

Minutes of Senate Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting

Date and time:	October 5, 2021 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
Location:	Zoom
Present:	Mark Burdsall, Helen Cahalane, Yolanda Covington-Ward, Lorraine Denman, Tom Diacovo, Gosia Fort, Irene Frieze, Vicki Gamble, Suzanna Gribble, Christine Jackson, Robin Kear, Victoria Lancaster, Marty Levine, Keith Reimink, Vinayak Sant, Isabella Stash, Tom Songer, Tyler Tenney, Amy Tuttle, Lu-in Wang, Seth Weinberg
Absent:	Parnaz Boogdah, Ashley Hill, Micaela Corn, Patrick Loughlin, John Wallace, Preeti Venkatesan

Call to order—The meeting was called to order by L. Denman at 11:00 am.

1. Introductions

2. Approval of September minutes (forthcoming)

3. Request for endorsement on new policy

- a. T. Tenney provided an overview of the policy, it will also go to Benefits and Welfare Committee before faculty assembly and senate council.
- b. In 2015, changes in PA law as it related to child protection clearances. Need to review the policy to update and align with the new laws.
- c. Previous policy was minimal, had been following the law, but the biggest change is that there is now policy and procedure. Biggest impact was that the 90-day grace period is no longer in existence.
- d. I. Frieze pointed out than an area in need of strengthening is a student doing research that requires direct contact with children, this students is neither in the volunteer or paid categories listed in the policy.
- e. S. Weinberg, needs clearances but doesn't interact with children. V. Lancaster said to consider "potential opportunity" to interact with children in course of research, err on the side of being stringent and have clearances.
- f. H. Cahalane is appreciative of the changes and the inclusive nature of requiring people to get the clearances.
- g. Y. Covington-Ward gave an example of faculty in her department where person might consider not running a performance where children participate due to the significant amount of change year to year to get the clearances. Concerned about community engagement while remaining in line with policy. Happy if the process for obtaining clearances becomes consistent. Also, how does the online environment impact the need for clearances.
 - i. T. Tenney referenced the "direct contact with children" definition section where virtual is included as a direct contact.

- h. T. Diacovo, how does it differ for clinicians where UPMC might have their own policies and if there are differences between Pitt and UPMC.
 - i. V. Lancaster, rule of thumb is if one unit is more stringent than the other, you go with the more stringent policy. Pitt will accept UPMC clearances.
- i. T. Songer, if someone comes in with clearances from prior organization or state, when are they accepted versus
 - i. Internal to PA clearances are ported into the system (good only for 5 years)
 - ii. Out of state require PA clearances. PA and MA have stricter clearance process than most states.
- j. T. Songer wonders about the payment of clearances for new employees. Should it be left outside of the policy?
 - i. Some departments pay for clearances other departments require individual to pay
 - ii. V. Lancaster will look again at the wording about payment
- k. L. Denman, if the landscape shifts again what does the path look like for future policy changes so people aren't scrambling
 - i. V. Lancaster said the state always gives some notice to a change in the law. Do their best to get the information out, but hopefully not many changes to law any time soon.
 - ii. T. Tenney said the policy update would work through a more expedited process and use an interim policy while the shared governance review process is ongoing.
- l. H. Cahalane said the FBI fingerprints are taking longer because a 3rd party vendor. Every licensed professional must take a training at renewal for mandated reporters or permissive reporters.
- m. Preparation and timing is really important. Prints can be rejected, increasing length of time for approval. If someone needs to start a position there may be a possible extension, but that is not common.
- n. Next steps are for policy office to meet with benefits and welfare committee in early November and then introduced to faculty assembly after that. FASC will wait for revised document before endorsement is given.

4. Updates on anti-discrimination policy (Tom Diacovo)

- a. Committee dealing with a lot of the issues surrounding the definitions of words
- b. Harassment and discrimination may be separated and to a different committees to define them better. Bullying, for example, is not necessarily discrimination. The open question is should non-discriminatory harassment be addressed in a different committee.
- c. UPMC has a harassment policy, going to present to T. Tenney to see if this could be adopted by the University.
- d. Timing of when reporting must occur hasn't been determined.
- e. Group who will evaluate complaints, no details of who that would be as of now.
- f. L. Wang indicated that this is just a status update, lots of discussion still to take place.
- g. November/December seems a good time to invite policy office to FASC meeting.

5. Updates on Fall 2021 teaching issues (Lorraine, Suzanna)

- a. Referenced the September email from Provost's office, frustrating for faculty to receive information like this one month into the semester. Too much confusion and lack of clarity in messaging. Difficult to interpret.
- b. Timing for spring semester planning has to be better.
- c. Subcommittee to address these issues for spring, contact L. Denman if interested

- d. B. Stash said SGB drafting a survey to probe student experience. Will provide results to FASC.

6. Report on over-enrolled classes (Robin, Lorraine, Irene)

- a. R. Kear disproportionate number of first-years on Pittsburgh campus though total enrollment has stayed level
- b. Where are the impacts? L. Denman will follow-up via email (only a few minutes left in meeting)

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm