

**Faculty Senate Chair Report to the Faculty
In advance of 04/14/2015 Faculty Meeting
By Ariela Tubert**

- The elections for senators and faculty secretary have just closed. Amy Spivey has been elected secretary of the faculty for 2015-2016. We will be announcing the results for the senator positions once they can be confirmed and replacement needs are established, in the next week or so.
- As I mentioned in my last report, at the 2/23 meeting, the senate discussed steps that may be taken to increase support for faculty encountering students with behavioral and other problems in the classroom. The discussion was prompted by requests from various faculty members that the senate take up this issue of growing concern for the faculty. There will be a Wednesday at 4pm session focused on some of the issues that came up in the senate discussion. The session "Classroom Behavior: Bridging Faculty and Student Expectations" will be moderated by Tiffany MacBain (English) with panelists: Ben Lewin (SOAN), Molly Pugh (School of Education), and Ariela Tubert (Philosophy, Senate Chair) will take place on Wednesday, April 15th, at 4pm in the Center for Writing, Learning, and Teaching. I encourage everyone to attend the session and to send any suggestions for the discussion to me or one of the other participants in the session, or to Eric Orlin and Julie Christoph who are organizing the session.
- The senate has had an ongoing discussion at various meetings during the year of whether to charge the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) or perhaps an ad hoc committee with looking for ways to improve the course schedule. The ASC had worked on this issue in the past but was stalled last year by the lack of available data during the PeopleSoft transition. After looking over the available survey and other data, the senate approved a motion at its 3/9 meeting "to collect data relevant to concerns regarding the course schedule and forward such data to the ASC." The senate believes that it would be good to charge the ASC next academic year to look for ways to improve the current course schedule but in order to speed up the process and make it less onerous on the ASC, the senate will undertake some of the data collection with senators Derek Buescher, Andrew Gardner, and Jonathan Stockdale leading the effort.
- At the request of various faculty members, the senate discussed the issue of various possible biases in student evaluations of faculty teaching. The senators agreed that this was an important discussion to have and that it would be good to charge the Professional Standards Committee with looking into these issues next year.

- Members of the senate will be conducting a faculty governance orientation for first year faculty members. The idea grew out of discussions of the results of the faculty governance survey and of ways to improve faculty experience with governance. The main goal for the session is to provide an introduction to faculty governance, clarify the role of the standing committees, their relation to the senate and to the full faculty, etc. If anyone has any suggestions for things that they think should be discussed at the session, please email Leslie Saucedo (senate vice-chair) or myself. The session will take place on April 16th.
- The Professional Standards Committee recommended changes to the current practice for submitting minutes. The updated process, which will be communicated to committee chairs, is as follows: standing committees submit electronically signed minutes to Jimmy McMichael via email, and Jimmy prints the minutes and archives them. (Note: an electronic signature is, for example, the standard "Respectfully submitted, Jane Doe.") It was also requested that Jimmy begin to tag the minutes available online at <http://www.pugetsound.edu/gateways/faculty-staff/committees-minutes/> with the date of posting. This change will help faculty to negotiate the 10-day and 30-day rules of review stipulated by the Code in certain situations.
- The senate received a report from the ad hoc Working Group Reviewing the Connections Core, created by the senate in fall 2013 and composed of senator Jonathan Stockdale, Jill Nealey-Moore, and Hans Ostrom. The recommendations of the working group can be found in Appendix A below, the full report will be available with the minutes from the 4/9 senate meeting.
- On 4/9, the senate discussed the Curricular Impact Statement approved by the Curriculum Committee and provided some feedback back to the committee regarding the letters required from chairs/directors of affected programs. See Appendix B for the statement as approved by the Curriculum Committee.
- The Professional Standards Committee has also approved various revisions to the Interpretations of the Faculty Code. The revised interpretations are available in Appendix C.
- In addition to the above, ongoing discussions on the senate right now include: a) the possibility of creating advisory boards for Connections Core, Know Requirement, and First Year Seminars; b) a request from the Accessibility Working Group to provide for extra time for student evaluations. As always, the senate welcomes suggestions for issues that the faculty would like the senate to take up. Please email me or any member of the senate with suggestions.

