose/Wood  
New target date: March 09

Item # 10: Research misconduct policy; Christoph/Goldstein  
New target date: March 09

Item # 8: Status of code interpretations  
Suggested was to arrange a discussion with former PSC chairs  
New Target date: May 09

Item # 12: Faculty recruitment guidelines: Bodine/Haltom  
New target date: May 09

There was discussion about adding an additional item # 18, "Special circumstances in appointment letters relevant for evaluations." Specifically, how could colleagues participating in an evaluation and the FAC learn about relevant agreements in the appointment letter of an evaluatee such as early promotion or special circumstances for an interdisciplinary appointment? One preliminary suggestion was an addition to the buff document encouraging evaluatees to include such pertinent information in their file. PSC will return to this discussion at a later point.

Senator Haltom reported that he drafted language for a code amendment proposing that standards for those wishing to be considered for early tenure and/or promotion be the same as for those coming up at the usual time. He will take this draft to the Faculty Senate at its January 26 meeting.

Item # 11: Violence Prevention Policy:

The subcommittee first emphasized the importance of having a violence prevention policy at UPS and acknowledged the objective of making such a policy comprehensive with respect to situations and people. The subcommittee, however, noted the following areas of concern:

- 1) The current draft appears to be too complex and to some extent redundant. A careful revision was strongly recommended to make the document clear, simple, and user-friendly.
- 2) As for actions required in the case of emergencies, the current document states to call campus security as the appropriate first response in emergencies. To contact the local police was frequently suggested only as a second choice. The subcommittee felt that this ranking was ill advised and that not calling the local police could possibly be a grave mistake. For instance, the recent incident of two students being shot in the leg from a window in Phibbs residence hall (a pellet gun was later confiscated) should have called for the immediate presence of local police to confiscate the gun and to re-establish security. As a second example, a faculty member working off-campus would also be ill advised to call campus security instead of the local police. Furthermore, instructions for required responses did not seem to be consistent throughout the document.
- 3) Suggested was to add a definition of "firearms" to the document, noting that, for example, pellet or airsoft guns do not fall into the category of firearms. The document should also state any exceptions to the general policy of not allowing the use and possession of weapons on campus. The subcommittee felt that there should be no exceptions to this policy at all.

PSC will take this matter up again at its next meeting to give all members the opportunity to read this draft of the violence prevention policy and to reflect on the above suggestions.

PSC next turned to a discussion of a confidential inquiry of the Dean.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sigrun Bodine