

Faculty Handbook Committee
Minutes

Date: April 24, 2009
Time: 1:00 PM
Place: Dolan, E244
Attendance: Dwight, Bob, Brenda, Marcy, Jackie, Sheila.

This was the thirteenth meeting of the 2008-2009 academic year.

The purpose of this meeting was to explore re-drafting a proposal for practitioner-in-residence faculty members that would be consistent with the Faculty Handbook. Invited guests included John Day, Karen Schuele, and Brendan Foreman. Linda Eisenmann and Jerry Weinstein were unable to attend.

The Handbook Committee did agree that it would be willing to craft an amendment that would be consistent with the present handbook. Several issues are troublesome. The first is the question of tenure. The Handbook Committee maintains the Handbook position that a faculty member entering his eight year would have de facto tenure. It is opposed to setting up what would essentially be a two-tiered system, having a set of faculty who are tenured after a rigorous process, and a set who are only tenured by virtue of time served. There is also a question of what voting rights would pertain to such faculty.

The Handbook Committee sees an additional question attached to the question of how long these faculty members would remain on the faculty. In a rapidly evolving professional world, practice changes equally rapidly. If these individuals are being hired as practitioners because their expertise in their respective fields is so valuable, how long does this relevance remain current? Service on boards and in the professions is hardly the same as actual service in the workplace.

Karen Schuele replied that, from the Boler School of Business viewpoint, the individuals hired for these positions would not be considered tenurable. They are a different animal. Additionally, the individuals seeking these positions don't want it. It is most likely, that such individuals would be hired on one-year contracts, which could be extended by two or three years if they get satisfactory reviews. She did not want to be specific about a specific length of contract. By default, only the number of practitioner faculty cannot exceed 10% of the faculty in the departments. To the extent that this can be controlled, every practitioner has to be professionally qualified. They must also maintain currency in the field.

Karen said that whether faculty are professionally qualified or academically qualified, they must demonstrate this every year to the dean. Practitioners would have a list of requirements that must be met, similar to retirees who usually remain no more than three to five years. There would need to be a specific policy statement developed about practitioners and how they remain professionally qualified. This policy statement must be consistent with the AACSB, which provides a good system of checks and balances.

John Day asked if there was any organization analogous to AACSB that Education could use for developing a policy statement for its use of professional faculty. KCREP, NCATE, and NASSP were cited as three organizations which are involved in accrediting departments of education.

Brendan Foreman spoke to the position of the Department of Education. Their original idea was to hire teachers or administrators who had served a lengthy term to retirement who have a proven record of achievement. Generally these would be individuals who want to give back to the profession by teaching students and guiding students into teaching careers. They could use their connections in the field to mentor students. In the case of administrators, retired superintendents could help build professional programs and bring in grant funding. It is unlikely that these individuals would have time to pursue tenure. He views these professional faculty candidates as quasi administrators/quasi faculty. He would like them to have a voice in the future direction of the department.

Jackie Schmidt would like to see that positions of this type are available to other departments which might find them relevant. She would want them to teach, not serve as administrators. There are probably standards for such hiring that could be applied even if the department is not part of an official governing body like the AACSB. Communications is starting to look at programs that might require a mix of both academically-qualified and professionally-qualified faculty.

Karen said that the Boler School already has a policy for hiring in place and criteria for evaluation. Sheila McGinn countered that the Boler School can look at this issue across the whole department, but in the case of Arts & Sciences, it would be undesirable for individual departments to have free reign. Jackie wouldn't want to have separate policies for the School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. She feels we are too small a school for that.

On the matter of voting, Karen suggested that practitioners in the Boler School might be restricted to voting within the school.

Jackie made the point that individuals who were not tenurable should not have voting rights on tenure matters.

Bob concluded the meeting by saying that the Handbook Committee would begin working on this. He said that this wouldn't happen overnight, but that the goal would be to come up with a proposal that meets some of the desires of the Boler School. Karen was asked to forward the policies that she referred to relative to hiring and evaluation.