Appendix A

Excerpt from the Report of the ad hoc Working Group of the Senate Reviewing the Connections Core (full report available with the minutes of the 4/9 senate meeting):

Recommendations

1. Related to challenge #1 above regarding teaching Connections, the working group recommends that more support be provided for those developing or seeking to enhance Connections courses. The working group strongly endorses the model for faculty collaboration across disciplines modeled by the “Enhancing Connections” workshop (perhaps supported by funding from Burlington Northern curriculum development grants), whereby a faculty developing a Connections course could be paired with another faculty in an overlapping area of expertise who could provide collaborative assessment, feedback, and support.
2. Related to challenge #2 above, bringing together students of varying academic backgrounds presents a fine line for professors to negotiate in their Connections courses, and some professors appear to do this particularly well. The working group recommends that in addition to posting this report on the Connections Core, some sample syllabi of successful Connections courses be posted as well, perhaps on a future Curriculum Committee webpage.
3. Related directly to the issue of enrollment limits set at 44 for those team-teaching in the Connections Core, the working group feels that a more ideal arrangement would be a 34 student limit – commensurate with the size of two first-year seminar classes combined. However, given current budgetary constraints, it appears unlikely that this change should be expected any time soon.

Appendix B

Curricular Impact Statement

Rationale

During academic years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the Faculty Senate charged the Curriculum Committee to “[d]evelop a curricular impact statement and process of formal communication for new program proposals (e.g., to Chairs and Directors) prior to program approval.” The Senate’s stated rationale for the charge was “to allow a channel of feedback from impacted programs to both the curriculum committee and program proposers.” In response, the Curriculum Committee requests that proposers of new majors, minors, interdisciplinary programs, emphases, and other courses of study complete a Curricular Impact Statement (CIS). Proposals will be considered incomplete until the statement is submitted.

Purpose

Proposals for new majors, minors, emphases, interdisciplinary programs, or other courses of study must include a CIS in order to:

1. demonstrate the limitations of the current curricular structure and explain how those limitations warrant a new course of study;
2. ensure and document that principal stakeholders are aware of the implications of the new course of study for existing programs; and,
3. explain which additional resources may be required in order to deliver the new course of study effectively.

A Curricular Impact Statement must include each of the following:

1. A statement of rationale that explains why students are unable to meet the learning objectives of the new course of study given the university's existing offerings of majors, minors, emphases, interdisciplinary programs, or other courses of study.
2. A statement identifying:
 - a. which departments, programs, or schools may be affected by the proposed course of study; and,
 - b. how these departments, programs, or schools may be affected by the proposed course of study. This discussion might include, but is not limited to: (1) any courses that will be cross-listed; (2) any existing courses that will be required, recommended, or potentially used to satisfy the requirements of the new program; and (3) any existing departments, programs, and schools that may see a significant increase or reduction in course enrollments due to the new course of study.
 - c. which departments, programs, or schools have been notified in writing of the proposal for the new course of study.
3. Letters from all directors or chairs of the departments, programs, or schools identified in part 2 of the CIS that state either:
 - a. the new course of study being proposed can be supported with the existing resources of the department, program, or school; or,
 - b. the new course of study being proposed cannot be supported with the existing resources of the department, program, or school, but the department, program, or school will be able to support the new course of study by making specifically

identified adjustments in course offerings or resources by the time that the new course of study is offered.

4. A statement identifying what additional resources may be required in order to deliver the new course of study effectively.

Motion approved by CC 4 March 2015
Motion drafted by Working Group 4 (Feb 2015)
[Beezer, Carlin, Ferrari, Johnson, & Rogers]
Based on Draft (Feb 2014) [Anderson-Connolly, Beardsley, & Johnson]

Appendix C

Recommended Revisions to Interpretations of the Faculty Code Professional Standards Committee 2014-15

Members: Kris Bartanen, Geoffrey Block, Douglas Cannon, Betsy Kirkpatrick, Tiffany MacBain (Chair), Andreas Madlung, Mark Reinitz, Amy Spivey

In the 2014-15 academic year, the Faculty Senate charged the Professional Standards Committee to “review all of the PSC interpretations of the Faculty Code to see if any have become obsolete by more recent interpretations and to ensure consistency of all interpretations with the current practice and policies on campus.” The PSC has completed the review and revised the interpretations as indicated below.

The PSC determines these revisions to be significant and so submits them in accordance with the instructions in the Faculty Code, Chapter I, Part G, Section 1: “If the Professional Standards Committee deems an interpretation to be of significant merit it shall issue a formal written interpretation which shall be delivered to the Faculty Senate for inclusion within the Senate minutes. Such interpretations shall also be forwarded to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees for its concurrence.”

Not included below, but in need of revision to align with existing policies, is the Interpretation of Chapter VI (Grievances arising from allegations of sexual harassment). Dean of Diversity and Inclusion Michael Benitez will recommend changes to this Interpretation following the university’s Title IX review in the summer of 2015.

