

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Oct. 20, 2011

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)

Brad Barry (BB)

Jen Ciaccio (JC)

Ami Comeford (AC)

Rob Cowan (RC)

Varlo Davenport (VD)

John Goldhardt (JG)

Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)

Dianne Hirning (DH)

Jie Liu (JL)

Russ Ross (RR)

Matt Smith-Lahrman (MS)

Betty Stokes Crane (BSC)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

PA: I want to spend most of this meeting on post-tenure review (PTR), but before we do that: DH, did you have a chance to discover anything about retiring faculty?

DH: No, I've been working on PTR as well as my regular job. But it's on my radar of things to do.

PA: I sent an e-mail to Munir; we'd do well to hear from him about the electronic portfolio process. We've gotten feedback from divisions, but if there's anyone in your area going through the process, find out their experiences and we can evaluate them at the end of this semester and see how it's working. I talked to Donna Dillingham-Evans and passed on the information from the Fine Arts person going through as well as the faculty that are trying to review the portfolios; Becky said she'd be happy to meet and discuss things with anyone that needs it. We'd like to hear about people having positive experiences on both ends (entering data plus reviewing it), so please poll your constituents.

DW: Campus Tech came out with a statement about e-portfolios and found them very problematic. My suggestion is to go to your national organizations and send out a message on their network and ask about schools that have had this and see what their recommendations are.

PA: That's a good idea. BB, you're working on updating our documents?

BB: Yes.

PA: In addition to what's there: traditionally, Best Practices has been something that Faculty Senate has handled, but that's not in our current documents, so we need to add that. Two years ago there was an FSEC member on that committee, too...

JC & BB: We are, too.

PA: Our Constitution and by-laws should reflect that. Also, I spoke to Donna with regard to policies and what goes into deciding what needs revision. A lot of what is being revised right now is being done for accreditation; currently, PTR is also being revised at the Board of Regents level, which is what's motivating us to work on ours. If we don't police ourselves, they'll do it for us, so it's better for us to have our own policy and have a say in the process. If Faculty Senate wants a policy revised, there's room for that.

MS: But when?

RC: There's some reverse-psychology here, telling us to devise something or they will, but what if they give us a policy and we say no?

PA: The Board of Regents hasn't said that.

DW: If the Board of Regents is developing a policy, but we put one forward, they could end up adopting much of ours, so we'd have a contributory role.

MS: But that never ends—it's always set up so that we don't have an angle in.

PA: What would be a better way?

MS: I don't know.

DW: Look, the Board of Regents' policy has to be general because of the diversity of schools in Utah. Ours has to be specific to us yet within that broad policy; theirs isn't a dictatorial policy.

MS: For instance, it'd be nice to work on, say, the Appeals committee policy.

RC: In other words, make new policies rather than revise old ones.

BB: Are you asking about when we set our own agenda, regardless of the issue?

PA: I think that's open—if there's a concern, bring it up and if you can address it and present solutions, we can be proactive.

BB: Is it a matter of whomever is drafting language?

PA: Maybe communicate with us (PA and AC) as leadership and we can facilitate it.

MS: So I would draft a policy and you'd put it on the agenda for an FSEC meeting?

PA: I want us to be proactive.

DH: I talked to Martha about this: even though the Board of Regents is working on this, and we work on ours, it doesn't also mean that we can't simultaneously work on another policy—we're not limited that way. My impression is that administration welcomes faculty input in terms of revision and creation of policy.

MS: But when do we have time to do that?

PA: If it's brought up during a meeting, it's difficult to address because I already have an agenda for the week. Having said that: DW, DH, and VD have agreed to work as a subcommittee on the PTR policy. I feel it's strongest if we as a body say "this is what we'd like to see" more than a group of individual comments. So I'll turn the rest of the time over to that subcommittee for the draft.

DW: We've collected faculty input, which I've handed out, except for Matt's comments.

DH: Also, VD put together a list of questions that compile the concerns we saw emerge from the various e-mails.

DW: Please see the document starting with "Intro" at top—that's [the American Association of University Professors \(AAUP\) document](#). The link I sent out yesterday takes you to this plus other information related to it. It sets the philosophy, criteria, and procedures for PTR and articulates it very well. Personally, I see no need to re-create the wheel, but just extract the language from this that best fits DSC. I can go through this, and I have copious notes, but by giving this to you, you can read it yourselves. Just above "Definition of Terms" is a statement that administration is not to use PTR as punishment.

PA: Also, it's not a re-evaluation of tenure.

DW: The "Continuing Status/PTR" section, which Martha is working on, suggests that PTR be overseen by the RTP committee, but I reject that because RTP is an extension of administration: they report to administration. PTR has to be sustained solely by faculty, and the information generated and procedures undertaken never goes in front of administration.

