



Faculty Personnel Policy Committee

2010-2011 Year End Report

TO: Kris Mullendore, Chair, ECS/UAS
Nancy Levenburg, Vice-Chair, ECS/UAS
FROM: Kurt Ellenberger, Chair, FPPC
DATE: April 18, 2011
CC: Tom Butcher, University Counsel
Peter Riemersma, Chair, FTLCAC
FPPC

FPPC Responsibilities: Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2.01.A.4.c.iii

Responsibilities: 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.

FPPC 2010-2011 Committee Members:

Administration: Jon Jellema, *ex officio*
Associate Vice President for Human Resources: D. Scott Richardson, *ex officio*
BCOIS: Kurt Ellenberger
CCPS: Diane Kimoto
CHP: Teresa Beck
CLAS: Sheila Blackman, Jan Brashler, Figen Mekik, & Janet Vigna
COE: Sandy Miller (Fall) & Cynthia Mader (Winter)
KCON: Kay Reick
Padnos College of Engineering and Computing: Paul Jorgensen
Seidman College of Business: Marie McKendall (Fall) & Sonia Dalmia (Winter)
University Libraries: Linda Masselink

I. Charges and Actions

1. Effective Teaching Language

a. Assist in the discussion during Fall of 2010 with ECS, UAS, FTLCAC and the University Counsel to address policy issues identified by University Counsel that must be resolved before the Board of Trustees may consider and support the policy revisions to the Faculty Handbook and Administrative Manual language faculty personnel policy revisions regarding "Effective Teaching" in Chapter 4, 2.9.1.A recommended by UAS in 2009-10.

There were some issues with the language approved in Winter 2010 that required further review by FPPC and ECS/UAS.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS that was approved, with minor revision, in the Fall.

b. Support ECS/UAS and FTLCAC in considering policy revisions concerning the use of student evaluations of teaching at GVSU based on the FTLCAC report submitted to ECS/UAS and FPPC in 2008-9 as the 2009-10 Faculty Handbook and Administrative Manual language faculty personnel policy revisions regarding "Effective Teaching" in Chapter 4, 2.9.1.A after they are adopted by the Board of Trustees and ready for implementation.

At the beginning of the year, the Chair met with Peter Riemersma (Chair, FTLC Advisory Committee) to coordinate our activities regarding the student evaluations. It was decided that FTLCAC would study the issue again, and then make recommendations to FPPC. While FTLCAC has been working on this all year, there are many aspects to this difficult topic that must be considered and thoroughly researched. FTLCAC has made some progress on this issue, and is presenting its initial findings at its final meeting on April 11. We expect to proceed with this charge in the coming year based on their recommendations.

• *Effective Teaching Language in 4.2.9.1 and 3.01.A* (not part of original charge)

In Spring of 2010, ECS/UAS approved revisions to the Handbook language describing effective teaching in 4.2.9.1 and 3.01.A. In the Fall of 2010, the language in 4.2.9.1 was revised by FPPC and ECS/UAS after which FPPC was asked to revisit the language in 3.01.A to compare with the revised version of 4.2.9.1. FPPC found the language in Ch. 3.01.A to be consistent and compatible with the revised language in Ch. 4.2.9.1, and thus recommended that no further revision was required.

ACTION: A memorandum was submitted to ECS/UAS early in the Winter semester informing the committees of FPPC's opinion regarding these two sections in the Handbook.

2. Tenure/Promotion

Complete drafting, with University Counsel, input proposed policy revisions to the Faculty Handbook and Administrative Manual concerning faculty promotions to revise and/or clarify its provisions regarding timing of promotion requests.

FPPC reviewed the current policies pertaining to promotion schedules in the Administrative Manual and, after consultations with University Counsel, made recommendations regarding 4.2.5.1, which discusses promotion to Full Professor. The most substantive policy change recommended was to change the time period after promotion to Associate to six years, which lowered it from the previous seven year period. In addition, the committee strengthened and clarified some of the other language in this section.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS in the Fall, which was approved, with minor revision.

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 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.

