

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee
March 3rd, 2015

Present: Kris Bartanen, Geoffrey Block, Betsy Kirkpatrick, Tiffany MacBain (chair), Andreas Madlung, Mark Reinitz, Douglas Cannon, and Amy Spivey

MacBain called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

I. The minutes of the Feb. 17th and Feb 24th meeting were approved.

II. The committee continued evaluation of another revised version of the Statement of Evaluation Criteria and Standards for the Department of French Studies. The committee approved the latest version unanimously.

III. The committee continued its conversation about the Senate charge to review the PSC's interpretation of Chapter III, Sections 4, a (1) and 4, a (c) regarding letters of evaluation from persons outside the department "to determine if the language on outside letters should be updated for: (a) distinctions of submission process for different types of letters (e.g., letters from co-authors, mentors, reviewers); (b) processes of solicitation of letter writers; (c) dates of submission of outside letters for departmental review; (d) expectations of outside letters; and (e) any additional questions raised in PSC conversations."

Dean Bartanen offered some additional language to clarify how outside letters can be included in faculty evaluations. The committee discussed the implications of various parts of the proposed language on the process of the solicitation of outside letters and agreed on the following wording:

"In consultation with the evaluatee, the head officer may also solicit appropriate letters from outside the department or university. When soliciting the letters the head officer will notify the writers of the status of the file as open or closed."

IV. The committee discussed changes suggested by Dean for Diversity and Inclusion Benitez that he had made in an email from earlier this year to chair MacBain with regard to aligning language in the Code so that it is in compliance with Title IX. These suggestions refer to the Code's appendix on pages 41-42 (Interpretation of Chapter I, Part C, Section 2 and Chapter I, Part D, Section 4 Spouses/Children Taking Courses from Faculty) and were as follows:

1. Throughout entire section: Replace "spouse" with partner" and replace "children" with "dependent children".
2. In the second paragraph (line 9), add 'their' as gender neutral pronoun option to read "partner or dependent child in his/her/their courses."

The committee agreed with the proposed changes.

V.

Another section of interpretations to the Code that the committee had considered for review was Chapter VI (pp. 35-38). Given that Dean Benitez commented on this section in said email to chair MacBain that this section did not require changes, the committee decided to let this interpretation stand as it currently is. Dean Benitez however suggested that the PSC “align” the language with the “Campus Policy Prohibiting” document.

Therefore, the committee suggested to delete lines 8-14 on page 40 of the Code and instead add additional text referring the reader to the Campus Policy Prohibiting Harassment & Sexual Misconduct. The committee suggested the following text to be added instead of the deleted lines:

“This policy aligns with the university’s conflict of interest provisions in the Code of Conduct as well as Section II, Part E (“Consensual Sexual Relationship”) of the Campus Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.”

VI.

Another comment by Dean Benitez from the same email to chair MacBain was discussed. This passage of the email stated:

“Attendant to that last interpretation is Chapter VI of the Code (pp. 35-38), which also requires your review, for it contains procedural information that may not be up-to-date. This section is fine since it deals with grievance procedures carried out by faculty and faculty has its own outlined format for handling complaints. The only suggestion we have is that some language addressing investigation (refer to Section IV. F. 2.) and burden of proof anchored in 'Preponderance of Evidence' (refer to Section IV. F. 3d. 3. [Procedural Rules of General Applicability] be included.”

The committee referred this recommendation to the summer working group headed by Dean Benitez working on issues related to Title IX.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andreas Madlung