MEMBERS PRESENT:
Robert Alderson, Mario Bennekin, Debra Denzer, Michael Diebert, Leslie Ann Dunn, Kristi Hendrix, Elizabeth Lathrop, Erin Morrey, Matthew Robison, Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, Connie Washburn, Emily Whaley

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:
Susan Cody, Tarrah Mirus, Robin Winston

ALTERNATES PRESENT:
Mary Brown for Coletta Carter

I Call to order
Brad Tucker called the meeting to order at 3:23 pm.

II Approval of minutes of 4/15/14
The minutes were approved as presented.

III Old Business
Mr. Tucker gave a recap of the Council’s work on the Withdrawals policy and noted that the BOR had recently made a change to the policy as it relates to Learning Support (LS) students and whether or not they can remain in their collegiate level classes when they withdraw from a LS class. The interim VPAA advised Mr. Tucker that the President’s Policy Advisory Board (PPAB) will likely make the necessary modification to the policy at that level to reflect the change. All the other changes that the AAPC made to the policy have not yet been approved by the PPAB.

Sometime ago the AAPC had passed a policy to prevent transient students from violating GPC’s prerequisites. That policy was tabled by the PPAB as the President wanted to get more information and give more thought to the matter. A case came up during the past summer, and Brad learned that the president decided to reject the policy that AAPC approved.

IV New Business

Faculty and Librarian Evaluation document
Mr. Tucker had invited members of the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) to give the AAPC an understanding of the changes in the document and the rationale. He stated that the AAPC would not be discussing the merits of any of the changes at the present meeting. Todd Hendricks, on behalf of the FEC, presented what he considered to be the most substantial changes.

First he dealt with changes to the requirements for promotion to the various ranks. The current requirement is that to be promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor there can be no rating of needs improvement within the past five years. If such a rating is received the faculty member has to start over. At the same time persons who are at the rank of instructor only have a certain amount of time, according to BOR policy, to be promoted or tenured or they have to leave the system. Because the rating was such a career-killer, chairs were not using the rating at all. Faculty that needed to be told to get their act together were not being told because the chairs didn’t want to end their careers. A change in the eligibility requirements allows a faculty to have up to two ratings of needs improvement over the previous six semesters. Any rating of needs improvement must be followed in a subsequent year by a rating of at least meets expectations in that same area. The most recent evaluation that the faculty member turns in cannot have a needs improvement in it.

Now that the rating of exceeds expectation is available, at least three ratings of exceeds expectations within the past 10 semesters under review are required. That will rise to five in 2016. The rationale is that if an instructor is only meeting expectations, there is no reason to promote. We should see a demonstrated ability above meets expectations in order to promote faculty members; therefore, we want to see regular exceeds expectations. It is set at three to begin with because the rating of exceeds has not always been available. The availability of exceeds needs to be in place long enough before it can be raised to five. These changes for Assistant Professor are the ones that impact the most faculty.

Promotion to Associate Professor requires at least two ratings of exceeds expectations and one rating of exceptional in teaching effectiveness, one exceeds expectations in service, and one exceeds expectations in professional activities over the evaluations under review. Currently, it is just a count of exceptional performances—a person could be really good in professional activities but not function well in the classroom and not serve the college at all. The minimum rating for practices and performance is expected performance. Degree and experience requirements have not changed. Full time teaching is defined as ten months; summers do not count. Masters plus 30 semester hours and earned doctorate have not changed.

Promotion to full professor requires ratings of exceptional in teaching effectiveness, service, and professional activities. Previously the requirement was for two ratings of exceeds expectations and one exceptional. This rank still requires an earned doctorate, but this is up for discussion as the BOR recently approved a terminal degree in the
appropriate discipline. Mr. Tucker pointed out that the wording from BOR says terminal degree or equivalent in training, ability and/or experience, which seems to open the door to persons without the terminal degree. The interim VPAA wants the AAPC to address the issue of a terminal degree. He does not want the AAPC to initiate a whole new structure/system. The Council is welcome to change the language in the document where it sees fit, to specify what is going to be required as far as terminal degree to become full professor. If the AAPC feels that a structural change is warranted then the VPAA wants the AAPC to make such recommendation to the FEC. After the AAPC approves the document, the VPAA will take it to PPAB. The Senate will comment and make recommendations but will not be approving the document.

Changes were also made to the annual evaluation itself. In terms of counting the number of ratings, course design gets one: it is either needs improvement, expected performance, exceeds expectation or exceptional. Some Chairs incorrectly rate each item under course design. Teaching effectiveness is now understood to be discipline specific. If no comment is written, the default will be understood to be expected. This is stated at the top of the form. The FEC has made sure that expected performance and exceptional have descriptors; then it will be a judgment call on the part of chairs to assign the other ratings. When we say a faculty member needs to have a certain number of exceptional ratings for teaching effectiveness, it is possible he/she could earn three in a single year. So when we are looking at a total of 10 semesters, as many as 30 are possible.

