

FACULTY WELFARE COMMITTEE

UC Aspen A & B

April 27, 2022 – 3:30p.m.-5:00p.m.

MINUTES

Present: Blatt, Brown, Doerner, Endres (Muller), Matchett, Schaberl, Senbet, Sileo, Wiegand

Absent: Applegate, Fulks, Williams

Guest: Levin, Satriana

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:36pm.

Approval of the Agenda

Approved without objection.

Approval of the April 13, 2022 meeting minutes

Approved without objection.

Chair's Report/Announcements

Special Orders

• Officer elections

- Doerner and Endres are nominees for Chair.
 - Doerner was approved by poll vote as Chair.
- Muller nominated Endres for Vice-Chair.
 - Endres was approved by acclamation as Vice-Chair.

Unfinished Business

• Tenure-track proposal

- Senbet outlined four main items of consideration relating to the tenure-track proposal:
 - Establish under what conditions/situations tenure-track faculty may face non-renewal.
 - Performance-related factors and/or what other reasons may result in non-renewal.
 - Explore the option of multi-year contracts.
 - CSU and CU both have multi-year contracts.
 - Establish a timeline for administrative action.
 - The proposal adds a 20 working days clause to prevent inaction on comprehensive reviews at administrative levels.
 - Examine the rationale of tenure.
 - Academic freedom is one reason for tenure; job security in a highly specialized field is another reason.

DISCUSSION:

- Faculty and administration have expressed differing views about the relationship/interaction between the tenure-track contract policy and the comprehensive review policy as they are currently written.
 - We want to amend the policies in a way that provides clarity and is agreeable to all parties.
- Members discussed circumstances that could result in non-renewal of a tenure-track faculty member.
 - Clearly, tenure-track faculty may non-renewed for performance reasons.
 - The administration's position is that tenure-track faculty can be non-renewed for any reason, as long as it is not discriminatory.
 - Members deliberated about what limits/criteria could be put in place to establish an objective basis for non-renewal decisions.
 - Non-performance-related factors that may result in non-renewal: Enrollment decline, program closure/restructuring, and financial exigency.
- Members discussed the feasibility of whether years of service could factor into decisions to renew/not renew.
 - Example: Make non-renewal in early years of tenure-track status for non-performance reasons allowable, but after pre-tenure review the decision to non-renew must be based solely on performance.
 - This would create an environment where, after year three, a tenure-track faculty member with good performance would be guaranteed a chance to apply for tenure.
 - However, if program enrollment trends continue downward after x -number of years, we don't want to corner the university into keeping faculty who don't have a viable program.
 - In the interest of protecting the health of the university/college/program overall, it may be more beneficial to non-renew a tenure-track faculty member, regardless of their years of service.
 - This would free up resources to invest in other areas as needed.
 - Even with improved use of data analytics, there is no guarantee of the accuracy of enrollment predictions.
 - If the ability to non-renew is narrowed as the employee gets closer to the tenure application period, this may prompt administrators acting in bad faith to non-renew the position before x -point because they know they won't have the flexibility to non-renew in a later year.
- Members are in general agreement that *all* factors impacting employment decisions should be clearly and fully disclosed to tenure-track faculty members.
- The committee will continue deliberation next academic year.

- **Sanctions short of dismissal**
- **Dismissal proceedings of tenured faculty**

New Business

Other New Business

Comments to the Good of the Order

- Thanks to Senbet for chairing the committee this year.
- Senbet thanked Levin for setting an excellent precedent of attending committee meetings as Senate Chair.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06pm.

Dawit Senbet
Chair

Betsy Kienitz
Recording Secretary