

## Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee May 3, 2008

Present: Bartanen, Bodine, Edgoose, Fields, Goldstein, Share, Tomlin.

The meeting was convened at 1:04.

PSC members expressed their sincere appreciation to chair Tomlin for his thoughtful and thorough work over the past academic year.

Chair Tomlin reported that he will present the year-end report of the PSC to the faculty senate on Monday, May 5, 2008.

The minutes of April 28, 2008, were approved with one minuscule revision.

The PSC had made several changes to the Buff document (i.e. the "Faculty Evaluation Criteria & Procedures" booklet) this year, some of which were initiated by questions/suggestions raised by the FAC in its year-end reports 06 and 07. Dean Bartanen had offered to implement these changes in the Buff document, and PSC now turned to a review of this draft, which was electronically circulated before the meeting.

The following summary of the changes is taken from Chair Tomlin's year-end report. Page numbers refer to the 2008-2009 edition of the Buff document:

- (1) that evaluations are both formative and summative in nature (p. 3)
- (2) that letters from faculty emeriti are considered outside letters and need to be submitted to head officers (p. 9)
- (3) that "need" for a faculty member undergoing tenure evaluation refers to need "for the position" (p. 14)
- (4) that course materials may be submitted electronically to the FAC or posted electronically with access permission (p. 16)
- (5) that non-departmental teaching should also be considered when departments are planning classroom visits for colleagues under evaluation (Checklist for Head officers, p. 17)
- (6) procedures for evaluating 3-year visiting faculty (p. 20)
- (7) references to the new streamlined evaluation procedures for ongoing instructors (p. 21)
- (8) affirming that classroom visits and writing a letter were permitted but optional for colleagues during a streamlined faculty evaluation (p. 21)
- (9) several small items of advice for faculty members preparing their file and for colleagues writing letters.

The PSC approved Dean Bartanen's implementation with minor amendments and thanked her for her accurate and comprehensive work.

It was confirmed to defer suggestion # 11 from the 07 FAC report to the next year. This suggestion is concerned with possibly adding examples to "information about professional growth, including copies of relevant prepared materials" on page 14 of the current Buff document.

In the end of the year report 2006, the FAC forwarded a recommendation to the PSC to establish a five-year review cycle of departmental guidelines. As outlined in this report, “This would allow departments to update guidelines, as needed; to adapt to changes in the nature of positions or responsibilities within faculty positions; to changes in the evolution of teaching technologies; or to changes in how professions value various kinds of evidence for professional growth.” It is not clear to the PSC if it has the authority to establish a firm review cycle. The Faculty Code does not seem to indicate that the PSC should initiate reviews (see III, 3, a and b) and PSC members could not find any evidence in the relevant part of the Faculty Bylaws (Section 6, E). PSC also discussed the practicality of such a proposal. Since there are approximately 30 departments/programs at UPS, the average would be close to 6 reviews per year, which would constitute a significant increase in the workload of the PSC. An alternative point of view was that departments review their guidelines at least every 10 years. Also discussed was the effect of a change in departmental guidelines on evaluations following such an amendment. Say, for example, that a department makes significant changes in the criteria and has a tenure evaluation in the following year. Should the former or the current guidelines be used for this evaluation? Maybe a “grace period” of two years, during which the former guidelines would still be used, would be appropriate to protect evaluatees. Having raised these questions without finding answers, the matter was deferred to AY0809.

Finally, PSC turned to a discussion of self-assessment as charged by the faculty senate. Instead of duplicating our discussion, the minute taker would like to refer to the excellent summary of this discussion by Chair Tomlin in his year-end report given to the Faculty Senate on May 5, 2008, which will be posted online together with the PSC minutes (see section “PSC Self-Assessment” in the year-end report).

We adjourned at 2:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sigrun Bodine