

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Nov. 3, 2011

In attendance:

Paul Abegg (PA)

Brad Barry (BB)

Jen Ciaccio (JC)

Ami Comeford (AC)

Rob Cowan (RC)

Varlo Davenport (VD)

John Goldhardt (JG)

Jie Liu (JL)

Jack Lounsbury (JL)

Russ Ross (RR)

Matt Smith-Lahrman (MS)

Betty Stokes Crane (BSC)

Kyle Wells (KW)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

Guest Appearances:

Pam Montralolo (PM)

Martha Talman (MT)

NOTE: These minutes were transcribed from a recording of the meeting; the secretary (Jerry Harris) was away at a conference. He has attempted to attribute material to the correct people, but there may be errors. Unidentified speakers are designated "XX" below.

PA: I want to thank MT for being here—is Pam coming?

MT: Last I heard, yes.

PA: I just sent an e-mail a couple hours ago saying the subcommittee has done some work and we could talk about it in the last half of today's meeting. And thank you to the post-tenure review (PTR) subcommittee for all your time and effort. We're making great progress and it's great to see everyone working together to create something we're happy with. The timeline AC sent out is from today until the 23rd when we send this out to the Academic President's office. Does anyone have anything else before we turn time over to the subcommittee? (No.) In the interest of fitting what we need to do in the time frame of this meeting, let's keep our comments general and concise and hit points that need to be addressed so we can cover everything.

DW: VD and I got together and worked on this (DH is out of town) yesterday. We looked at a number of policies from other schools: USU's was too parsimonious, U of U's is too expansive, but U CO Boulder has a workable, applicable policy and that's what I've passed around. We're adjusting language there to better fit DSC, but it seemed to us the most efficient way to move forward rather than line-by-line creating something new. This has been in place at UC Boulder since 2006; this is the most recent version of it. That's some history about it. Rather than go through this sentence-by-sentence, I think this was made available to everyone, so if you have questions, VD and I can address points.

PA: I liked in the document that went out yesterday—there were concerns of duplication with the faculty dismissal policy already in existence; Iowa State had good wording in theirs (reads from that document). It's a concise way of saying that this is a separate issue, and part of what I hope MT will address is where our dismissal policy is.

MT: We call it "Faculty Tenure," and it's the Board of Regents' policy; a new one will be forthcoming in a week or two.

PA: So I don't think we need to address that in this policy, but Iowa State's wording about how this isn't to hinder academic freedom is good.

MT: That's in the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities already, too. The only thing I'm worried about is #3 under the policy (reads)—that's not going to fly with the AG's office, that each department develops their own policy that isn't approved or overseen by anyone. We'll have to come up with a standardized policy that may be able to be customized for each department or unit.

XX: Read on—the next page talks about the development of coaching programs for each department.

MT: Right, but that's not the procedure appropriate for peer evaluation. That has to be more standardized. Also, we have departments with only one faculty member, or no women, or whatever—there has to be a balance for reviews. DSC isn't mature enough in terms of tenured faculty in certain fields, particularly in terms of women and minorities, so this opens us up for problems.

PA: A typographical thing—we should be consistent in referring to department or...

DW: They use "primary unit."

MT: Fine, but it *can't* be the "primary unit" is the point. In your department, we don't have any tenured females, so the first one going under review won't be reviewed by other females, and we can't do that. People can sue for that reason.

DW: Then we go to the division.

MT: Yes, that's my point. I think only two departments are big enough and have enough diversity right now.

PA: So we can specify having cross representation.

MS: Can we say it's *desirable* at the departmental level but if that's not possible it goes to some other level...?

MT: I don't know, but I think you have to come up with a standard, myself. We can always change it down the line when departments are big enough; policies aren't written in stone.

KW: Question: I feel a little lost—this one was written and is under review; then *this* was written, and I'm looking at these two policies. This one has upside potential and requires less work, less restrictions, and then I'm given *this*...why are we even debating this?

MT: Because some people don't want to be reviewed and don't want administration involved in the review.

KW: No, no—both of them require review, but *this* one requires a lot *less* review and has upside potential, and a lot better feedback, but this other one...

