

Faculty Personnel Policy Committee
2009-2010 End of Year Report
Prepared by: Teresa Beck, Chairperson

The FPPC has the responsibility to review faculty personnel policy matters that extend beyond the college, as specified by the ECS, and make appropriate recommendations to the ECS. The Chair of ECS shall convene the committee early in the fall semester each year for election of a chairperson and to specify personnel matters that must be addressed by the committee.

Committee Members: Teresa Beck, Sheila Blackman/fall (Pei-Lan Tsou/winter), Kurt Ellenberger, David Good (Mike Yuhas, Susanne Crampton, Vijay Gondhalekar, Sonia Dalmia/rotation at meetings), Jon Jellema, Paul Jorgensen, Diane Kimoto, Erika King (winter), Gwyn Madden, Linda Masselink, Sandy Miller/fall (Cynthia Mader/winter), Kay Reick, Scott Richardson, and Richard Stoelzel/fall (Jim Goode/winter).

FPPC received the following charges from ECS.

1. Effective Teaching Language

Consider endorsing the proposal from the FTLCAC to revise the personnel policy language regarding "Effective Teaching" at 4.02.9.1.A in the Faculty Handbook and report back the position of the committee to ECS in a manner timely enough to allow UAS action before the end of the 2009 Fall Term. Assist ECS and UAS in engaging faculty members in a campus wide dialogue regarding this proposed revision, if supported.

Committee Action

FPPC along with FTLCAC developed a subgroup that met and revised the "Effective Teaching" language to bring forth to ECS/UAS. This language was approved by UAS at its meeting on March 26, 2009.

2. Tenure/Promotion

Consider the Faculty Handbook language concerning promotions and propose any needed language revisions that both clarify its provisions regarding timing and explanation of procedures for requests for consideration of early tenure or promotion.

Committee Action

The committee has revised the length of years one must be at the rank of Associate Professor before going up for promotion to Full Professor from seven year to six years. Language has been added to clarify that six year must be completed at the rank of Associate Professor, and the candidate applies during their seventh year at the rank of Associate Professor. Revised language is at university counsel and will be presented to ECS in the fall.

While the committee reviewed early tenure and promotion policies at peer institutions, the committee believes the current language is adequate at this time. Prior to considering any further changes, the committee would like data on the issues surrounding the current policy (i.e., the number of faculty applied for early tenure and or early promotion; number granted/denied early tenure and/or early promotion etc.).

3. Personnel Processes Regarding Unit Votes on Personnel Actions and College Personnel Committees' (CPC) Communications With Units Regarding CPC Actions

Consider the provisions of the Faculty Handbook that:

- (1) Determine the impact of the absence from a personnel action of an eligible unit faculty member on the Unit vote and Unit recommendation on the personnel action under review and propose any needed revisions, and
- (2) Govern CPCs' reporting responsibility regarding reporting its actions concerning its review of a unit's personnel recommendations and propose revisions that would provide for appropriate feedback to the units.

Committee Action

(1) The committee took no action and is waiting until the referendum process is completed. Revisions to this language could impact how a quorum is counted. The outcome of the referendum process could also impact policy language that impacts quorum as well, thus it is preferred that this language all be written at the same time.

(2) The committee was unable to get this charge.

4. Graduate Faculty

Prioritize review and respond by making recommendations regarding the personnel policy implications of any proposed policy revisions regarding the qualification standards for faculty who teach graduate courses that are submitted by the Graduate Council, including addressing records of scholarly or creative activity

Committee Action

FPPC reviewed the proposal of qualification standards for faculty who teach graduate courses several times, giving feedback to Mark Luttenton of the Graduate Council. FPPC also invited Mark to its meeting November 24, 2009 to further facilitate the discussion.

5. Full Professor Promotion Reviews

To relieve some of the increasing workload on College Personnel Committees during Winter terms, as well as to create opportunities to honor those newly promoted to full Professor in a timely manner, bring forward recommendations on the following:

- a. Consider moving personnel actions on requests to be promoted to full professor to the fall semester,
- b. Discuss and report on whether full professor reviews should remain a unit and college-level recommendation, and
- c. Using the best practices of peer institutions as a guide, explore the possibility of creating a new promotion level beyond full professor.