DH: I don't think that was the intention by doing it in the Spring.

DW: But it's out of faculty control in RTP. Plus, it doubles RTP's workload.

BSC: They'd have to get extra compensation for that work.

DW: It's the individual departments that are best suited to help faculty in their own departments because people from outside that department aren't qualified to assess people in other fields.

PA: But personal vendettas need to be avoided, too.

DW: Yes, and AAUP addresses that. We all need to read it and think about it. A drawback that Martha pointed out that is valid is that not all departments are very large—in those cases, in my opinion, you draw on willing volunteers from related fields. For example, in Communications, we might ask English to help us rather than, say, Health. Nonetheless, it's populated by faculty members. If a department does have enough members, they should make up the majority of a PTR committee, with a minority of outside people for balance and to avoid within-department vendettas.

DH: What about having it be at the division-level rather than department-level?

DW: It still boils down to content experts.

DH: Well, for those smaller departments, you could draw in from its division.

DW: Sure, but I'd hate to set it up that way for everyone—some departments are big enough to be divisions themselves!

MS: You have to worry about workload again—there'd have to be a rotation.

DW: That's solvable, but I agree. But again, we're considering, as AAUP suggests, a 4-5 year period between PTRs. They do talk about piggybacking PTR and RTP for faculty moving from associate to full professor. But it all has to be by colleagues/faculty. If a faculty member refuses to change after a PTR, *then* it goes to administration, *not* as a recommendation, but just as a packet of information; a recommendation is what RTP would do. Information can never be used punitively.

JC: Then what's the purpose of the review?

MS: Faculty development.

DW: Yes. This puts the onus of responsibility for peer review to be more professional, and it can't be a "good-ol'-boy" system, which is kind of what it's been in the past.

BSC: In this policy, the one submitted for review, it talks about rank increase or salary recommendations. If this is within a division, are we just saying "we want to retain this person"? How does salary get decided?

DW: PTR *only* identifies deficiencies and suggests ways to overcome them. There's already a policy for dealing with a blatant act of malfeasance.

BSC: If we're putting this at the division level, it addresses the salary increase.

DH: Yes, and has a recommendation from a dean, but that needs clarification—either a recommendation for a salary increase, or a general recommendation of retention.

DW: Deans and the highest levels of administration don't see PTR material.

BSC: I'm talking about part F—that may need to be struck from this policy. What is the recommendation of?

DW: Not of salary.

BSC: OK, then it's about retention only, which I support, but then this statement shouldn't be in the policy.

DH: We don't want a 2% raise?

DW: Martha's trying to marry two policies together here, and that's producing this issue.

MS: Raises should not be connected to PTR.

DW: PTR makes no recommendation other than "you need to address this deficiency."

RC: That cannot be connected to salary. So the carrot just disappeared, with no raise.

VD: But so did the stick.

JC: But the stick is there: it says that if you don't rectify the deficiency, we have to turn over our information to administration. That's a recommendation of "we have a problem with this person."

DH: I thought about that, too, and I thought that the only way it wouldn't be punitive is if they don't forward *any* PTR evaluation stuff anywhere, ever, and if administration wants to look for cause, they can only use the stuff they already have: portfolios, the usual evaluations, etc.

PA: I don't know how many of you had a chance to look at the link I sent earlier today, but it includes PTR policies from a few other schools. As we look into these questions, we should look at these other models.

DW: One of the things I handed out is the University of Utah's policy.

DH: The language here can help us.

PA: How does this compare to what we've been discussing?

MS: It says right on the first page that they have to make a recommendation.

DW: Let me read something from the AAUP document. JC has a valid concern about the use of the information generated in a PTR. (Reads from document). The expectation is that once you have tenure, you sustain the level of excellence that got you tenure, but a demonstration by someone that they're unwilling to perform at that level, they must be given a faculty-controlled opportunity to change. If the person chooses not to perform, *then* it's an abrogation of their responsibility and the procedure. Administration can do whatever they want with the information: decide to do nothing, to fire the faculty member, etc. and start that appeals process, but *not* immediately dismiss.

PA: Our draft says it's not a duplication of the tenure process, but section 2 describes the same process of portfolios, etc. for RTP.

DH: Yes, that's what they're doing.

PA: But it's not supposed to be.

DW: PTR isn't designed for a person to generate support for tenure; it's for others to generate support for a faculty member with a deficiency. We all probably know people on campus that need support, but those people are reluctant to adopt a change because of a lack of a policy. Only if the person decides that they don't want to be a professional, then action has to be taken.

BB: When does it go to a dean?

DW: We can put that into the policy.

VD: Is there a "nuclear option"?

DW: We can have that in there or not. AAUP suggests yes, or else you'd have a toothless policy.

