

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee
April 14, 2015

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

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

I. The minutes of April 7 were approved, with the corrections provided by the committee via email.

II. Recap of discussion of questions related to electronic evaluation files

The committee agreed that all of the questions brought forward by Dean Bartanen related to electronic (Moodle) evaluation files were addressed in previous meetings. Therefore, that charge from the Senate has been completed.

III. Discussion of the draft Faculty Opportunity Hire Policy from Dean Kris Bartanen

The committee took up discussion of the draft Faculty Opportunity Hire Policy shown in Appendix A.

Background information offered by Dean Bartanen: This process would provide for a (rare) recruitment and hire process different from what is outlined in the Faculty Recruitment Guidelines. The PSC shares responsibility for some of those guidelines, as indicated under the link entitled "Status of these guidelines" at <https://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices-services/human-resources/hiring-information/faculty-recruitment-guidelines/>, which states:

"This document fulfills the expectations of the Faculty Code that the Professional Standards Committee and the Academic Vice President will develop and publish guidelines for recruiting and hiring faculty at the University of Puget Sound. The guidelines included in sections 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15 that follow are understood to be extensions of the framework stated in the Code; all involved in faculty searches should normally adhere to these guidelines. Any substantive changes to these sections of the Faculty Recruitment Guidelines require the agreement of the Professional Standards Committee and the Academic Vice President. Changes not considered substantive would include names, titles, email addresses, or telephone extension numbers.

"Some details of the search process are more technical or logistical, specifically those in sections 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, and 16. The guidelines in these sections may be altered according to circumstances at the discretion of the Academic Vice President."

A number of issues and questions were raised by the committee, as follows:

1. How transparent is this process of undertaking an opportunity hire going to be? A number of departments really feel the need for another tenure-line person. Is this going to step on their toes and offend them? Does this take away from the issue of where the need for staff is the greatest?

This was followed by some discussion about the needs of departments versus the opportunity to hire a particular person into a particular department.

2. What do we mean by “special opportunity”? Do departments create an opportunity or does it come to them? Some discussion of this question ensued, including the idea that a department might come across a possible candidate for this type of hiring in a variety of ways (as part of a current faculty search, through professional contacts, etc.).

3. The impression the committee had of the intention of the policy is that it is particularly focused on opportunities to hire faculty members from historically underrepresented groups.

4. The committee discussed the fact that this policy introduces a method by which a department can eliminate the need for a national search for a tenure-track colleague. Does the elimination of a national search mean elimination of “equal opportunity in hiring”? One reason to have a policy like this in place is to increase transparency of the process for hiring without conducting a national search.

One committee member asked, “How specific are the Faculty Recruitment Guidelines about how the search is conducted?” The answer was that the guidelines talk about “casting a wide net”. It seems that ad hoc decisions by the dean can be viewed as violating that condition, so it’s important to have a policy that outlines criteria for occasional, desirable ad hoc hiring decisions.

5. One committee member asked if the policy is compatible with the spirit and letter of federal law. Dean Bartanen agreed to consult with the university’s legal counsel about this question.

6. One question raised related to the fact that the policy seemed to be specifically about diversity, but that the current wording was ambiguous about whether increasing diversity was one criterion among many or a requirement for this type of hiring. A poll was taken of the committee members, and all but one felt that the wording should be made more specific, in order to clarify that the candidate for a special opportunity hire must be from a historically underrepresented group. During that discussion, the point was also made that diversity is much broader than underrepresented groups, and that narrowing the language would discriminate against some groups of people.

7. Specific concerns with the wording of the draft policy were raised. For instance, if one reads the Faculty Code statement on hiring and the faculty recruitment guidelines, normal tenure-track faculty interviews do not require meetings with the Faculty Senate Chair or the Dean for Diversity and Inclusion. However, the draft policy states that, “The interview process will include the Chair of the Faculty Senate and the Dean for Diversity and Inclusion.” This is a departure. One committee member commented that it seems a little intrusive. In response, Bartanen pointed out that the Dean for Diversity and Inclusion participated in all tenure-line searches this year, provided feedback to the departments, but did not “vote” as part of a department or program’s determination of its recommendation regarding candidates. The policy was drafted to include the Faculty Senate Chair in order to increase transparency in instances when the policy would be implemented.

