

## **Faculty Meeting Minutes December 9, 1997**

President Pierce called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. Thirty-eight voting members of the faculty were present.

Minutes of the November 18, 1997 faculty meeting were approved as published.

There were no announcements

President Pierce gave no report.

Dean Cooney announced that Chris Ives has received a National Endowment for the Humanities Research Fellowship to go with his previously awarded Social Science Research Council grant. This news was greeted by a round of applause.

President Pierce asked Dean Terry Cooney to continue to preside over discussion of proposed changes to the *Faculty Code* so that she could participate in the discussion. Dean Cooney asked Code Revision Committee (CRC) members David Droge and John Riegsecker to continue leading us through the proposed changes one by one. After the most recent faculty meeting on November 18, 1997, two additional documents were distributed to faculty by the CRC, both dated December 1, 1997. A one-page green sheet described four new proposed changes to chapters I and II of the *Faculty Code*. A multi-page buff document (Addendum III) described new proposed changes to Chapter III.

**We first considered the fourth proposed change on the green sheet, to Section 4 of Chapter II. This changed replaced proposed changes 18 through 22 on the CRC's October 6, 1997 white-paged document:**

*Fourth, we propose more collaborative and chronological language for Chapter II, Section 4:*

*a. Schools, departments and programs shall work closely with the dean to define qualifications and responsibilities for each faculty appointment.*

*b. When the dean has approved the search, faculty recruitment will proceed using guidelines recommended by the dean and approved by the Professional Standards Committee.*

*c. When the head officer is to be hired, the dean, in consultation the school/department, may designate a search committee. The search committee will include at least one faculty member from within the department and at least one faculty member from outside the department or school.*

*d. At the conclusion of the search, the head officer of search committee chairperson, in consultation with department faculty and students, should select an individual and make a recommendation to the dean and the president. The president shall normally adopt the recommendation of the head officer or search committee chairperson. If such an adoption is not forthcoming, the president shall forward the reason for not doing so to the school, department, or program or search committee. After further review, the head officer or search committee chairperson shall resubmit a recommendation from the school department, program or search committee. The president will be responsible for the final decision and shall approve each initial appointment.*

Riegsecker introduced these changes by saying they restore the collaborative tone between departments and the dean. The apparent diminution of this collaboration in the language of the

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original proposed change was the source of much discussion at the last faculty meeting. There was no discussion.

**We considered proposed change #23 (on the October 6, 1997 document), to Chapter II, Section 5:**

*Substitute: "Tenure-line faculty members serving on appointments without tenure shall be considered for reappointment by the dean during the term of employment. If the decision is reaching not to reappoint, the dean will notify the faculty member in writing . . ."*

*For: "Tenure-line faculty members serving on non-tenured appointments shall be considered for reappointment during the term of employment. If the decision is reached not to reappoint, notification will be given in writing . . ."*

There was no discussion.

**We considered proposed changes #24 and #25, to Chapter II, Sections 5 and 6:**

*Chapter II, Section 5:*

*Insert: "Reappointment of tenured faculty members is governed by Chapter IV, Section 7 of this code."*

*Chapter II, Section 6:*

*Substitute: "without tenure" for "non-tenured"*

There was no discussion.

We next turned to the three remaining CRC recommendations on the green December 1, 1997 sheet. **We considered the first of these, to Chapter I, Section 4, a:**

*First, we withdraw the proposal to add the words "and its published policies" to Chapter I, Section 4.a (page 3). We will defer this discussion to "phase 2" of Code revision. At this later time, we can also discuss the desirability of a Faculty Handbook and what major policies applying to faculty might be included therein.*

The consensus of the faculty was that this was appropriate.

**We considered the second recommendation on the green sheet, to Chapter II, Section 2, b:**

*Second, to remedy some redundancy we propose to strike the first sentence in Chapter II, Section 2.b (page 2) Persons appointed as instructor, adjunct faculty, visiting faculty or other positions that might be created are non-tenure-line faculty. Non-tenure-line faculty are appointed on a contract basis. Such contractual relations may continue indefinitely but shall not lead to tenure. Use of non-tenure-line positions shall be periodically reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee. (See Appendix A for memo of understanding on use of instructors and other non-tenure faculty.)*

There was no discussion.