VD: The primary thing that that does is to place PTR at the department level. Great pains were taken so that it's *not* an administrative tool because there are already administrative tools in place for dismissal of faculty. It places the burden of work on the department chairs.

MT: ...who already aren't functioning because they have too much to do, but that's another story.

XX: But they're in the logical position to make a decision.

MT: But you have untenured department chairs who would make decisions about tenured faculty.

DW: No, they're not. The policy says that the chair does not participate in PTR—s/he only charges the committee.

VD: They participate in annual review, and a negative annual review—there's a procedure laid out for how an annual review should occur.

MT: In here?

VD: Yes.

MT: We have to take that out because there's a separate evaluation policy for all faculty and we can't duplicate that. I only just now got this to look at, but here's what I need to know from you guys: you want it *only* under faculty control and not to go to administration. Is that a consensus? Because KW seems to imply otherwise. Let me tell you the cost of that: the 2% raise. Is the entire faculty OK with that?

JC: That's something that needs to be brought up.

VD: That was the consensus at our last meeting.

MT: And I'm fine with that, but I'm concerned about that for you guys; it's the only raise you'll ever get, other than cost-of-living, from the legislature.

VD: No, once you go through this document, there are a number of things being raised that are addressed here. There is a recognized need for other policy issues, one of which is we're asking faculty members to be evaluated, but there is no objective yardstick.

MT: That's always the case. We need that for RTP, too.

VD: And we want to create one, so we're asking for that process to be put in place, and it presumes in here that it *is* in place so that we can say "OK, you have these job responsibilities, you did these well, etc."—so we have a yardstick.

MT: And that was presumed when we passed the last policy, and it was put on the deans and departments to develop, but they haven't even settled what the terminal degrees are in each field.

VD: The other thing that we have in here is the need for a merit pay and reward policy that is not tied to PTR and which is intended to improve teaching.

MT: Well, I agree with that, but I can tell you right now that the college isn't going to pass that anytime soon. We're in expansion mode, not taking care of...

DW: Then why are we developing this policy in the first place if there's a prediction that the college will reject it?

MT: No, they're not going to reject the policy—well, there's always the prediction that they will change things; it's not set in stone. But the purpose of this PTR policy is three- or fourfold. First, to get out in front of the legislature, some of whom are trying to abolish tenure. Second is accreditation—it's demanded and we've never done it, and depts. going through specific accreditations know that. There was no intent on the part of administration—they have the tools to take care of things if they want to. The issue was to show that something was in place, and my preference was to give faculty a reward—not merit pay, because our Board of Trustees will never approve that while we're in expansion mode; we'll stay in equity, and right now everyone is over 100%. But if the faculty want to forego the 2%, I'm fine with that.

PA: Well, we need to discuss that. The caution was that it'd be connected to maintaining quality.

VD: The other issue we were dealing with was: if PTR is going to potentially go to administration for consideration of merit increase, then they should have access to every other review also.

MT: They already do.

VD: But here we're saying that because PTR is intended to improve teaching, it's a confidential document that stays in the department.

MT: May I ask why this is such a concern?

DW: Because the information could be used in a punitive fashion by administration.

MT: But I'm not sure that's true, or any more true than it would be without the document. So what you have is accessibility to syllabi, other evaluations, etc., which they already have.

DW: That's fine, but the way it's employed in PTR is to assist a faculty member to address weakness in teaching *only*.

MT: Why? We don't hire people to just be teachers; they hold office hours, do co-curricular activities.

DW: Then I'll rephrase: anything we use as criteria for professional performance—service to the college, the community, etc.,

MT: Scholarly endeavors.

DW: Yes, creative endeavors—if a weakness is noted in any of those, and administration learns of it, the potential exists now to make decisions that create more negative, adversarial information.

MT: I don't think that's true. I mean, first of all they'd still have to have cause to do anything—sanction, dismiss, etc.

DW: But it's a building block for that cause.

MT: But so is *anything* we do every day in every other evaluation.

DW: But if we do positive things, they don't use it.

MT: OK, so if someone gets a negative review because they're not meeting their professional responsibilities—do you think administration doesn't know about it because it's been compiled in one place? Trust me, they already know.

XX: Then why are we doing this in the first place?

MT: Because we have to codify the process for external people.

XX: Why can't they just codify it themselves?

