

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee

April 2, 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.

1. Announcements/New Business.

- In her email announcing the appointment of the next Associate Dean and Dean of Graduate Studies, Dean Bartanen wrote that Sarah Moore would “assist the dean with faculty evaluations not involving change in status.” In response to feedback on that statement, Bartanen asked whether the PSC could consider whether the Dean can name an associate dean to assist with faculty evaluations.
- Another committee member reported an informal request on the status of addenda to faculty evaluation letters to the FAC. It was agreed to revisit this issue in the meeting (see item 4 below).

2. Minutes from March 26 Meeting.

These were approved with minor amendments.

3. Finish Chapter III Sections 6 and 7 Revisions.

As Kirchner was to discuss the PSC’s revisions with the Senate, the committee agreed to revisit their discussion of strategy at the next meeting in the light of that conversation. Otherwise the committee agreed that it had taken a “conservative” turn in trying to remove any Code revisions that might cause controversy.

4. Status of Addenda to Faculty Letters (New Item – See Announcements Above).

The question was raised as to the status of addenda that faculty members might write to their letters for the FAC. This question came to the PSC informally and not in a request for a formal interpretation.

It was noted that some departmental guidelines are explicit in the role and use of addenda, while others are silent on the matter. While addenda are not commonplace, some faculty members indicate in their letters that they are looking forward to the departmental meeting to better inform their decision, and write an addendum to explain their final decision. In rare cases, however, faculty members indicate in their addenda that they wished they had voted differently, and this can cause some confusion for the FAC. It was generally agreed that the PSC did not want to encourage too much “addendizing,” nor did they wanted to prohibit the practice (if that were possible). The committee supported the FAC using its discretion in interpreting addenda, but agreed it would revisit this issue if a request for a formal interpretation were to be made by a faculty member or by the FAC.

5. Confidentiality of Deliberations.

The PSC chair reported that she had been contacted by a department chair who had failed to find any basis in the Code for the advice he had given some junior colleagues: that evaluation deliberations are to be kept confidential (the evaluatee would get feedback regarding what was said by way of the summary letter). The PSC agreed that the confidentiality of these deliberations is not specified in the Code, and that an individual can choose not to talk with an evaluatee about the deliberations. It was noted that departments might be able to specify confidentiality in their departmental guidelines, or they might be able to vote on the confidentiality of certain deliberations, but the status of

these assertions of confidentiality was not clear. Kirchner agreed to draft a response to this issue for next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 noon.

Submitted respectfully,

Julian Edgoose