

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

September 16, 2010

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)

Jie Liu (JiL)

Munir Mahmud (MM)

Dennis Wignall (DW)

DW: Gary Cooper can't make it today, and John Goldhardt had to change some times with Chizu Jaret because she's dealing with students and can't be here either, but I'll represent their sentiments. First, motion to accept minutes: BB moves; JC 2nd; passed. To proceed: Our greatest priority is post-tenure review language & policy development. I've worked on it a bit; here's what I downloaded from HR and used their format.

MM: Quickly: can we introduce new people for those of us who weren't here last time? (done).

DW: OK, so I have some language here taking shape; I borrowed language from other, existing policies, especially from Faculty Development Policy. The review process is quite sophisticated per AAUP. What I wrote can be cross checked with AAUP policy. If we go to the end of the Fall semester and back up to the various other committees, Board of Regents meetings, etc. that it will take to gain acceptance of a new policy, we need to work on this VERY diligently.

PA: There's only one more Board of Regents meeting (Nov. 22) this semester.

DW: If we get it approved up to the Board of Regents, they could approve it at the end of January, and Donna would find that acceptable. But we have lots of pressure to get this done. Again, this is *by faculty for faculty*.

PA: The pressure to get this done quickly is because of accreditation.

DW: And the Board of Regents has a policy that says that all schools will have this policy.

MM: From Business, section 9.2 should say for faculty improvement, not to threaten faculty.

DW: Absolutely. So read this and make comments; we need timelines, who does the reviewing, etc.; this document is just a skeleton that needs your input to flesh it out. I'm looking forward to that because we have good people on this committee. If we don't do this, but administration does, it could end up punitive. We want to address our colleagues in constructive ways so their teaching performance goes up.

PA: Inevitably, this will come up: say a tenured faculty does not respond to whatever this policy says a reviewed faculty member needs to do -- what happens?

DW: It would only be used for dismissal if we adopt the burden of proof of the issue at hand.

PA: But if there's an issue that comes up in an evaluation by a supervisor, by students, etc. and something is drafted to address that, and the faculty member doesn't respond, then isn't it "improve or find another job"?

MM: The consequences would be for faculty to accept the rules – if the teacher goes to a conference, etc. designed to improve their skills, but the faculty member doesn't improve, then that's different than if s/he doesn't even go to the conference at all.

JC: If we can make it so administration is notified of this, but they can't use any findings from the evaluation...!

RC: The best the administration could get is that we recommend that they do "something."

DW: What we're looking at here is that colleagues do a review, here's the options for improvement (the mechanisms), and ensure that money is in place for that support so the faculty member doesn't pay for it him/herself any way; if the reviewed colleague does *not* follow through (doesn't attend, doesn't incorporate the training, etc.) then there has to be a post-training review. There's no timeline in here, but there are faculty who got tenure long ago and they are weak in some areas but there are no mechanisms in place to improve them. Should they be re-reviewed every 2 years...?

VD: What I was thinking is that if there was, for example, a 5 year review, and you pass with flying colors, then there's a 1% raise/benefit, and if you don't, you don't get the benefit.

DW: Interesting...that would be an incentive, but would come with post-training review.

JC: But it would have to be for everyone – you passed, you get the raise; if you didn't pass, you get training and if you pass the *next* year, etc., THEN you get the raise.

DW: I can anticipate that what will come up with that is to see if you're doing the job the school paying you for in the first place; the purpose of the review is to see if there *is* a deficiency.

VD: But if we are supposed to keep development professional, what's the incentive for if you don't?

DH: That was one of my biggest concerns, too. I read up on some other post-tenure policies, and one recurring theme is: here's the policy, you're telling us you want us to do professional development to fix these issues, but where's the money from to pay for this? There's a serious lack of that. Then there was concern that if funding is not there to fix deficiencies, is the policy then being used to weed faculty out? It depends on how administration uses it.

PA: At those places, do they have a professional development budgets?

DH: Yes, but it's decreasing.

DW: Toward the end of what I have here, I look at ways (9.5.2 – by the way, the numbering is irrelevant; ours would be unique) to improve, most of which come out of *current* faculty development language. What we have here is high-powered faculty development, but that itself may have to be reformulated in order to pursue teaching improvement that is specifically monitored. Professional development exists now, but it's optional.

PA: But there's also an option there that activity has been recommended by a supervisor – that's in place.

