

# FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

November 4, 2010

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*In attendance:*

*Paul Abegg (PA)*

*Brad Barry (BB)*

*Georgine Bills (GB)*

*Robert Carlson (RC) (for Ed Reber)*

*Jennifer Ciaccio (JC)*

*Varlo Davenport (VD)*

*John Goldhardt (JG)*

*Jerry Harris (sec.) (JH)*

*Dianne Hirning (DH)*

*Jack Lounsbury (JaL)*

*Jie Liu (JiL)*

*Munir Mahmud (MM)*

*Shane Prine (SP)*

*Dennis Wignall (DW)*

DW: You've had a chance to look over the minutes from the last meeting – can we approve them? (JC moves, PA 2<sup>nd</sup>) – any discussion? (no; approved) OK, we have a number of things submitted concerning our colleagues. In order, these are: after the Academic Council meeting on Tuesday, Donna said two things need our attention: (1) post-tenure reviews, which I'm working on; and (2) professional equivalency – what kinds of professional experiences does someone who lacks a terminal degree in their field need to teach – how does it offset the terminal degree? For example, someone with an MS in Communications with experience that would enable them to teach upper level classes. Not from a generalist perspective – this would be different in each field/specialty. This comes so that we can tap into highly skilled members of the community that lack terminal degrees, but we can put them in a tenure-track pipeline.

DH: This isn't intended to apply to new hires when two people are competing for a position?

DW: When we write a policy, we can account for that.

DH: Yesterday we had meeting with the President and Donna, and Donna said that the big push for Ph.D.'s is accreditation – our faculty has to have a certain percentage of Ph.D.'s in the population.

MM: It will be hard to convince the accreditation body of equivalency.

DW: That's why we need the policy.

MM: That won't work with accreditation people – what if we hired *everyone* this way and then say that it is in our policy? This will not hold water with the accreditation body.

DW: Part of the problem is that people without Ph.D.'s are making the decisions about this.

MM: The problem is that we have professionally qualified faculty who are able and willing to teach upper division classes but there seems to be a policy barring them from doing so.

BB: There is something written at the Board of Regents level.

MM: We need to see that in order to be able to address it.

JG: I seem to remember that USU has a "parallel track" (lecturers) that keeps the professional ranks "clean" – they're still hired, but instead of "tenure" they get "continued appointments" (which is semantics). This doesn't require altering faculty policy, but rather creating a separate system.

BB: In order to tackle this, we need to know why the current solution ("teacher of record") doesn't work – why is that not sufficient?

DW: That's a good question, and I don't have an answer. Part of it may be motivation on the part of highly-trained faculty who lack terminal degrees that feel that they're second-class citizens compared to degreed faculty.

BB: But we have such professors in our department that are teaching upper level classes.

SP: My understanding is that the "teacher of record" is for teaching assistants.

DW: Yes, it's a supervisory role.

DH: If I had lots of experience and I needed a "teacher of record," then yeah, that'd invoke those feelings.

DW: But the Board of Regents recognizes a teacher of record. Plus, people in that role aren't in a pipeline for tenure and promotion; if they were to have a way of recognizing that experience, then they would have that avenue. But then it dilutes the "faculty" track.

MM: At Penn State, they have the same thing under a different name – "instructor," "lecturer," etc.

DW: I tried to get this 3 years ago when we were getting titles made, and it kind of disappeared.

RC: There are two issues here: (1) can we have people without terminal degrees in a system, and (2) whether or not that system would satisfy the Board of Regents – that's a separate issue; if such faculty were in a separate system, it would still reinforce the idea of a second-class system.

DW: OK, so if we set a policy that states that X number of years of experience offsets lack of Ph.D., we've made professional decision that they're equivalent – there's no separate track.

JG: Maybe I'm a purist, but I did lots of years in grad school...

JC: It's like a nurse with lots of experience being given equivalency to an MD.