MT: Because we have shared governance and faculty should have first vote on other faculty members—peers should have the first role. We could make it a totally administrative review that they could shove down our throats, but that isn't what the college is about.

PA: So the difference is that this is peer originated.

VD: Yes.

MT: I just thought that going to that step—believe me, there's no new news; they're not looking for anything to get rid of anyone. It costs a lot to hire someone new, so they're not looking to do that, especially for tenured faculty. The whole attitude of "they're out to get us"—policies are not meant to do that; they're meant to put a standard out there so that we know what to reach for, what's expected of us. I find it strange that people in education that making a living in education assessing other educators harshly refuse to be evaluated themselves. And I get that tenured faculty think they're special, and they are—they've achieved something important. But it doesn't mean they're not employees with responsibilities, and they're not free agents all of a sudden.

VD: That thought never crossed my mind.

MT: Then why don't you want administration involved in a process of review?

VD: They *are* involved in the review process—it has to do with what the function of PTR is.

MT: We look at the whole RTP process as developmental—that's how that policy is written and why we have division participation.

VD: OK, but as defined by almost everywhere, PTR is *by* faculty *for* faculty to police themselves.

MT: That's a frequent, but not universal, definition. But it's at a cost, and I think *all* faculty members have the right to say they don't want that increase.

VD: Well, if that's the thing—we did talk about this in a smaller meeting, and my suggestion was let's develop this policy and put it forward with two options and let faculty vote on it.

MT: And I'm fine with that; I just don't think they'll like giving up the 2%.

XX: I think before we take that out, that has to be brought up to faculty.

MT: The other concerns about academic units is just wording, and we can work on that. I just don't think it's fair to assume merit pay is forthcoming.

VD: It wasn't; this is just something that needs to be worked on and developed.

MT: We have other, higher needs, such as raising adjunct pay, maintaining equity, expanding programs and baccalaureate offerings—whether I agree with those or not, those are the priorities.

XX: Maybe I'm not understanding this that well, but this felt like there were a lot more sticks and no carrots in this.

MT: Well the sticks were done by other faculty, so that's OK. (Laughter)

VD: The difference in *this* is: I'm not going to be put in the position where I, were I in your faculty, say KW deserves a raise or not; instead, the department chair is in that position with the info s/he is given. Let's say that we three are your committee, and in the end we give a review that would *not* make you eligible for merit pay. That doesn't help collegiality.

MT: But how will that help collegiality if you're saying that they need to develop anyway?/

DW: They need to develop because it's a supportive measure, not punitive, but to increase overall professionalism in our colleagues.

MT: But VD has a valid point. But that's why we took it out of the individual department level—so it wouldn't be that. Right now we *have* people voting on raises for rank advancement. But by separating it to division or college level—if you want to institute another *layer* of PTR that has departmental interface *before* the other layers, we can link the two.

VD: And if I understand that correctly, then that's in here.

MT: No, because it never goes in front of another committee.

XX: But it says here that the committee should be made of three tenured faculty member. It's still faculty reviewing faculty.

VD: Yes, but not deciding on raises.

MT: He's talking about separating out the money part of it, which I think is important if it's at the departmental level. I might recommend that PTR should be separate from RTP and made up of tenured faculty. I'm not totally comfortable with assistant professors voting on that, but there was some concern about having yet another committee.

VD: The other thing here is: the PTR form at the very end—it bears looking at. It lays out what that committee would be looking for.

MT: It could still be this.

VD: This is a process.

MT: But I think there's a way to merge these two ideas.

VD: I think so, too. There was some noise about separating PTR from RTP is a good idea.

MT: Right, and it's one that I wanted. Now that PA and I will be working on procedures for elections so that we don't get three people from one department on the committee, etc.—that can't be in policy because we're changing too fast organizationally, but it could be a procedure. We could look at it every year to make sure it's equitable. I think that's great if you want to have department review first—it's another layer of work, but remember that *all* faculty will have to do a portfolio anyway—that's an accreditative standard, so there's nothing that administration can't get to anyway.

DW: But PTR doesn't review portfolios.

MT: Yes it does.

DW: No.

MT: So you're just going to talk? It doesn't review evaluations?