BB: Is there a problem here that professional development funds would decrease by being pulled away from faculty that *want* to go to a conference to pay for someone that *has* to? It should come from a different place.

PA: Yes, but there's an item in the policy now for supervisor recommendation. I think it'll only diminish funds as faculty continue to increase. The fund hasn't gone up in three years, but it's been spread out in other areas to keep it substantial enough to cover the needs of the faculty. Donna redistributed money from elsewhere to other budgets.

DW: We were paying for nurse re-certification from this fund, but that's not something that the school should pay for because it's not teaching related – the certificate is irrelevant to college. It was a gray area, which is why Donna has re-budgeted things. It's been a struggle.

MM: So if we leave it to administration, and there's a significant increase in those kinds of requests, then money would have to come from elsewhere.

DW: But "redistributed" means some funds for some activities already come from elsewhere.

PA: But funds *are* limited, and we had to deny some requests last year.

DW: There may be a priority issue: if there is a weakness in a tenured faculty member, then fixing that is higher priority than untenured faculty.

RC: That's why having a separate fund is a good idea.

DW: I agree – that's why we need to talk about this!

GB: In the bulleted item on the form with things to do to improve: in my experience, these rarely improve faculty teaching – people learn better by example, so we should have a “Master Teacher”.

DH: What about mentoring? Is that what you're talking about?

GB: Yes.

DH: Then those costs should be in-house.

GB: We can provide tools for new faculty coming on board – I have some new adjuncts that could use some improvement. I'm trying to find ways to improve them, but it's not an easy transition to make – I think during the opening week of the semester, they can be paired with someone for the semester.

DW: That's pre-emptive; on the Faculty Excellence Committee, we deal with post- stuff.

GB: What makes it attractive is that people that agree to be a mentor get special recognition. It's a low-cost way to address the issue.

RC: For many faculty, being sent to a meeting just means no classes for a week and nothing more!

DW: This discussion is excellent – if you would each take a copy of this, add comments, changes, etc.

VD: Question: do we have someone here from Education?

DW: Yes, John Goldhardt.

VD: They may have access to information that will help us organize this.

DH: Education in public school uses mentoring regularly.

BB: Would Master Teachers be tenured?

RC: In our department, we only have one tenured person that could be a Master Teacher!

JC: It doesn't have to be from in department.

DH: We're the first librarians to apply for tenure, so we've had to figure out what to do based on other regular faculty!

DW: That's why a post-tenure review committee should consist of 2-3 people from *within* a department and 1-2 people from outside, so content is addressed as well as teaching techniques.

DH: But in the library, no one is tenured – same as RC was saying. I'd love to have evaluations from English, Communications, etc. but I value the input I get because it helps me become better teacher in a library setting from people that don't teach library studies.

VD: Would it be helpful to involve emeriti?

PA: How many of them are tenured?

DW: I'm not sure that, um, the emeritus process at DSC follows the same rubric as at a Division 1 research school, who are outstanding at both teaching and research. I don't know what it's based on here, but it may be done on a case-by-case basis.

MM: Probably it would be that very senior faculty are under this process, too; what if the senior-most faculty are under this? Who does those reviews? Junior faculty? People from outside?

DH: For review or mentoring?

MM: Both.

DW: A “Master Teacher” could be a fairly new person that just has exemplary skills.

MM: Then who determines that?

DW: Well, we'll have to have a secondary process to assess that.

RC: We can have multiple levels – if mentoring becomes widespread, it will be used on new *and* established faculty.

DW: But for the probationary period...on the RTP committee, this is what interim reviews are for, sodepartment can come up with ways to address weaknesses.

Robert: But that only addresses *when* there's a problem, not mentoring and pre-empting problems.

PA: At larger institutions, there is someone designated to tell someone up for tenure what to do. But that would be under the RTP policy, not this.

VD: So two questions: who does mentoring, and who does the review?

DW: We have to stay limited and specific here: later, the policy could be expanded to include all faculty mentoring.

VD: Would a useful step be for department chairs/deans to identify the best teachers in their departments?

DW: That will create problems and fractioning in a department – I'd hesitate to do that. So it has to be left to the post-tenure review committee that *one* option is to approach someone with the designation of "Master Teacher" (identified from a different process and doesn't talk about pass/fail – just "here's how I approach things") to figure out how to share ideas on the specific weakness area identified. They don't assess the success of that -- that's what the post-review body does. *Then* VD's ideas can be addressed.

VD: What I was talking about was: everyone that passes review gets a "carrot" but not *until* they pass review...?