DH: In section D(i) of Martha's document, it says that if the review is unfavorable, the person, working with the department chair and associate dean (we'd have to get rid of administration's role here) shall concoct a plan that *may* include another review before the usual five year period. I read that as: who gets to decide if/when that

review would be sooner than five years? If a plan for overcoming the deficiency has been worked out, do they have another five years before another review?

DW: We'd have to address that in the policy's language. We could say it's a one year thing, with financial support from administration.

JC: So right now, a tenured faculty member still has to get student, supervisor, peer, etc. evaluations —so what's different about what has to be done for PTR that isn't already being done? Is it just "here's the agglomeration of everything you've done?"

DW: Right now, there simply isn't a policy to deal with someone exhibiting a deficiency. If it's a tenured faculty member, administration doesn't have a position yet unless they can prove...we'd have to get a copy of their causality policy.

BB: They may not have one.

DH: I'll look for it in the policies, if I find it, I'll e-mail it out to everyone.

DW: Without seeing one, it's an arbitrary process.

JC: But right now, if all your evaluations are terrible, administration can't step in?

PA: No, that's causation.

JC: Then what does PTR do? It should never, ever go to administration. But I'm still not clear on what PTR does that isn't covered by RTP.

MS: It is redundant.

DW: But it's controlled by faculty, not administration.

JC: Is it just a mechanism for providing money to go to a conference? And isn't discovering and dealing with deficiencies part of supervisor evaluations?

PA: This would make things uniform across campus.

DW: No one's feet are held to the fire right now...

DH: But right now, if you're not tenured, and not asking your supervisor for evaluations—that's a requirement! But after tenure, I don't know that there's any requirement for continuing evaluation.

DW: If administration gets a packet of bad evaluations, they don't say "here's some problems; let's help him/her fix those," but that *is* what faculty would do in a PTR process.

JC: But the policy draft we have doesn't do that at all.

DW: I agree—what Martha put together doesn't do what we or AAUP want.

VD: What if, given that, we have a colleague that reaches that point: at that first step, administration refers them to the PTR committee *for* that assistance.

BB: And that committee is only created when a situation arises.

DW: But it's still under administration's control—they are the ones that get to decide if a deficiency has been fixed.

VD: But I'm talking about keeping that colleague's support by making administration's first step turn it *back* over to faculty to get the member the help s/he needs.

DW: What if administration wants to dismiss the person and doesn't make the recommendation back to faculty?

MS: So instead of a standing PTR committee every five years...

BB: Well, it could be every five years but 98% of people would be fine; only for the other 2% would another committee have to be assembled.

BSC: Then the name PTR is misleading. We already have Faculty Development committee. But I like the idea.

DW: AAUP notes that most schools have struggled with the name, but it's gained so much parlance that they recommend using PTR.

JC: I think at a large number of colleges, once you're tenured, no one looks at you again. But we're different and we're constantly being looked at.

DH: I want to create a reply to this policy from the Faculty Senate. I can put things together based on what we've discussed today and send it out to FSEC to review. Basically, what I'm getting is that we need to rewrite it at a department level. We're not going to get away from needing a PTR policy.

JC: But what can't it just be using the evaluations we already use?

RR: But the Board of Regents' policy *will* involve administration.

DH: And administration has to worry about accreditation.

RR: PA mentioned the new requirement about the new portfolio every six years—there's a ratcheting process of evaluations, portfolios on schedules, etc.

JC: But why do we have to have portfolio review?

BB: Probably for accreditation.

MS: The Board of Regents won't like your idea, VD—they'll want regular reviews.

RR: But rather than uniformly increase the load...

DW: PTR isn't yearly; it's every five years to avoid the occasionally crappy review. Over five years, the deficiency can be easily identified as a recurring event.

PA: I propose that we read all of these documents, and that will help us better understand these issues. They've given a deadline for feedback on this of Nov. 5; our next meeting is Nov. 3, so there's still some time to keep giving feedback. I know this is a lot of material, but if we can find time to work through these models, it'd be helpful.

DH: I'll send out an e-mail of the biggest issues to get us started.

DW: Look at page 8 of the AAUP document: one of our decisions has to be fueled by how specific it is to DSC. Halfway through paragraph 3. We have to think about who we are as an institution and adjust the policy accordingly.

PA: RR brings up a good point that we're worrying a lot about things we cannot control, like accreditation.

DH: AAUP is concerned that PTR affects each professor's academic freedom.

PA: We need to figure out the content that will be most friendly to *our* academic freedoms, so we don't require a new portfolio, etc.

JC: But the question remains: what is getting reviewed?

PA: These documents will help us understand that.

DW: We have no choice about creating a policy; only in how to word it.

PA: Our next meeting is a general meeting, so spread the word to get comments. FSEC won't get back to this until our Nov. 3 meeting.