

Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee Minutes
07 November 2019
Cathedral of Learning 156

Attendance: Nick Bircher, Jane Cauley (secretary), Abbe de Vallejo, Susan Jones (representing the University Times), Laurie Kirsch, Kirill Kiselyov, Ergin Kocycildirim, Maria Kovacs, Amanda Leifson (Graduate student representative), Elizabeth Mulvaney, Ben Vincent (representing J. Agustin Cruz Vasques, post doc representative), Karin Warner

Excused: John Kirkwood

Absent: Carey Balaban, Chris Bonneau, John Boyer, Jonathan D'Cunha, Barry Gold, Nicholas Mance, Tara O'Connor, Helen Petracchi, Rakesh Sindhi, Ann Thompson, Jessie Van Swearingen

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 by Abbe de Vallejo.

1. The minutes of the previous meeting (June 13, 2019) were discussed and approved.
2. Discussion: Draft university policy on non-discrimination.
 - a. Seth Weinberg from Faculty Affairs is to update this policy. Chris Bonneau requested that TAFC review the document because of possible impingement in academic freedom because revised documents allows for open comment; need good balance between non-discrimination and academic freedom.
 - i. Action: Laurie Kirsch to ask Pamela Connelly (chair of the committee) to attend TAFC next meeting.
 - ii. Action: All committee members are to review documents and send comments to Abbe de Vallejo.
3. Provost Ad Hoc Committee on Promotion and Tenure
 - a. Dr. Kirsch, Co-Chair, three charges:
 - i. Provost concerned about the level of consistency in tenure decisions across schools.
 - ii. Make recommendations on procedures for how different schools handle the tenure clock; proposal is to modify tenure clock at the school level e.g., School of Medicine tenure clock, 10 years; Education/Law: keep tenure clock to 7 years.
 1. Next step: take it to the Council of Deans.
 - iii. Standardizing Type A Transfers (Temporary): Under what circumstances are decisions made; differs by school.
 1. Proposal: University wide committee to discuss tenure. There will be four subcommittees: School of Medicine, Regional, Appointment Stream, Tenure Stream/Tenure.
 2. Discussion: (Attachment C: TAFC report regarding Provost's Promotion and Tenure Ad Hoc Committee by Dr de Vallejo). Concerns raised about putting 50% of faculty into a different category than the rest; School of Medicine faculty approximately 2400; half of all faculty at Pitt. Concerns about the application of different standards; the notion that you can have uniformity across diverse schools is mythology.
Dr. Kirsch noted that this approach is typical of other schools and will help to elevate criteria and increase transparency.
 3. TAFC requests the following:
 - a. Concrete examples of how this will improve transparency and equity;
 - b. Rational for another university wide committee;
 - c. Information on how it elevates the tenure process;
 - d. Information on whether it will prolong the process.
4. Proposed changes in bylaws on review of faculty

- a. Appointment and Appeals: U of Pitt Procedure 02-20-10/draft by Nick Bircher. These procedures have not been revised since 2001.
 - i. Action: TAFC review document and send to Nick Bircher; he will compile and send to Dr. Kirsch.
- 5. Extended Executive meeting
 - a. Chancellor three major concerns:
 - i. Change in federal policy on immigration: decline in international students and impact faculty recruitment;
 - ii. Federal requirement to disclose collaborations outside of US: may withhold funding;
 - iii. In response to AAU 2019 survey on sexual violence and misconduct, the Chancellor is proposing an institutional approach and augment it with a community driven one.
 - iv. Links to the story were provided by Susan Jones of the University times:
 - 1. <https://www.chancellor.pitt.edu/spotlight/community-driven-response-preventing-sexual-misconduct>
 - 2. <https://www.utimes.pitt.edu/news/multi-pronged-approach>.
- 6. No other business and the open meeting was concluded
 - a. Laurie Kirsch, Ben Vincent, Amanda Leifson and Susan Jones all leave.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane A. Cauley