RC: If we came up with a policy we like on our campus, the Board of Regents can still override it.

SP: As can accreditation people. When Communications was looking for someone to teach broadcast media, there weren't any Ph.D.'s in the applicant pool because in that field, someone can make a lot of money without the terminal degree. In an area like that, this issue is more applicable than in others.

PA: In Performing Arts, experience always trumps education.

DW: But we don't have a criterion that addresses that here. If it's a parallel track, maybe that works, but are they in a track for promotion, a tenure-like thing?

MM: That comes with the salary benefits too, yes? The main thing is that we need professionally qualified people to teach in some departments. But we need to see the Board of Regents policy in order to know if there is written policy.

DW: Yes, we need that.

DH: But not just the Board of Regents policy – it's the different schools' accreditation rules – like in Education, they won't have accreditation for their school if they don't have all Ph.D.'s teaching upper level classes!

JG: It sounds like this is needed most in clinical and practicum classes, yes?

SP: These people won't be teaching theoretical classes, just applied classes.

BB: Junior and Senior level classes imply theoretical stuff that experience may not provide.

DW: We can argue whether teaching is for theoretical stuff or practical stuff...

BB: Another way of thinking about the theory issue is pedagogy – for example, if I've been editing professionally for a long time, that doesn't mean I can *teach* it or anything like it, like reading.

DW: Good point.

RC: But in the sciences, *none* of us are taught pedagogy!

DW: Well, we need to address this.

JC: Is there a way to keep it as an exception? That is, most people have terminal degrees, but there can be an exception in some circumstances because not all experience is the same! Let's say someone like Yo-Yo Ma wants to teach cello here – that's different than someone who's simply played for 50 years – there are different amounts of experience but the difference in ability is obvious. I think the theoretical basis is needed to teach practical applications – why is it done this way vs. another way?

PA: But even with Yo-Yo Ma, there's no guarantee he can teach!

DW: New faculty teach lower level classes under the supervision of upper level faculty ("teachers of record").

PA: When some positions are advertised in Performing Arts, ads say "degree or equivalent experience."

JC: So we can't use a set amount of time as a criterion.

PA: Yes.

RC: I don't have problem if we hire people with experience, but only if there are no other applicants that *do* have a terminal degree.

DW: In broadcast, film production, etc., when we search, we just don't find people with terminal degrees because very few get one; they can make more doing the job than by teaching, so there's no reason to get any higher degree.

PA: Some of this has to do with the size of our institution.

DW: You mean other places' faculties are larger so there are more Ph.D.'s in house?

PA: Yes.

JC: What does a "teacher of record" do?

DW: Ostensibly, supervises whomever teaches an upper level class. This would be in a department that has nobody in it that has a degree qualifying him/her to teach a certain kind of class, but the department can assign someone with experience to do it.

SP: Our institution is trying to improve our perception of our value, so we're trying to have more Ph.D.'s for this.

YY: Are there people we'll lose without this?

DW: Well, yes, but it's more an issue with people that have been here a long time but that can't move upward because we're confronted with accreditation in near future. There's increasing pressure to achieve this closer to accreditation. In the interim, there are people who have been teaching upper level classes here now being told they can't.

RC: That seems like relevant professional experience...!

DW: Another way to deal with this is to get people who lack terminal degrees into degree programs. Donna said she didn't care if the person were taking only one class per year; if the person is in a Ph.D. program, they can teach anything they want.

VD: That's the dividing line: if you're not going to get into a program, then we have the lecturer track as the other option.

DW: That seems reasonable.

RC: But there's nowhere around here for someone to *get* Ph.D. Options are limited!

DW: There'd have to be language that said that if you're on a lecturer track, and then later decide to get Ph.D., do your years of experience translate and get applied to RTP when you become degreed faculty?

RC: But that's already a problem because we have people here that taught elsewhere but didn't get full credit for that experience toward RTP when they were hired here.

MM: It was the same at Penn State.