DW: No. There are a number of reviews going on. For instance, it says here a "triggered review" because of a deficiency noted in the otherwise professional components—

JC: I like that even less than PTR.

MT: Me, too. A lot of colleges have that, and I didn't like it so I didn't put it in because then PTR is the stick and administration should be handling their own issues.

DW: But it's not a stick.

MT: To me it would be.

JC: It would be to me, too.

RC: It's a stick. If you pass, then there's no need to go into great detail—

MT: But what if there's a deficiency?

RC: If there's a deficiency, then there should be some more work put in to correct it.

VD: Process-wise—I think to some degree we're talking without having reviewed this; process-wise, what we're looking at is: every year, the chair (primary unit administrator) sits down with each faculty member and says "this is what we want you to accomplish this year". At the end of the year, the chair sits down with the faculty member and say "yes, you accomplished this, and here's the plan for next year." This happens every year. If one of those reviews reveals something, or a consistent pattern emerges where a faculty member needs help, that triggers a PTR review that would not otherwise happen *except* on a five-year cycle. That way, if a problem develops, it can be identified quicker than five years and the PTR committee can come in as a *support* mechanism to help identify a problem and provide resources to overcome it.

XX: But that's already kind of in here, right?

MT: What we're doing here is merging something. Let's say there's someone that is deficient in some way. What happens is that they have to take care of it via administration because we don't have a PTR policy in place. So if someone tenured stopped showing up for classes or whatever, they have to go through their evaluative procedures. I like the idea of developing the mentor relationship; I don't like the idea of using PTR as the remedial process because that doesn't help with collegiality—it brings in three people to tell you how to do something better.

VD: PTR is there to identify *how* to help.

MT: But that isn't how a triggered review will feel.

JC: I think the triggered review—I could see if everyone is wonderful, it's wonderful—I could see this used a means of harassment.

MT: I can also see when department *chairs* are deficient, which happens more often than not.

VD: It helps if untenured faculty aren't chairs.

MT: Or even non-full-time. (Laughter.) But that won't change—it's up to departments to decide who'll be chair. I get what you're saying about collegiality, but I think the triggered review is in absolute opposition to that as well. If the mentoring were available separately, it could accomplish both. But the triggered review should be administrative—if administration wants to do something to you because you've done something bad, they need to do it and not use this.

DW: That's administrative language; PTR language says it's is supportive throughout the process.

MT: And we say that in RTP, too.

DW: But it doesn't say you did something *wrong*; just didn't do something at an expected level of professionalism.

MT: Well, OK—that's just my way of looking at it—so they didn't meet their goals for the year. I just don't know if referring them to this peer group for action *after* administration has determined—department chairs are administrative, and using them to refer someone to a PTR committee is inappropriate.

VD: This may be off the subject, but: the other issue in this is that it *does* become the chair's discretion whether or not the behavior is serious enough to trigger.

MT: The deans will have a big say in that—that's how chairs work on this campus. Our chairs are not independent like at a big university.

JC: So you're making it one person's decision whether or not you get reviewed.

VD: On an annual basis, this should be happening anyway.

JC: But this triggered review is by the one person who maybe you had a beef with, you failed their kid, etc.

VD: If that happens, then they shouldn't take that to administration by statute; what they need to do is take it to a committee of peers that the faculty member and chairman have determined, and the chair is *not* part of that committee—that's where we get away from personality issues, ideally.

JC: But *triggering* the review is still giving someone a heart attack because they've got a review triggered. If the chair is choosing the people who are doing the committee—

VD: No, it's the chair *and* the faculty member.

MT: I think that bringing in that part of it—it would be so much better for our institution to have a scheduled review and that's all, and we deal with other stuff separately. That's a better stepping stone based on the nature of our departments.

VD: Question: I strongly feel we need a more objective yardstick by which to measure ourselves. The default, then, for a chair, if someone is having a challenge, s/he has to go to administration.

MT: No, absolutely not; there are all kinds of things in between. We always prefer informal measures to formal ones.

VD: So if that's the case, then anything during that five-year period would be negotiated between the faculty member and their administrator, but once every five years they go through a bigger process.