Another concern was raised related to the sentence that reads, “Nominations presented with the endorsement of multiple departments and/or programs are particularly welcome and will be considered as strong evidence of the candidate’s potential.” One committee member commented that that sentence seems ambiguous about which departments are suggesting candidates for which other departments. The committee wants to affirm the department or program’s role as the key initiator, as in the sentence under “Procedures”. One suggestion is to join the sentence in question with the paragraph that follows it.

Further discussion on the draft Faculty Opportunity Hire Policy was tabled until the next meeting. In the meantime, Bartanen will seek feedback from the university’s legal counsel about the draft policy.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Spivey

Faculty Opportunity Hire Policy - DRAFT

University of Puget Sound is committed to equal opportunity in all of its hiring practices.¹ The university also is committed to an environment that welcomes and supports diversity. We seek diversity of identity, experience, thought, perspective, and background in our students, faculty, and staff.

Policy Statement

The University of Puget Sound, in exceptional cases, supports recruitment and appointment of a tenure-line faculty member without a national search in order to take advantage of special opportunities to bring to the faculty persons of extraordinary ability and exceptional promise who will clearly further the university's mission, contribute distinctively to the curriculum, and advance the strategic goals of the campus, including its Diversity Strategic Plan. While the vast majority of tenure-line faculty appointments will continue to be made following the search processes outlined in the *Faculty Recruitment Guidelines*, this policy allows for the ability to move flexibly and proactively, to pursue special opportunity hires.

Procedures

A department, school, or program which has identified a candidate for a special opportunity hire should present a nomination proposal to the Academic Vice President/Dean. A candidate might come to the attention of university members through searches, pre- or post-doctoral fellowships, visiting faculty positions, or contacts faculty members make via engagement with professional associations or professional contexts.

The nomination should indicate how the appointment would benefit the university and present evidence for marked strength in teaching and advising, professional growth, and potential service on the part of the person proposed for the tenure-line hire. The department chair or director should provide written evidence to the Dean that a majority of the tenure-line faculty members in the department, school, or program support the nomination.

Criteria important for a special opportunity hire include:

1. The candidate is exceptional in her or his field, with a record or promise of excellence in teaching and in scholarly or creative work that would make it likely that she or he would have emerged as a top candidate in a conventional search.
2. The candidate's membership on the faculty will meet curricular needs and enhance the curriculum.
3. The candidate will help the university fulfill its mission by increasing the diversity of the faculty, particularly with regard to historically underrepresented groups.

¹ The University of Puget Sound does not discriminate in education or employment on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, age, disability, marital or familial status, sexual orientation, veteran or military status, gender identity, or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal laws. This policy complies with the spirit and the letter of applicable federal, state and local laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Nominations presented with the endorsement of multiple departments and/or programs are particularly welcome and will be considered as strong evidence of the candidate's potential.

The Dean will consult with the department(s) and/or program(s) that might be potential homes for the nominated faculty member regarding an interview process that corresponds as reasonably as possible to that for a standard tenure-line appointment, materials to be requested from the nominee, and particular provisions of the appointment, if any. The interview process will include the Chair of the Faculty Senate and the Dean for Diversity and Inclusion.

When the interview process is completed, the Dean will consult with the hosting department(s) and/or program(s) regarding their recommendation and gather input from others who participated in the interview process. In accord with the *Faculty Code*, the Dean and the President must approve all tenure-line faculty appointments.

Policy drafted: March 2015

Reviewed by: Professional Standards Committee, DATE

Approved: DATE by Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees

Added to the *Faculty Recruitment Guidelines*: DATE