

Minutes of the Professional Standards Committee
October 22, 2015

Present: Mark Reinitz (Chair), Tiffany MacBain, Garrett Milam, Jennifer Neighbors, Amy Odegard, Kurt Walls, Matt Warning, and Kris Bartanen.

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 p.m.

The minutes from the October 15, 2015 meeting were approved as drafted.

Old Business:

Philosophy Department Guidelines – A committee member brought to our attention a passage in the submitted guideline that was not totally clear. The PSC comments regarding the document have been shared with the department and the committee is awaiting their response. The PSC chair will contact the department seeking clarification on this additional point.

Interpretations to the Faculty Code related to Title IX – The chair updated the committee regarding his attempts in scheduling Michael Benitez, Dean of Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Officer for Puget Sound, to join the PSC for some enlightenment regarding Title IX as related to work on Faculty Code interpretations. Dean Bartanen will attempt to arrange a PSC meeting time with Michael Benitez.

New Business:

Proposed amendment to the faculty code regarding criteria for promotion to Full Professor – The discussion started with the proposed amendment by two faculty members to Chapter 3, Section 3e of the Faculty Code. The existing code reads as follows:

Advancement to the rank of full professor is contingent upon evidence of distinguished service in addition to sustained growth in the above-mentioned areas.

It became clear to the members in the room that, due to an ambiguous sentence, the current code language is interpreted differently by various departments. The PSC past chair MacBain noted that in the 2015 end-of-year report the PSC charged itself to “review and consider revising” the code statement above; the charge stems from a request made by faculty members on the same subject (see Appendix E of 2014-15 PSC year-end report). All concurred that this matter should go to the full faculty, perhaps by way of the Faculty Senate, and that the PSC needs to gather more information prior to developing a plan to proceed. A subcommittee will confer with Ellen Peters, Institutional Research, to develop a survey for department chairs aimed at understanding how departments have interpreted this piece of the code.

Senate charge regarding additional time for students with disabilities to complete Instructor and Course Evaluation forms – After a brief discussion and consensus,

the committee concurred to have Dean Bartanen contact Peggy Perno and develop a plan to allow students with disabilities more time.

The Senate charge to the Professional Standards Committee to assay studies of biases to which students' evaluations of teaching are prone and to recommend to faculty those studies, if any, that should inform faculty discussion of biases in student evaluations – The committee understands that PSC oversees the student evaluation of instructors but wasn't clear why the senate wants this committee to ~~examine~~ determine the quality of such studies. The chair will contact the faculty senate chair to request clarification of the charge.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kurt Walls