FPPC discussed the CPC's reporting responsibilities in the personnel process and decided that the process would be strengthened if the CPC were required to report, in the case FPPC drafted several versions of Administrative Manual 4.2.10.4.B.8 that would require, in those cases when the CPC does not accept the unit recommendation, that the reasons for the disagreement with the unit be communicated in writing to the Unit Head, who then reports to the faculty.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS in the Fall which was approved by ECS/UAS late in the Winter semester.

4. 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,*

FPPC reviewed the “Schedule for Personnel Actions” in 4.2.10.4.A of the Administrative Manual and recommended changes in the schedule for reviewing candidates for Full Professor so that these reviews will take place in the Fall semester only.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS in the Fall which was approved by ECS/UAS in the Fall. FPPC also reviewed a parallel proposal from the Library to revise their schedule for promotion to Senior Librarian and approved of that revision, which was approved by ECS/UAS in the Winter semester.

b. Discuss and report on whether full professor reviews should remain a unit and college-level recommendation, and

FPPC was not in favor of removing the unit or the college from the review process, and felt that another layer of review was not necessary and may, in fact, be cumbersome and unhelpful as well as increasing faculty workload.

ACTION: FPPC submitted a memorandum to ECS/UAS in the Fall which detailed the Committee’s rationale in this decision.

c. Using the best practices of peer institutions as a guide, explore the possibility of creating a new promotion level beyond full professor.

FPPC carefully studied the personnel guidelines of approximately 20 of our peer institutions, and found that there is no rank beyond Full Professor at these institutions. The Committee saw no additional compelling reasons to create a new rank beyond Full Professor. The Committee did however, find that an award with a permanent, honorary title, should be considered to both recognize and motivate those who have achieved the rank of full professor.

ACTION: FPPC’s draft description of this proposed award (“Post Full Professor Achievement Award”) was submitted to ECS/UAS and to the Provost for consideration.

• Additional Handbook Language for Promotion to Full Professor Schedule

After the recommendation to move all reviews for Full Professor to the Fall was made, FPPC was asked to consider the circumstance, albeit rare, in which a faculty member would be applying for both tenure *and* promotion to Full Professor at the same time. The committee felt that the language in 4.2.10.4.A should explicitly provide for this circumstance.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS, which was approved by ECS/UAS in the Winter semester.

5. 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*

FPPC has completed some of the preliminary research on this charge and has engaged in several fruitful discussions. More work is required before any recommendation can be made and we look forward to continue working on this charge in 2011-12.

6. Reduction in Number of Personnel Reviews

In 2009-10 the FPPC supported the proposal to reduce the number of formal contract renewal reviews for untenured faculty as to their progress to their tenure review, but also identified a number of related issues that should be addressed before this reduction occurs. Please consider these related issues:

- a. Determine what, if any, policy revisions should be made to the clarify the role of the annual “Salary adjustment” review process in the untenured faculty member’s progress to tenure including clarifying the role of the unit head in that evaluation process as well as the content of the annual Faculty Workload Plans and Reports,*
- b. Propose language revisions clarifying the policy and processes that are to be used to terminate an untenured faculty member who is not making necessary progress towards tenure, and*
- c. Propose policies that establish a formal mentoring program for untenured faculty to offset the reduction in input that would occur with a reduction in the number of reviews.*

FPPC discussed this issue at length throughout the year and reached consensus in favor of a reduction in the number of pre-tenure Personnel Reviews to only *two* reviews: one in the third year, and one in the sixth year (tenure decision). The Committee consulted with Gayle Davis, Provost, who provided information from the administration’s perspective, and with Christine Rener, Director of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Center, on the types of mentoring programs currently being offered by FTLC and general “best practices” in regards to mentoring programs. From these discussions, a draft document that described a possible mentoring program and how it would fit into the overall personnel process was created.

This was, however, not forwarded to ECS/UAS because there were insurmountable issues that presented themselves, having to do largely with how formative feedback would be provided to a faculty member prior to the first review. The Committee found that the logical place for this to occur was in the salary adjustment review process, and that the feedback

should be delivered by the Unit Head, as is current policy. Two difficult issues came to the fore:

1. Is the Salary Adjustment Review (SAR) part of the Tenure/Promotion Process?

There was disagreement on whether the SAR is part of the personnel process. At least one college considers it to be outside of the personnel process, and the Handbook does not include SAR as part of the personnel review process. This was contradicted by the fact that the document submitted for review in the SAR is the FAR, in which a faculty member reports on his/her activity in the three areas of evaluation (teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service). Furthermore, at least one college does not use the entire FAR for the SAR, focusing instead on the student evaluations.