APPENDIX

Page 39, line 8: Because the Appendix contains current interpretations and interpretations that are no longer active, change “This Appendix contains current interpretations” to read “This appendix contains such interpretations.”

Page 39, lines 23-48: Given that technology has evolved to the point where it is easy to search PDFs, and given the potentially incomplete nature over time of the list of references to

“working days” in these lines of the Code, the PSC recommends that lines 23-48 be deleted from the Appendix.

Page 40, lines 8-14: Because these lines are outdated and do not align with the language of the “Campus Policy Prohibiting Harassment & Sexual Misconduct” document, delete lines 8-14. Add to the end of this Interpretation (of Chapter I, Part C, Section 2, and Chapter I, Part D, Section 4) the line: “This policy aligns with the university’s conflict of interest provisions in the Code of Conduct as well as Section II, Part E (“Consensual Sexual Relationship”) of the Campus Policy Prohibiting Harassment & Sexual Misconduct.”

Page 41, throughout entire Interpretation of Chapter I, Part C, Section 2, and Chapter I, Part D, Section 4: To bring the language of the Code into compliance with Title IX, as recommended by Dean for Diversity and Inclusion Michael Benitez, replace “spouse” with “partner,” and replace “children” and “child” with “dependent children.”

Page 41, lines 42-49: Committee members expressed concern about ambiguity in the text regarding the timing of PSC reviews of departmental guidelines for the use of course assistants. Change the sentences beginning with “Thus” in line 42 to read, “Thus each department employing course assistants should submit to the Professional Standards Committee a document that explains the duties, responsibilities, and supervision of course assistants. The PSC will review departmental statements for agreement with the guidelines. Upon obtaining committee approval, the department may then employ course assistants in accordance with the departmental document and need not submit that document again for PSC review until the guidelines in the Code or the departmental document are revised.”

Page 42, line 9: To bring the language of the Code into compliance with Title IX, as recommended by Dean for Diversity and Inclusion Michael Benitez, use the gender-neutral pronoun “their” instead of “his/her” in the phrase, “in their courses.”

Page 43, line 15: To correct a problem with sentence structure, the PSC recommends changing the first sentence of line 15 to read, “The evaluation process is clearly career-influencing.”

Page 43, lines 38-39: To correct a typographical error sending readers to an incorrect section of the Code, and to align with the recommended language for page 45, line 5 (below), the PSC recommends changing the lines to read: “If you have concerns regarding obligations under this policy, please refer to Chapter 1, Part D, Section 4 of the *Faculty Code* (‘Professional Ethics’) and/or speak with your head of department, school, or program or the Academic Vice President.” The font size and type should be the same as the surrounding document.

Page 45, line 5: “department head” becomes “head of department, school, or program.” Change sentence to read: “The faculty member must request that there be a delay in consideration for tenure or promotion by writing to the head of department, school, or program and the Academic Vice President, normally no later than one semester before the scheduled evaluation.”

Page 46, Interpretation of Chapter III, section 4. To bring the language of the Code into compliance with Title IX, as recommended by Dean for Diversity and Inclusion Michael Benitez, replace “spouse” and “mate” with “partner.”

Page 47, lines 31-34: To correct outdated language (“photocopied”) and to affirm the writers’ ownership of their letters of evaluation, the PSC recommends that the lines read: “In the case of an open file, the faculty member being evaluated has access to letters in the evaluation file and may take notes while reviewing the file. If the faculty member desires copies of the letters, the faculty member must seek copies from the writers.”

Page 48, line 10: To clarify how outside letters should be solicited for faculty evaluations, add the following statement after the phrase “if they seem relevant”: “In consultation with the evaluatee, the head officer may also solicit appropriate letters from outside the department or university. When soliciting the letters the head officer will notify the letter writers of the status of the file as open or closed.”

Page 48, line 17: For consistency’s sake, change “confidential letters” to “a closed file.”

Page 48, line 18: For clarity’s sake, change “those individuals who submitted letters and a summary...” to “those individuals who submitted letters to the head officer and a summary....”

Page 48, line 19: To correct an error of reference, change “Faculty Code: Chapter III, Section 4, b (2) (a) and Section 4, b (2) (b)” to “Faculty Code: Chapter III, Section 4, b (2) (a) and Section 4, b (2) (e).”

Page 48, lines 29-30: Because the university affirms the validity of electronic signatures, change bracketed note to read: “As defined for purposes of interpretation, a letter of evaluation is a signed document.”