

The PSC meeting convened on Mon Sep 24, 2018 at 4:00 pm.

Present: David Andresen, Provost Bartanen, Fred Hamel, Jim Jasinski, Pepa Lago-Grana, Andreas Madlung (Chair), Amanda Mifflin, Paula Wilson

1. Minutes for the September 10, 2018 PSC meeting were approved via email prior to meeting.
2. Begin work on additional charge 1: Address the request from a faculty member in the School of Education regarding the streamlined clinical instructor review process.

The motivation for the request is to avoid overtaxing Clinical Instructors and graduate faculty involved with the evaluations with a 3-year evaluation cycle. This particular request originated from MAT faculty, but would apply to Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and potentially additional graduate programs as well. Three persons currently hold Clinical Instructor positions.

One suggestion was to look for an analogous situation, such as the streamlined evaluation option in year 12 for tenure-line faculty. Another suggestion was that the PSC could focus on the fact that the language states instructors “normally” should be evaluated every 3 years, which allows for some leeway when desired. Fred Hamel and Provost Bartanen will draft potential language for the User Guide for the PSC to review at next week’s meeting. The goal is to add transparency and clarity for the graduate programs that house clinical faculty.

3. Begin work on additional charge 2: Review and clarify the evaluation process for non-tenure-line positions, including visiting faculty members that stay beyond 3 years and other potential renewable non-tenure-line positions that may be created.

One PSC member asked for clarification on whether this is technically a PSC issue. Provost Bartanen clarified that the Code does outline the different types of faculty positions, but does not specify anything about the length of term. Bartanen also offered additional historical context for the undergraduate ongoing Instructor positions as they are currently employed: years ago, the university made an effort to consolidate adjunct staff into full-time instructor positions. Since the mid-1990s, as ongoing Instructors left, they were not replaced with other ongoing Instructors. There is a cap of tenure line positions set by the Board of Trustees. Dean Cooney converted some instructor lines to tenure lines, and Provost Bartanen was able to convert 3 instructor positions into 2 tenure lines, through Board approval. Rather than hire additional undergraduate instructors, there was a shift toward hiring visiting faculty with a term limit of 6 years, although the 6-year rule has been relaxed some in recent years.

Currently, the PSC document is clear in saying how we deal with 3-year appointments, but there is no reference to an evaluation process for 1-year renewable positions (positions that are initially for 1 year, but keep getting renewed each year due to continued need for staffing).

Some have proposed introducing a new type of position that would fit the needs of certain departments that rely regularly on visiting faculty. One PSC member offered that Whitman College has a set of faculty appointed to 5-year lecturer positions, which then require review to be continued, and can eventually progress to a senior lecturer position. One PSC member mentioned that at some institutions it has been legally ruled that if visitors are renewed every year, then they are not considered “visitors”, and that we may want to look into any legal

ramifications of the language used. The PSC determined that Puget Sound may need to create a new position for areas with ongoing demand that is not served adequately with the current options. Such a position would not be tenure-line, but would allow for continued staffing by one person, with clarity about evaluation process, rather than a frequent cycling through of different personnel every few years.

The PSC plans to focus first on the evaluation part of the issue, since that is an area that the committee can handle on its own. The PSC agreed that it would be good to have better clarity for non-tenure-line faculty on evaluation procedures, and plans to add language for ongoing Clinical Instructors in graduate programs and ongoing visiting assistant professors to p. 27 of the User Guide. The PSC will then look into the issue of creating an additional type of faculty position, since that will likely require input from other committees and administration.

4. Request from English to modify department evaluation guidelines.

The PSC approved the request from the Department of English to strike the following line of language from their department evaluation guidelines:

“Due to the size of our department, an evaluatee must make her/his complete file available to the department thirty calendar days in advance of the department deliberation meeting.”

Meeting adjourned at 4:52 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Amanda Mifflin