**We considered the third recommendation on the green sheet, to Chapter II, Section 2, c:**

*Third, after lengthy consultation with the Classicists, we propose to use the plural "faculty emeriti and emeritae" in Chapter II, Section 2.c (3).*

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There was no discussion. This completed discussion of proposed changes to Chapters I and II of the *Faculty Code*.

We then began discussion of proposed changes to Chapter III of the *Faculty Code*, by turning to the buff-colored CRC document dated December 1, 1997. Droge introduced this discussion by saying that most CRC time and energy was spent drafting proposed changes to Chapter III. The CRC received the most comments on this chapter, and the CRC anticipates much faculty discussion on this chapter, because: (1) the CRC attempted to codify some actual practices not currently in the *Code*, (2) other significant aspects of chapter III needing to be addressed were addressed, and (3) the CRC tried to make the key guiding principle of Chapter III explicit: evaluation is based on materials in the evaluatee's file, materials or summaries thereof that have been reviewed by the candidate.

**We considered proposed change #26, to Chapter III, Section 1:**

*Substitute: "The evaluation process shall be directed to (1) providing documentation necessary for achieving a fair and impartial decision when the faculty member is eligible for a change of status and (2) providing timely and accurate feedback about areas of strength and weakness necessary for improvement of faculty performance.*

*For: "The evaluation process shall provide documentation necessary for (1) maintenance of professional competence of the faculty member and improvement of areas of weakness; (2) fair and impartial decision when the faculty member is eligible for a change of status; and (3) timely and accurate feedback to the evaluatee.*

David Potts said that the wording of the second point was awkward; that "providing "feedback" is too general a wording; that what we do is provide assessment for improvement; and that there must be a better way to say this. Dean Cooney suggested a possible wording: "providing suggestions for improvement of faculty performance," and Potts indicated that was certainly better.

Ted Taranovski said that the emphasis should be on *maintaining* excellence, because it was illogical to anticipate that performance could continue to improve uninterrupted throughout a long career. Florence Sandler suggested adding the word *any*: "providing any suggestions for improvement of faculty performance."

Curt Mehlhaff expressed concern that the proposed wording would preclude an evaluation having multiple purposes (i.e., both "change of status" and "suggestions for improvement"). Riegsecker said that the intent is that one evaluation can serve two purposes, and Dean Cooney pointed out that the proposed wording is similar to current *Code* wording. Kris Bartanen added that providing feedback is *always* a purpose of any evaluation.

Dean Cooney asked if it was the faculty's consensus that the CRC should work on David Potts' suggestion for changed wording, and the faculty indicated that it was.

**We considered proposed change #27, to Chapter III, Section 2:**

*Substitute: "specified" for "certain"*

*"Tenure-line faculty shall be evaluated at specified points in their careers with the university, in the manner provided in this chapter."*

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There was no discussion.

**We considered proposed change #28, to Chapter III, Section 2, a:**

*Substitute: "faculty member without tenure" for "non-tenured faculty member"*

There was no discussion.

**We next considered proposed change #29, to Chapter III, Sections 2, b:**

*Insert: "An evaluation by the head officer shall be made at the conclusion of each year for the first two years of a non-tenured faculty member's appointment, or earlier if a question of non-reappointment is at stake."*

Dean Cooney pointed out that Section 5,a of Chapter II implies the need for this change. Doug Cannon asked who it is that decides whether non-reappointment is at stake. He said that if it is always "the head officer," the language should say so. Taranovski said he thought it wasn't always the head officer; that student complaints, for example, could also raise the question of non-reappointment, and that therefore the language should not be more specific than it is.

Sandler asked whether the validity of the evaluation might be questioned if it is made by someone other than the head officer. She suggested that the language should allow for someone other than the head officer being delegated responsibility. Carol Merz responded that it is still the head officer's responsibility to summarize the evaluation, regardless of who is involved. Sandler said that the chair might not be involved at all. President Pierce agreed with Merz that it ought to be the chair's responsibility to evaluate the work done. Bartanen added that junior faculty need to know that the source of the evaluation is the chair.

Suzanne Barnett pointed out that, while we have been consistently replacing "faculty members without tenure" for "non-tenured faculty member," the current proposed change #29 retains the original wording. Members of the CRC sheepishly agreed they had overlooked this and would attend to it.