Committee Action

a. The committee took no action moving the full professor review to the fall semester as having a new tenure track faculty member in his or first semester at Grand Valley State University make a decision on promotion to full professor did not appear to be in the new faculty member's best interest. Action was postponed until the referendum process is completed.

- b. The committee reviewed peer institutions for a university level committee for full professor reviews. While peer institutions' full professor reviews do not typically extend beyond the college level, the committee's discussion on this was not in depth and the committee is not ready to issue a written recommendation..
- c. The committee reviewed peer institutions for promotions beyond full professor and did not find any evidence of such in writing. While committee "heard" of other institutions that were considering this process, no such evidence in policy was discovered. The committee's discussion of this topic was not in depth and is not ready to issue a written recommendation.

6. Faculty Workload

- a. Review university, college, and unit policies and practices regarding faculty workload from the perspective of 12-month contracts and workload expectations other than course assignments under summer contracts, and
- b. Review university, college, and unit policies and practices regarding faculty who engage in interdisciplinary and "inter college" teaching, scholarship and service

Committee Action

The committee was unable to get to this charge.

7. Reduction of Review

At its October 23, 2009 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Senate unanimously agreed to add an item to the charge for the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee for the current Academic Year. The Faculty Personnel Policy Committee should prioritize the consideration of a policy revision that would merge the first two contract renewal reviews in our current policy into a single one occurring during the winter of a faculty members' third contract year. The Faculty Personnel Policy Committee should include in its discussion and recommendations any additional policies that will be implicated by such a merger

Committee Action

FPPC spent the majority of its meeting time with lengthy discussions regarding the merging of the first two contract reviews into a single review, the consequences of such an action, impact on other personnel policies, and the merit of a formal mentoring system in conjunction with the reduction of a review. The committee's recommendations fall under two categories: Reduction of Review and Structured Mentoring Process.

Reduction of Review

FPPC supports the reduction of the review.

Rationale:

Currently, the first contract renewal is conducted after the faculty member has been at Grand Valley for two full semesters, possibly three semesters if the member's second fall semester of teaching makes it in the portfolio review. Thus, this first review is often developmental and not evaluative in nature as the faculty member is often describing what he or she intends to do to improve in teaching, indicates what his or her scholarly

pursuits will be, and how he or she would like to serve the university. Faculty are rarely denied contract renewal at their first review.

A reduced number of contract renewals would mean fewer portfolios for faculty to review. This would allow more time to spend on those portfolios for the pre-tenure review, thus allowing faculty to be more thorough in their review. A reduced number of reviews is in keeping with Best Practices and with a number of our peer institutions.

While FPPC supports the reduction of the review, we believe there are concerns that must first be addressed:

1. Policy language that ties a faculty member's performance/evaluation to the FAR and Faculty Salary Adjustment and Benefit Program. This would allow the junior faculty to get a yearly performance evaluation in terms of his/her progress toward tenure.
2. Clear language to terminate a faculty member's employment prior to the third year review when it is clear the faculty member is not making progress and is a detriment to the unit.
3. Clarify the role of the chair in the evaluation process.
4. Develop a formal structured mentoring program for junior faculty to offset the reduction in reviews. It is suggested the mentoring program be in place at least a year prior to reducing the reviews.

Mentoring Process

Rationale:

As the first contract renewal is more developmental than evaluative, a process needs to be in place that will facilitate faculty development in lieu of the first contract renewal.

Based upon our research, we have the following recommendations:

1. Mentoring is to be a developmental and formative process and needs to be separated from the evaluation process for personnel decisions.
2. There are current mentoring programs (at least on paper) within academic units that merit further investigation as the basis for the beginning of useful generic guidelines at the university level to be further developed by the colleges and units.
3. The University of California San Diego system has a mentoring program that would also be a good starting place for general guidelines in addition to several other universities.

<http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/faculty/programs/fmp/default.htm>