2. Unit Head Responsibilities

As noted previously, the Unit Head is currently required to provide feedback to the faculty member as part of the SAR. There was concern from some on the committee (as well as anecdotal comments delivered from the campus at large) that if formative feedback from the Unit Head was required and formalized in the personnel process, it would make the Unit Head's job too difficult.

The lack of consistency in the SAR process hampered our progress on the development of a mentor program. The larger question (reducing the number of personnel reviews) hinges on the development of a mentor program, and we were thus unable to achieve consensus. We will revisit this issue next year.

ACTION: The Committee did come to general agreement on some relatively minor Handbook language revisions that should be made regarding parts *a)* and *b)* but these were not submitted to ECS/UAS because they are linked to the larger issues referenced above.

7. Grievance Committee in Grievance Process

Review the Grievance process available to untenured faculty who are denied contract renewal or tenure to consider whether or not to revise the current process to add a review by a University Grievance Committee that would hear the appeal from the Dean's decision before the appeal is heard by the Provost and, if supported, develop appropriate language to implement such a revision in consultation with University Counsel.

FPPC reviewed the Grievance Procedure policies in 4.2.16/4.2.17 in the Administrative Manual and recommended that the Grievance Committee make its recommendation, as a faculty committee, to the chief academic officer (Provost) rather than making a recommendation to the President after the Provost's decision.

ACTION: FPPC made a recommendation (which required extensive revision of 4.2.16/4.2.17 and which was written in close consultation with University Counsel) in a memorandum submitted to ECS/UAS which was approved by ECS/UAS in the Fall.

II. Other Issues Requiring FPPC Response

In addition to our formal charges, FPPC was asked to consider several other questions during the course of the year.

1. Associate Deans and Unit Personnel Actions

CLAS Faculty Council submitted a draft Handbook revision to section 4.2.1 of the Administrative manual (with accompanying rationale) that would allow Associate Deans to participate in unit personnel actions. The CLAS Faculty Council asked FPPC to endorse the draft language as submitted. A motion to approve the draft revision met with a negative vote from FPPC, largely due to conflict of interest concerns, as well as issues regarding “conditions of accepting an administrative conditions” (Administrative Manual, 4.1.11.1.B).

ACTION: A memorandum with FPPC’s opinion and accompanying rationale was submitted to ECS/UAS and CLAS Faculty Council in the Fall.

2. Personnel Procedures Representative (PPR)

FPPC reviewed the Executive Summary of the PPR Pilot Program (attached) submitted by the Inclusion and Equity Division. The Committee was fully in support of the program in principle, but had several questions about the program. In addition, there were concerns regarding one of the recommendations contained in the Executive Summary as well as concerns regarding the general implementation of the proposed program.

ACTION: A memorandum summarizing the committee’s concerns and rationale was submitted to ECS/UAS and to Jeanne Arnold, Vice President for Inclusion and Equity in the Winter semester.

3. Draft Agenda Reporting by Unit Heads

FPPC was asked to review the language in the Faculty Personnel Policy Workbook and in the Faculty Handbook regarding draft agenda reporting by Unit Heads in personnel decisions at our meeting on February 16. After consideration of the language in question, the Committee found no compelling reason to revise any of the Handbook or Workbook language, but did suggest that University Counsel revisit #6 in the Workbook to consider whether any clarification might be useful.

ACTION: A memorandum with FPPC’s opinion and accompanying rationale was submitted to ECS/UAS in the Winter semester.

4. Workload Policy Issues

FPPC was asked by Larry Burns, Chair, FSBC, to consider some draft handbook language revisions for 3.01.D having to do with Significant Focus Area and Teaching Loads (4:4/3:3) and provide feedback. This was not a formal charge from ECS/UAS, rather a request from the chair of another standing committee for feedback on a set of issues that may be part of our charge in the coming year. The Committee was not in support of these changes, and a memorandum detailing the Committee’s comments and rationale was sent to Larry Burns.