Cannon asked whether the proposed language precludes a decision at the end of the first year not to re-appoint at the end of the second year. Dean Cooney indicated that the CRC needs to look at this.

Droge then asked to make sure that the CRC understood the issues the faculty wanted the CRC to work on further: (1) whether evaluations must be done by the head officer, and (2) whether an evaluation needs to be done earlier than the end of the first year if there is a question about non-reappointment at the end of the second year. Faculty indicated that these were the issues to be addressed.

**We considered proposed change #30, to Chapter III, Section 2, b:**

*Substitute: "A copy of the head officer's report shall be sent to the individual under evaluation and to the dean. A copy of the head officer's report shall be placed in the faculty member's evaluation file (Chapter III, Section 9). Except in cases of non-reappointment (Chapter II, Section 5), no further action is required."*

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For: "A copy of the head officer's report shall be sent to the individual under evaluation, to the dean, and to the Faculty Advancement Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Advancement Committee) for their information."

There was no discussion.

**We considered proposed change #31, to Chapter III, Section 2:**

*Insert: "Normally, evaluations after the third year of employment will not be undertaken at intervals shorter than three years. At least one year shall pass between the completion of a normally scheduled evaluation and a request for a new evaluation."*

Members of the CRC explained that the proposed change makes *Code* language consistent with practice, because one year's student teaching evaluations need to be included in any evaluation.

Tom Fikes asked if he was correct in interpreting the proposed change to mean that there will be two years between evaluations, insofar as one full year must elapse between an evaluation and a request for another evaluation. Droge responded "yes."

Tom Rowland pointed out that another change that has been made here is the addition of the word "instructor." Members of the CRC agreed that they had forgotten to point out this change.

Mehlhoff asked what the need is for the sentence beginning "normally." Bartanen responded that it is the norm that faculty other than full professors are evaluated every three years. Taranovski asked about faculty up for tenure one year and promotion the next. He said we should not preclude that possibility; that that is why the word "normally" is important, to allow for exceptions.

Taranovski argued that it is not the practice to have to wait a year to make a request for a new evaluation. He said the practice that the language should make clear is that there can be a new evaluation after only one year. Sandler agreed, saying that it is possible to generate a new year's teaching evaluations within one year after an evaluation. Dean Cooney suggested that this is a wording issue for the CRC to work on. He added that another issue to be addressed on which there are two sides is: must a year pass before there can be a second evaluation?

George Tomlin asked whether the second sentence of the proposed change is meant to apply only after the third year evaluation. Droge and Bartanen responded yes, that this sentence does not apply to first and second year evaluations, which have their own procedures. Sandler suggested simply eliminating the second sentence.

Cannon argued that professional growth is a kind of evidence that could come quickly, so that teaching is not the only evidence to be accumulated after an evaluation, leading to a subsequent evaluation. Nancy Bristow suggested that perhaps whether one year needs to pass or not is a substantive, rather than editorial change, since there is disagreement about it. Dean Cooney said that the CRC could consider this, but pointed out that currently the Faculty Advancement Committee decides when it is appropriate for another evaluation to occur, and that perhaps we want to leave it this way.

John Rindo suggested that the CRC should take this up, and a straw vote supported this step over expunging the proposed language at this point.

**We considered proposed change #32, to Chapter III, Section 3:**

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*Insert a new section entitled "Evaluation Standards and Criteria"*  
*Move to new Section 3, a. the existing language from old Section 3, b.*  
*Move to new Section 3, b. the existing language from old Section 4, a.*

Bartanen pointed out also that in Section 3,a "and substantive comments" and "procedures" were dropped from the language.

Taranovski and Mehlhaff initiated a lengthy discussion by pointing out that what are currently called "evaluation procedures" are in the proposal called "evaluation standards and criteria." They and others argued that this is a major substantive change. Dean Cooney said that the Professional Standards Committee document identified in proposed Section 3,a has been used as standards for many years.

Dean Cooney summarized by saying that some faculty favor the old language and some favor the new language, and that perhaps "department procedures" needs to be retained in the language. President Pierce said that the purpose of this *Code* review is to eliminate ambiguities and that the CRC should look at this again. The consensus of the faculty was that the CRC should revisit this question.

We adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John M. Finney  
Secretary of the Faculty.