

Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee Minutes
24 March 2022 11 AM – 1PM EDT
Zoom

Present: Abbe De Vallejo (Co-Chair), Maria Kovacs (Co-Chair), Donald Yearly (SOM liaison), Kirill Kiselyov, James Miller (Staff Council), Marty Levine (University Times), Nick Bircher (Pro-Tem), Don Ulin, Carey Balaban, Karin Warner, Lu-in Wang (Vice Provost), Robin Kear (Senate President), Barry Goldberg (Pro-Tem), Stephen Jacobus, Elizabeth Mulvaney, Ergin Kocylidirim, Caroline Arena (Student Rep), Mark Paterson (Secretary)

Absent: Jane Cauley*, Helen Petrarchi (Pro-tem), Jessie VanSwearigen (Pro-tem), Monica Costlow (Staff Council), Cristina Espinosa-Diaz (Student Rep), John Kirkwood (Pro-tem), Rakesh Sindhi (Pro-tem), Chris Bonneau (Senate Liaison), John Wallace (Vice Provost)
[*excused, notified co-chair]

Open Session

1. Roll Call, quorum met, meeting called to order by Abbe 11am
2. Minutes from meeting of January 9, 2022 approved unanimously.
3. Old Business
 - a) Abbe confirmed that the Senate had approved the Policy/Procedure on Gifts that Support Projects that was previously examined and voted on by TAFC
 - b) A brief update was presented on the Chartered review of policies/procedures on Harassment and Non-discrimination. There was a target date of finishing a draft a year ago, but deliberations are still happening
TAFC would like to see and would support that a faculty member be involved in investigations, and this was relayed to the committee..
4. New Business
 - a) An introduction was presented to the circulated Document on Pitt's Statement on Academic Freedom and its history, which comes from the Provost as chief academic officer. TAFC discussed several complications, including the difference between academic freedom at UPMC and the University, and the fact that there may be conflicting policies and procedures such as Non-Disclosure Agreements from companies, startups, DoD etc. It was agreed that a public statement from the Provost should be assented to as soon as possible. A related issue of establishing ground rules for academic freedom in classroom conduct, was discussed, including potential statements in the Syllabuses. Unlike peer institutions, there is no separate University policy/procedure on academic freedom, only a series of statements from Provosts upholding the 1940 Principles of Academic Freedom by the AAUP.
 - b) Action Point: Recommendation from TAFC clear statement of policy about academic freedom, and our affiliations to other institutions and organizations.

- c) TAFC recommended that we endorse the document with the tracked changes, and then propose recommendations for future action separately. It was voted unanimously in favor.

Abbe called the meeting closed.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Paterson
Secretary