

## Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee 11/30/07

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

The meeting was convened at 11:06.

The minutes of 11/16/07 were approved.

### Announcements:

1. Chair Tomlin reminded the PSC that the December 4, 2007 faculty meeting will include the first reading of the PSC-proposed Faculty Code “housekeeping” amendment package and the second reading of the PSC-proposed amendment regarding the role of an associate dean in streamlined faculty evaluations.

2. Tomlin then reported from the November 28 chairs meeting, in which chairs were surveyed on evaluation of colleagues who teach some of their classes outside of the department. At the meeting, various chairs described their experiences, and it appeared that many departments have difficulties establishing guidelines for evaluation of classes taught outside of the department. Chairs suggested that specific rules might not fit all possible individual situations, but that general suggestions or guidelines would be welcome.

Tomlin’s report was followed by a discussion of this issue, which lasted for the rest of the meeting. It was noted that in some departments teaching outside the department rarely occurs and that the evaluation of these classes was not deemed as crucial as the evaluation of classes taught within the department. However, such a policy needs to be re-evaluated if the number of such classes increases.

It was suggested to find a balance between giving individual departments the freedom to develop their own individual evaluation strategy and giving head officers more incentive to assure a balanced class visitation plan, maybe by encouraging them to explain why certain classes were not visited by colleagues. In this context, the “2 by 2” rule, defining the minimum number of required visits, was recalled (i.e., at least two visits by two faculty members, see p. 9 in the “buff document”). While this rule determines the *minimum* number of visits, which might not necessarily amount to an *adequate* consideration, the question was raised as to whether visits to all classes are necessary to constitute an adequate consideration. For example, do all twelve classes in a typical tenure file need to be visited? What constitutes an adequate sample of visits? How can a balanced visitation of all or at least most classes be encouraged? An example was given of one department in which the head officer posts a sheet with all classes covered in an evaluation and asks colleagues to mark their visits.

The PSC finally agreed to add the following sentence at the end of the paragraph “Begin class visits early” on page 9 of the “buff document:”

*The head officer is encouraged not to overlook the teaching of classes outside the department where that forms an important part of the teaching responsibilities of the evaluatee.*

Since the planning of balanced class visitations is an early responsibility of the head officer in the evaluation process and might be overlooked in some cases, it was suggested to offer some assistance to chairs, especially new chairs, for example in form of a workshop. Another idea was to prepare a “calendar for chairs,” listing responsibilities of chairs by the month.

At the end of the meeting, Dean Bartanen announced that the PSC will meet in the Misner Room in the library during the spring semester. We had already agreed at a previous meeting to meet at 1 pm on Fridays.

We adjourned at 12:03.

Respectfully submitted,

Sigrun Bodine