

## **Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee 2021-2022 Annual Report**

Co-Chairs: Babs Davis and Rona Donahoe  
Members: Seth Bordner, Cecily Collins, Dan Joyner, John Latta, Rebecca Owings, Cynthia Peacock, John Petrovic, Stephanie Shelton, Weihua Su, Nelle Williams  
Meetings: 9/7/21, 8/5/21, 10/2/21, 11/30/21, 2/1/22, 4/5/22

### **Faculty Handbook**

The following changes to the Faculty Handbook have been approved for implementation on August 16, 2022:

- Contribution of Administrative Duties to Promotion and Tenure Decisions - Chapter 2, Section I. (pages 13-14); Chapter 2, Section IV, A.1.c-d. (pages 27-28); Chapter 2, Section IV, A.2.c-d. (pages 30-31)
  - Changes clarify that administrative or service duties do not provide an alternative route to tenure and/or promotion and deans/department chairs should assign time-intensive administrative appointments to associate and full professors (with the most time-intensive appointments being reserved for full professors)
- External Letters for Tenure, Promotion, and University Professorships - Chapter 2, Section II, E.4. (university professorships, page 22); Chapter 2, Section VII. (tenure and promotion, page 37)
  - Changes indicate an expected number of external letters from up to three outstanding scholars in the field who either (1) hold appointments at R1 universities or (2) have appointments at other types of universities but have demonstrably exceptional records of scholarship. These scholars are to be “arms-length” from the candidate. Former advisors, co-authors/co-editors, research collaborators, and former colleagues are excluded. The preponderance of letters should be from scholars of distinguished rank, named chairs, or similar titled professorships. When this is not possible or feasible, an explanation should be provided.
- Search Procedures for Deans, Department Chairs, Endowed Chairs - Chapter 2, Section II, D.2.b-c. (endowed chairs, page 20); Appendix A, Sections I-II, IV (deans, pages 81-82); Appendix A, Sections V, VI (chairpersons, pages 84-85)
  - The proposed revisions state that search committees will keep applicant names and application material in confidence for dean, department chair, and endowed chair searches. Only candidates who are chosen and agree to be finalists and interview on campus will be made public
  - This draft also includes language that (1) standardizes the type of evaluation committees should provide to deans or the provost for department chair and dean searches,

respectively; (2) clarifies the duties of the committee, dean, and provost; and (3) sets the expectation that the committee solicit (versus encourage) input from faculty

- Graduate Faculty Appointments - Chapter 2, Section XI. (page 42); Appendix J. (page 153)
  - The Graduate School and the Graduate Council requested that the qualifications for graduate faculty status be moved to the Graduate Catalog
- Copyright Policies, Intellectual Property and Patent Procedures - Chapter 3, Section XIII. (page 61); Appendix G. (page 130)
  - The Office for Research & Economic Development requested that this policy be removed and replaced by a stand-alone policy out of their office
- Maternity and Parental Leave - Chapter 4, Section II. C-D (pages 66-68)
  - The first change in this section extends paid maternity leave to faculty in their first year, previously faculty had to be employed for at least one year before they could request paid maternity leave. This change is consistent with the new Paid Parental Leave policy. With the addition of the new Paid Parental Leave policy, faculty who give birth are eligible for eight weeks of paid maternity leave for recovery under the Faculty Handbook maternity leave policy and an additional four weeks of bonding under the University's paid parental leave policy.
  - The second change in this section removes “parental leave associated with adoption, foster care, or childbirth” from the list of other FML-covered leaves and informs faculty that paid leave for bonding associated with adoption, foster care, and childbirth is provided by the University's Paid Parental Leave Policy. This policy provides all faculty with four weeks of bonding-time for adoptive, fostered, or newborn children (in addition to eight weeks of recovery for childbirth described above).
- Leaves Associated with Distinguished Fellowships, Awards, and Grants - Chapter 4, Section II. E. (pages 69-70)
  - Encourages, **but does not require**, faculty to take leaves associated with fellowships during their sabbatical. The application process for sabbaticals has long encouraged faculty to seek external funding to support their sabbatical and this change makes that expectation consistent.
  - Makes explicit that this policy covers leaves for fellowships beyond Fulbright Fellowships.
  - Allows faculty to have compensation to flow through the university if they choose, instead of being paid directly to them (there are often tax implications to faculty accepting the award directly).
  - Make leaves more manageable for home departments and lessen the burden on other faculty by (1) limiting leaves to two-years, (2) granting leaves no more than once every four years, and (3) setting the expectation that faculty return to the UA faculty for at least one year after being granted a leave (this is consistent with the policy for sabbaticals).