Practices and performance is no longer a discipline-specific category. It covers things like advising. The FEC wrote these with the understanding of what advising meant at the time, before it was realized how our budget is going to be affected by student retention and graduation. The demands of advising here at the college may change so these things in the document may get changed again in the future. We expect everyone to be advising students, to meet regularly with them and to keep on top of what happens in one’s discipline so that faculty can make recommendations to the students.

It causes problems when faculty members do not report their grades on time. This element was given a “yes” or “no” rating. As Mr. Hendricks explained, you either do it, in a timely manner, or you don’t. Ms. Whaley suggested that instead of “yes” or “no” the normal rating scheme that is applied elsewhere should be applied here as well. Otherwise, it would not be represented in the bigger scheme of things as there is nothing that refers back to the number of ratings of “no” that someone has received. Mr. Hendricks proposed to use needs improvement and expected performance for record management and leave the other ratings blank.

More descriptors were added to Service. All faculty members should be actively serving on committees within their discipline and on their campus. Serving students and the work that they do is an area of service and it is outside of a discipline. In terms of keeping current in your knowledge in the discipline, the FEC tried to make a distinction
between being a member of a professional organization versus giving presentations at conferences versus holding office. The different ratings for these demonstrate a progression in what the faculty member does in the organization. Similarly, the difference between participation in local state conferences and regional/national conferences is tied to different ratings.

A new summary page that carries the overall ratings in all the areas has been added. It sorts out the problem of proper labeling as the evaluator must indicate if it is a mid-year review, a final review, or an initial review for a new faculty member at the end of the first semester. If for any reason there is discrepancy between what is on the summary page and what is in the document, the summary page is what is official. There is a signature line for evaluator and one for reviewer because in large departments an associate chair may do the actual evaluation and the chair will serve as the reviewer. Also, the dean will evaluate a chair and the VPAA will serve as the reviewer.

Mr. Tucker informed the meeting that the interim VPAA is aware that it will take AAPC some time with the faculty evaluation document because the Council has a whole agenda of other things to do in addition to this. He projected that if we get it done by spring 2015 it would get published for use in 2016.

Discussion of policies from other policy councils
Policy 502: Faculty and Staff Electronic Mail
  • Procedure as presented is a continuation of policy
  • “Restricted information will not be sent via faculty and staff email to internal and External email addresses”.
  Based on previous discussions with OIT Security personnel, the AAPC was under the impression that internal emails between faculty and staff members were secure.
  • “OIT will determine the best method of sending restricted information” does not Say anything meaningful. This is something that needs to be resolved.
  • AAPC is very concerned that there is still not a secure way to communicate with students; iCollege is not sufficient as department chairs and deans do not have access to this. Dr. Thompson-Sellers pointed out that the situation greatly impacts about one-third of GPC’s student population (who are online), that practices for online faculty and chairs are very different from what happens on campus and that there are some business processes that have to be conducted via email.

Policy 606: Data Classification and Handling Policy
  • Under which category do student identification numbers fall—Restricted Information or Internal Use Only Information?
Ms. Washburn pointed out that student ID numbers were used to replace SSN numbers as primary identifiers to protect our students against identity fraud. She thought they did not have any meaning outside of the college and were not a source of risk if exposed. Many persons agreed.

Under Restricted Information the word “etc.” is used at the end of a series twice—once regarding data that exposes the college to risk, and once regarding personally identifiable information. The AAPC feels that “etc.” leaves things too open.

Policy 507: Appropriate Use of IT Resources

- The requirement for users to “make regular backups” is not reasonable. Access to the backup utility comes with administrator privilege, which the average user does not have. This means that users would have to purchase thumb drives to do this, and it is a tedious process to move files by copying and pasting. The College should provide the mechanism to do nightly backups to a server.
- Users are not able to control virus protection on their computers either.
- The possibility that an individual could be held personally accountable for the insurance deductible in the event that the laptop in someone’s charge is stolen or damaged does not seem fair to the AAPC. Damage to the computer could be caused by an accident, or it could be stolen from a vehicle. The Department should not get to decide if the individual should bear the cost of the deductible.

Policy 504: Student Electronic Mail

- Procedure as presented is a continuation of policy.
- “Restricted information will not be sent via student email.” The AAPC understands that restricted information cannot be sent via student email. However, there still remains a major problem with communicating Internal Use information that falls under FERPA to students. We have been told that such information cannot be communicated using student email unless the additional security protocols are used. However, those protocols are so cumbersome that it is an unworkable solution, and deans, department chairs, and others do not have access to a student’s iCollege email, which is secure. This issue needs immediate attention.

V Other business

Upcoming reviews
A system of triennial reviews has been established for policies. The AAPC has fourteen to review and Mr. Tucker has arranged for them to be done in small batches. Three
were placed on this meeting’s agenda—(1) Alternate Coverage of Classes, (2) Archiving of Grades and Final Exams, and (3) Academy Honesty—but time will not allow for discussion. Mr. Tucker explained that changes do not have to be made if they are not warranted.

VI Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.