

Professional Standards Committee
Final Report to the Faculty Senate
Spring 2004
Submitted by Kate Stirling, Chair

Members of the Professional Standards Committee 2003-2004:

Bill Breitenbach, History;
Wade Hands, Economics;
Sue Owen, Communication Studies;
John Riegsecker, Math and Computer Science;
Tom Rowland, Chemistry;
Kate Stirling, Economics;
Carolyn Weisz, Psychology;
Terry Cooney, Dean (ex-officio).

The Professional Standards Committee (PSC) met every week of the fall and spring semesters, with the exception of university holidays and Spring Break. We also held several additional meetings, during the evening, of both semesters in order to hear two grievances. Below is a list of the actions undertaken by the Committee during AY 2003-04.

1. Given the changes to the Faculty Code, the PSC requested that each department or program review its statement of standards and procedures for evaluation. This task was undertaken as indicated by Duty 4 assigned to the PSC in the Faculty Bylaws. Every department and program responded to our request; some reported that no changes were required in their documents to align with the revised Code. The others – listed below -- submitted changes to the PSC for our approval.

Art
*Chemistry
*Communication Studies
*English
*Exercise Science
History
*Mathematics and Computer Science
Music
Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy
Politics and Government
*Psychology
*Theatre Arts

*Review complete; the others have been returned to the department/program with questions and or suggestions.

2. The PSC discussed and responded to several inquiries from faculty members. A brief summary follows.
 - a. Regarding whether a letter from the director of an interdisciplinary program for an evaluatee in an interdisciplinary program whose evaluation is housed in a (different) department should be considered an “outside” letter, the PSC

responded that unless the individual is a member of the department or a member of the evaluation team (as described in the Code, Chapter III, Section 4 (3)), letters are “outside” letters.

- b. Regarding which copies of student course evaluations should be submitted to the Faculty Advancement Committee, the PSC responded that the department is required to submit whatever copies it used in its evaluation process.
 - c. Regarding clarification of “working day” and specifically whether working days in the summer count towards the thirty-day limit to file a grievance, the PSC responded the thirty-day limit does not include summer, although timely notification is encouraged so that a respondent is aware of the grievance. (Note: the issue of the definition of working days in the Code warrants further consideration and is currently under discussion by the PSC.)
 - d. In response to a series of inquiries related to the appeal process at the departmental level, the PSC responded that:
 - i.) a deadline for submission of written material means that hard copy must be submitted by the close of the working day (5 pm).
 - ii) for counting days to a deadline, Fall Break Day, Spring Break, and holidays (closure of the University) are considered non-working days. Reading Period and Final Exam days are working days.
 - iii) The intent of the "or" (Faculty Code, Chapter III, Section 4b, last paragraph) referring to "the right to pursue those concerns (1) informally or (2) formally" is inclusive. Both the informal and formal routes are available.
 - e. Regarding the use of the word “days” in the Grievance section of the Code (Chapter VI), the PSC affirmed that it consistently refers to working days.
3. The PSC heard two grievances; a third grievance was delayed and ultimately withdrawn. Given the confidential nature of grievances, the details of the process and proceedings are not provided in this report.
 4. Established (with the Senate Chair) and convened four hearing boards. Having reached a decision, one of these hearing boards referred the issue to the PSC. Given the confidential nature of the evaluation process, additional details are not provided in this report.
 5. The following interpretation was issued:

Interpretation of Chapter II, Section 4 - Reappointment:
"For visiting and adjunct faculty, inclusion of the specific term of the contract in the contract itself (e.g., "This is a one-year contract") shall constitute notification of non-reappointment as required in Ch. II, Section 4 of the Faculty Code."
Note: For full time instructors not holding appointments as visiting faculty, notification of non-reappointment shall occur as specified in a, b, or c of Chap. II Sec. 4.
 6. The above interpretation was also crafted into a Code amendment with its first reading at the last Faculty meeting of the year. It is copied below:

Proposed amendments to Chapter II, Sections 4 and 5, of the Faculty Code. (Strikethroughs indicate deletions; underlining indicates additions, except for the section titles, which are underlined in the current Code):

Section 4 - Reappointment

Tenure-line faculty members serving on appointments without tenure and non-tenure line faculty shall be considered for reappointment by the dean during the term of appointment. The provisions of this section shall also apply to faculty members who are full-time instructors except those holding appointments as visiting faculty. If the decision is reached not to reappoint (See Chapter III, Section 2-a.), the dean will notify the faculty member in writing at the earliest possible time, and in accordance with the following standards:

- a. ~~Not later than March 1 of the first academic year of academic service, if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, if one year appointment terminates during the academic year, at least three months in advance of its termination.~~
- b. ~~Not later than December 15 of the second consecutive academic year of academic service, if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, if an initial two year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least six months in advance of its termination.~~
- c. Not later than June 30 preceding the final contract year, after two or more consecutive years of academic service.~~At least twelve months before the expiration of an appointment after two or more years in the institution.~~

~~Reappointment of tenured faculty members is governed by Chapter IV, Section 7 of this code.~~

Section 5 - Grounds for Non-Reappointment

The university may refuse to reappoint faculty without tenure for any reason not forbidden by this faculty code. ~~(See especially Chapter II, Section 1a. and Chapter III, Section 2a.(3).~~ Upon written request by faculty members who are not reappointed, the dean shall inform them in writing of the reason they were not reappointed.

Non-reappointment of tenured faculty members is governed by Chapter V of this faculty code.

7. At its final meeting of the year, May 7, the PSC will continue its discussion of “working days” and whether previous interpretations of the Code remain applicable in light of the Code revisions.