DW: It does kind of open the door to some competition...

PA: DH, in the models you studied, how common was a reward?

DH: I've not seen that worded into any policies, but that doesn't mean it isn't there.

MM: My point is: the *expectation* is that we do a good teaching job, then if that's lacking, then should I be rewarded for doing my job?

JC: It's post full-professorship, too...this is only full-professors.

DW: You can get tenure but not be promoted... So the point is: this is about tenure, not rank. Tenure is awarded after the probation period because no major weaknesses have been identified. Post-tenure review monitors any diminution of teaching ability/excellence/etc. after tenure has been awarded. So after tenure is awarded, the review is reflective of *emergent* weakness not identified during the probation period.

DH: It would also monitor things like staying current in techniques, technologies, etc. because there are some areas that rely heavily on that. In librarianship, if I'm not current, then I lose the ability to do my job effectively...

DW: This is why we have teachers looking at teaching *and* content people in there doing a review at the same time. The content people would address that kind of thing, and that's offset by the department saying that it may be hard to incorporate such-and-such a technology into this kind of class, etc. I think it's up to the balance between the teaching assessors and content assessors. Modernity in content is always an issue – a faculty member's teaching may be great, but the material may be out of date. Each individual needs to be kept up to date.

BB: Most of this is about pedagogy...is post-tenure review *only* about teaching?

DW: Yes, for accreditation purposes.

VD: I remember something a dean at USU once said: with tenure, you get the right to due process. So what we're really talking about is the "process" in due process.

DW: Yes – the language I put in here, and that from AAUP, says "due process always exists for tenured faculty members, but the burden of proof is always with administration."

VD: OK, so the other half of that is: what is the standard of what to perform to?

DW: Hmmmm...that's a great point!

VD: That's a rubric everyone can be held to across faculty.

JC: So what is the impetus for having this policy?

DW: Accreditation – to get higher ratings in accreditation; the rating is a range and we want to be as high as possible.

RC: This is verification for accreditation people.

DW: Without it, we'd be on probation.

JC: Does accreditation see the actual info on each faculty member that's been reviewed?

PA: No, they just need to see policy in place.

JC: So if 10% went through training, and some of them didn't improve, our accreditation would be revoked?

DW: No, because sanctions will be available, and that's what I'm struggling with here.

VD: But 9.2 says there *are* no sanctions...?!?

PA: That's why we need to revisit the language because at present it sounds like no one will ever be let go. If they're just sitting on their laurels 'til they retire...

DH: I can e-mail out some policies from other schools.

DW: AAUP always says that this kind of policy *cannot* be used punitively, but it contains nothing that says that *colleagues* can't put pressure on colleagues.

JC: That's just asking for problems within a department.

DW: True...

RC: I'm worried that administration would have parallel investigations that would find a way to weed out tenured faculty...

JC: So currently what are grounds for losing tenure?

PA: Doing something illegal.

DW: Illegal & immoral behaviors.

JC: Not a proverbial "you suck as a teacher." So then there *has* to be some sort of policy like this.

PA: That's the driving force behind this -- so faculty rights are protected.

RC: So a teacher is presumed good until administration can demonstrate otherwise.

DW: If a recalcitrant faculty member doesn't do things to address their weaknesses, administration can say they are failing to meet what they were hired to do – based on their not performing. So a post-tenure review identifies a weakness...administration *cannot* use this information. But, what they *can* do is act on the fact that there is a fundamental responsibility of faculty to teach well, and that failure to meet that responsibility is malfeasance and a fire-able offense.

JC: I think that can be addressed like: "Given *two* 'unacceptables,' the faculty member is given a chance to fix the problem(s), but then..."

MM: (people prepare to leave) About the next topic, faculty dues: I talked to the Business division, and they said "why can't we have the list of dues-payers, mail it to everyone, and have people make sure they're on the list?"

DW: We have to avoid any perception that being employed is contingent on paying dues.

MM: Also, during lunches, can't we have the list given to the check-out people?

DW: We did talk about that, and it's not clear that we're policemen, or be able to ask the check-out people to be policemen. Oh, next week is the general faculty meeting: I want to bring to them a vote to increase dues by \$2/pay period (a total of \$8/month). JC 2nd.

GB: That's a huge jump – people already not on board may be less likely to join.

DW: It may or may not be successful, but that's what the general meeting will determine next week. So: is there a vote? (Five people yes.) So after the general meeting, I'll put it to all faculty.