

Minutes 02/10/04 – Faculty Council on Tenure and Promotion Meeting

Attendees:

Bob Jackson
Karen Landenburger
Tracy Thompson
Anthony D’Costa
Jack Nelson

Discussion with Lea Vaughn regarding P&T procedures.

1. Lea provided a summary of P&T procedures as reflected in the UW Faculty Code.
2. In general, most of our questions pertained to areas where the code is silent. She provided one copy of P&T guidelines from 3 different schools on the Seattle campus (Engineering, Arts & Sciences and the School of Law). We can access these online as well as those from other schools. She also recommended looking at guidelines from other universities.
3. Answers to our specific questions:
 - a. How do different units select outside reviewers? Are there specific guidelines written in code at the school level elsewhere on campus?
Answer: Different schools have different procedures. The code is silent on this. Some units invoke a collaborative process with the candidate, and others choose for the candidate.
 - b. How do different units select a review committee (if this step is taken elsewhere)? What if there is disagreement about the membership?
Answer: Again, there is variation across schools with respect to how this is handled.
 - c. In other Faculty Councils, does the VCAA (or equivalent Dean) sit in on the discussion or does the Faculty Council discuss and then present their recommendations and vote to the VCAA/Dean? Answer: This, too, seems to vary across the campus.
 - d. After being denied a promotion (to Full), is there a minimum waiting period before applying again? Answer: No, but common sense dictates that one would take the information from the review, act upon it and then seek promotion at a later date.
 - e. What do external reviewers receive? Is there shared practice across units? Do P&T criteria get sent? Entire narrative or parts of it? All the work or selected pieces? Are there standard letters within a unit/school? Answer: Again, there is variation in the system where each school has its own practices.
 - f. Can associates vote on promotions to full per the code? Answer: She will take this one back to Steve Olswang. The code is silent on this.
4. Lea ended up with three issues/questions to take back to Steve Olswang and Faculty Senate
 - a. What is the status of annual reviews in the candidate’s materials?
 - b. Can associates advise the Dean/VCAA on promotions to full?

- c. There was a difference of opinion between Lea & Jack re. interpretation of 24:54 B. "...The voting faculty of the candidate's department (or college/school is undepartmentalized) superior in rank to the candidate shall then meet to discuss the candidate's record and to vote on the promotion question. The department chair (or the chair's designee or the dean of an undepartmentalized school or college or the dean's designee) shall write a formal report of these proceedings for the candidate, summarizing the discussion and recommendation. For purposes of confidentiality, all names shall be omitted and vote counts may be omitted from this report. The candidate may then respond in writing to the department chair (or dean in an undepartmentalized school or college) within seven calendar days." The disagreement is when the faculty vote on the candidate should take place. Lea thought the code was clear that faculty vote at the time of the discussion. Jack thought that the faculty voted after the candidate had reviewed the remarks of faculty (summarized in a letter written by the director) and made a response.
5. She spent a fair amount of time discussing her philosophy of the role of Faculty Council and the importance of good communication between us and both administration as well as faculty/programs. Her view of policies is that they reflect trust. In other words, where you leave discretion indicates where you are willing to trust others to do the "right thing."
6. Ideas that emerged:
 - a. We might consider meeting with Directors (and program faculty?) to begin building a better understanding about their P&T criteria, and to give them a chance to understand our role in the process. We need to discuss more openly with directors and the assembly the information we need to be able to make an informed decision about P&T. We need to talk about what our standards are and why and how standards may shift over time. Lea suggested that the Faculty Council has to be "rational" in its judgments and must have reasons. The Faculty Council shouldn't merely be a rubber stamp, approving the decisions of lower levels.
 - b. We might communicate the Chairs the importance of writing letters that do a better job of communicating more of the context that surrounds various candidate's files. We face the challenge of not being knowledgeable about specific disciplinary areas. For example, letters could do more to communicate information regarding where the program is in its development (mature, level of service, teaching loads) that influence scholarly expectations, what kind of research is valued in the field, how the candidate's research fits into the larger field-context, etc. These letters will help us, administration at UWT and in Seattle in making better, well-informed decisions about P&T cases. Directors and committees need to make sure that they write letters within context of the criteria so it is clearer what the work of the faculty member has been.

- c. Lea suggested that we might want to talk to Doug Wadden & ? about the new legislative initiative related to performance contracts and what kinds of campus-wide metrics might better suit our campus (vs. Seattle.)