

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee  
March 26, 2007

PRESENT: Kris Bartanen, Sigrun Bodine, Doug Cannon, Julian Edgoose, Karl Fields, Grace Kirchner, George Tomlin

Kirchner convened the meeting at 11:05, a.m.

There were no announcements.

Sigrun Bodine's minutes of March 19, 2007, were approved as written.

### **Revisions to Chapter III of the Faculty Code:**

Discussion continued regarding proposed changes to sections 6 and 7 of the Faculty Code, and approaches to presenting them to the faculty for their consideration.

Kirchner reported that she had consulted Barry Anton, Chair of the Faculty Senate about scheduling an additional faculty meeting to provide for an initial reading and subsequent discussion of and voting on proposed changes. Anton recommended presenting the changes to the Senate in advance. Kirchner asked to be scheduled on the Senate agenda. She will distribute the side-by-side version of the two sections to faculty Senators and meet with the Senate on Monday, April 2.

It was observed that Anton has asked for a faculty meeting to be scheduled for Tuesday, May 1, and that President Thomas announced the scheduled meeting during the last faculty meeting.

There was discussion of the dismal fate of the two motions for revision of the By Laws presented by the Faculty Senate at the faculty meeting of March 20. Both were overwhelmingly rejected. Out of the respect for faculty time we must be prepared to explain and support the proposals that we bring forward

Strategies for presenting the changes were considered. Though distinguishing the several changes for separation would clarify discussion, it was agreed that changes serving different aims were integrated in the proposal. Instead we will be prepared with alternatives, including suggesting amendments for deleting sections from the proposal or modifying certain phrases if controversy arises.

It was emphasized that we have avoided the three most controversial aspects of the 2006-2007 proposal from the Committee, by leaving intact the current language of the Code. These were (1) the clause concerning confidentiality of the proceedings of a hearing board; (2) the authority and continued existence of a hearing board after it has made its report; and (3) the question whether under the prevailing procedure (which provides for formal appeals at two levels) the process begins anew after a successful appeal, thereby permitting multiple appeals at the same level.

With these issues factored out the Committee identified the following five matters that are addressed in our proposed changes to sections 6 and 7 of chapter III.

- (1) Language concerning the function of a hearing board is brought forward from later text (namely, section 7.e) to the preamble of s. 6.
- (2) The respondent on behalf of the department, school, or program, is designated and responsibilities of the respondent are clarified.
- (3) The time-line for a response is adjusted.
- (4) The hearing board roster is expanded to include the full faculty less exemptions for conflict of interest and absence of consent. The chance of a tied hearing board is reduced by insuring an odd number of members.
- (5) A repair is made to the current confused language about the path taken by the file after an appeal is concluded.

The Committee considered whether to remove the phrase (in section 6.b) “subject to their consent”, understood to require the chair of the Committee to poll faculty annually as to their willingness to serve on a hearing board should the need arise. It was agreed that, despite the work entailed by securing this consent, the existing wording will be more palatable to the faculty.

It was observed that the paragraph (section 6.b) concerning the hearing-board roster could be removed from the proposal without damage to other parts of the proposal. In the event of controversy, we can be prepared to suggest an amendment to our proposal deleting that section, leaving the current section 6.b in place.

It was observed that the two paragraphs, (a) and (b), of section 6.a.2 duplicate, with the same wording, provisions of sections 4.b and 4.c. These provisions have been repeated here to enable prospective appellants better to understand the appeals process. If they prove controversial, again they can be removed from our proposal by amendment. Continuation of the current (1) through (4) of section 6.a, would be consistent with adopting the remainder of our proposal.

As members had other obligations, the meeting was adjourned shortly after noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Cannon