DW: Also, from the Professional Development perspective, we have non-Ph.D. faculty members that seek funds and they get them.

PA: That's because the only criterion for Professional Development funds is being a full-time faculty member.

JC: What would be the benefit of distinguishing "full-time, reduced load" vs. "part time"?

DW: Benefits. My feeling is that if they're here full-time but with a reduced load for a year, they should have reduced benefits.

RC: If we did that, administration will just reclassify all of them as adjuncts.

DW: In Academic Council, it was noted by a few administrators that we're moving in the direction of a 24 model.

RC: I'm teaching more in our new 27 model this year than ever before!

DW: We have here an example of a policy not being met because of budgetary and other contingencies. In Communications, we're holding our class caps tightly – there's pressure to increase them. That's a business model, not a pedagogical model.

MM: But how would this be helped with 0.5 and 0.74 people?

DW: That's a really cheap way of putting qualified people in front of students.

MM: It's designed that way so that the college can save some money since they will not have to pay benefits to those employees.

PA: Isn't it that when the budget allows, those people hired as such can then apply for full time positions?

DW: We'd need to write that into policy.

RC: To add one more thing to this: there's an informal policy for 0.74's: if one gets added at the last minute, current adjuncts are *not* eligible because they're already committed to teach – I heard this happened in Psychology and in English. That undermines the idea of getting the best person for the job.

PA: If that's the case, she's asking us to come up with a policy to regulate that in writing.

BB: It seems like we have two issues here: the 0.5 and 0.74 issue is different from the "separate track" issue. In terms of the other one, there are also two issues: a person about to be hired who lacks a degree *vs.* those *already* hired without terminal degree – do we need two separate policies?

RC: Or provisions?

DW: Very possibly.

MM: Why is it in our policy to begin with that these people can't teach upper level classes? We need access to that policy and reasoning. If we have some *small* percentage of our classes taught by non-Ph.D.'s, would that be a big deal?

DW: There are national guidelines about how to address certain kinds of disciplines, and we can rely on those and they become credible statements, but we need to avoid having different departments functioning under different criteria.

DH: Donna explained that some total percentage has to have Ph.D.'s – different disciplines will have different percentages.

GB: Part of this is of concern to me because it's hanging on our transition from being a community college. But I don't know what the push is to create this now – even if we achieve university status, there'd still be a window in which to deal with this before absolutes came down. It's not a national standard for an institution our size to have X% of Ph.D.'s.

DW: Yes, I'm not sure what the impetus is.

PA: I think it's lots of things – we're on the brink of becoming a university, so they're trying to get this in place.

DW: Yes, so when it comes time to apply for university status, we look like one already.

GB: I agree it's a good idea to move that way; I just don't understand the rigidity because right now it's unenforceable.

DW: It may be an artificial pressure from a range of things perceived. But if we have a flexible policy for each program, we can move forward and there wouldn't be a sufficient counterpoint to reject a policy if faculty support it. ...OK, in last few minutes, a few other things: peer review – please consider the items on the handout and we'll do an e-mail vote on Monday.

JH: The top sheet on the handout lists how to do a peer-review – it's not a ranking number system like student evaluations; the reviewer has to write up something after the review, and the top sheet is the instructions. The second sheet it a list of factors the reviewer should consider while doing a review and writing it up afterward. They are very general in order to not get bogged down by things that apply only to certain kinds of classes, and even of these, some factors may not apply to all classes or at all times in a class.

DW: Also: the Higher Ed program from RC...

RC: The State is trying to improve the status of how education looks in Utah – they want 55% of Utah’s population to have AA degrees or higher by 2020, and do this by outsourcing on-line programs, etc. We’re currently at 34% -- increasing the number by over 50% means a massive influx of adult students, and I don’t know how it would be funded or what the supporting infrastructure would be. Part of this action plan is how to induce those adults to enroll.

DW: Please take a look at this as well.