MT: So you know, it was kind of unfair to send this out on its own because there's a new faculty evaluation policy coming because it has to be updated—we keep getting dinged on that by accreditation, and the Board of Regents just passed a new policy that all faculty have to be evaluated every year for competence by supervisors; we've talked about that. Now, I'm hoping that's a fairly simple form. There is that process in place that there will be more feedback in place. Also, all classes will be evaluated every semester by students because by saying that tenured faculty don't have to be reviewed takes a voice away from students. So there will be more feedback there; I think faculty have resources if they think they're being treated unfairly—they can file a grievance, and a committee is formed where faculty and administration each choose some members. I really like some of what you have here in the local-ness, but I hate to give up the 2% because it may never be there again.

AC: When talking that the powers that be won't approve a merit policy—what are the chances that the raise built into this will be accepted?

MT: I have a guarantee from academic vice-president. My policy was approved by Donna.

AC: OK, that helps us. Merit won't go through unless it's built into this policy. Is that because it doesn't have to go through the Board of Trustees?

MT: No, it does, but merit pay opens up a whole 'nother ball of wax.

PM: We're not at the point where we can give merit pay—lots of groundwork and policies have to be in place before merit can be determined.

MT: I've been at an institution where every year I got an 11% raise merit pay, so I get the value of it, but it was a really nasty, un-collegial process.

XX: I'm all for the 2% raise, but if you pass review, you get the 2% based on available funding.

MT: Yes, we always have to put that in there. Administration is committed to doing it. PM is the reason we get the 2% for rank advancement, and the same with equity.

PM: We're at about 93%, but in the past few years because we've gotten no money from the legislature, so it's down to 90%.

MT: I feel totally safe that as long as they fund rank advancement, they'll fund this.

XX: I have no problems with this because I feel it is *my* responsibility to maintain reasons for employment—I feel I'm valued on the inside as I am on the outside. I wouldn't want to be on a committee that evaluates 20% of the faculty every year.

MT: No, it wouldn't be 20%; just tenured full professors. If you guys want a new committee, I'd love it to be full tenured professors that are not up for review while serving.

XX: The tenure committee makes a “yes or no” recommendation; I see the PTR committee as providing feedback. If this goes through, I can see release time requests for being on this committee.

MT: But it would only be in the Spring, and no one can serve on both RTP and PTR.

PA: We need to wrap this up because some people need to get to class.

AC: I think that in terms of this discussion, it seems that these are the issues we need to discuss: (1) the pay issue and the levels of faculty support and evaluations that provide the levels *before* it gets sent to the administrative level and localizing the evaluations as much as possible so people outside the area aren't trying to evaluate people inappropriately.

MT: When appropriate and possible.

AC: Yes, that'd be ideal, but this can be flexible enough as we grow to cover—

MT: And we can change it.

AC: Sure, but that seems to need to be part of the discussion. (2) Separating RTP from PTR, and finding ways to standardize evaluation measures.

DW: I'd like to add thinking about a role responsibility as a teaching individual—something that creates a map for the upcoming year.

MT: I had that in there in terms of role statements, because most colleges do, but Donna had me take it out because we're not in a position to do that. It would really help, but we can do that separately and not as part of a policy. But it would really help to have in writing an agreement and we can do it quickly and it would be so positive on both sides.

VD: But doesn't that *have* to happen in order to review someone—to have a yardstick?

MT: We have a position description. That's what we evaluate them on now for RTP.

PA: OK, did everyone get the e-mail about the meeting next week and then a general meeting on the 17th?

AC: I don't think we have a consensus yet.

VD: Other than to marry these two documents.

MT: Can I work on putting them together for you?

AC: That's what we were going to ask you—if you wouldn't mind meeting and being in dialog with VD, DW, and DH who are our subcommittee members. From our discussion, it looks like there are parts of each document that we can put together that has faculty stamp of approval.

BB: My concern is that the subcommittee hasn't heard the feedback from this body prior to doing that.

MT: Can we meet next week? Individually?

PA: Maybe we can submit comments to them via e-mail now that we have the document in preparation for the meeting on the 10th? (Discussion of meeting times ensues.) I think your point is important and a meeting is important. Let's plan on continuing this discussion on the 10th.

MT: We are under the gun on this, and Faculty Senate has had this for two years...

PA: But there's room to continue this next week—if you have concerns, direct them to the subcommittee.