- Academic Misconduct Policy – Appendix C
 

The following changes to the Academic Misconduct Policy have been approved:

  - The first change concerns the time limit a student has in which to respond to a charge of academic misconduct. If a response is not received within five days, the student will receive a second notice from an academic monitor. After that, if there is no response from the student, the charge will move forward without the involvement of the student.
  - The second issue concerned the possible need of a translator for a student with language difficulties. The University will be responsible for scheduling and providing a translator.
  - The guidelines are not clear concerning who can be a monitor. The committee recommended previous classroom experience be required to serve as a monitor.
  
- Other Minor Revisions
  - Adds date when changes are effective annually. (Welcome, page 5)
  - Clarifies that departmental and college RTP policies must be approved by the dean and provost. (Chapter 2, Section I, page 14)
  - Adds emphasis to language that already exists, stating that quality and quantity of contract and grant activities matter in appraising research contributions to the discipline for tenure and promotion. (Chapter 2, Section IV, A.1.b. and 2.b., pages 27 and 30))
  - Makes the timeline for renewable contract assistant professors applying for promotion consistent with the wording for tenure-track ranks. (Chapter 2, B., page 32))
  - Adds date by which a faculty member who received a tenure extension must notify their chair if they decide to decline that extension. (Chapter 2, V, B., page 36)
  - Adds language stipulating that committee deliberations and votes for appointment, tenure, and promotion should be kept confidential. (Chapter 2, VI., pages 36-37)
  - Adds creative activities and seeking external funding as types of work for which the university reassigns time in order to support faculty engagement. (Chapter 3, XI, A.1., page 59)
  - Clarifies that the registrar consults with the provost in setting the annual calendar. (Chapter 3, Section XVI A., page 64)
  - Removes “Pay Transparency Policy Statement” because it is now protected by state and federal law. (Chapter 3, formerly Section XIX., page 65)
  - States that deans and chairs will be evaluated on an annual basis (versus periodically) to match current practice. (Appendix A., page 80)
  - Removes stipulation that provost will meet with faculty after a decision has been made to retain or not retain a dean. This has not been past practice. (Appendix A., page 83)
  - Removes Appendix E. It is a verbatim AAUP statement from 1965 that is fully addressed by Appendix F (pages 118-120).

### **Academic Program Review Council**

Academic program reviews provide each academic unit with the opportunity to examine its strengths, weaknesses, and strategic goals in all aspects of its academic affairs. Academic program reviews are important in UA’s efforts to satisfy SACSCOC, ACHE and UAS (Board Rule 504) requirements.

- **Cycle of APR:**
  - Every eight years
- **Duration of APR:**
  - Academic program reviews will be a one-year process, with most of self-study and review completed in either fall or spring.
- **APR Council:**
  - The Academic Program Review Council will consist of 38 faculty members with proportional numbers (in parentheses) of faculty at the rank of Associate or Full Professor from the following colleges: Arts and Sciences (14), Capstone College of Nursing (2), Communication and Information Sciences (2), Community Health Sciences (2), Culverhouse College of Business (4), Education (3), Engineering (4), Honors College (1), Human Environmental Sciences (2), School of Law (2), and Social Work (2). The Council will also include an ex officio member from each of the following: Graduate School, OIE, OIRA, OUR, Student Life and University Libraries.
  - Council membership carries 3-year term with 1/3 of the council members rotating off and 2/3 of the council members staying each year. Council members will have the option for a one-time renewal for a second 3-year term.
  - Each Council member will serve on only one academic program review team per academic year.
  - Council members who serve on an APR team will receive a \$1,500 stipend while the council member who serves as chair of each review team will receive a \$3,500 stipend.
- **APR Team:**
  - Each academic program review will be comprised of 2-4 APR Council members and an external reviewer. A department can only forego the addition of an external reviewer with approval of the dean. The associate provost for academic affairs will select team members based on the expertise of the faculty.
  - External reviewers should come from aspirational programs. The dean will recommend the name of external reviewers to the associate provost for academic affairs.
- **Departmental Visit**
  - Each academic program review will include a two-day departmental visit, which can be held either on site or virtual.
- **OIRA Data:**
  - OIE will assist in notifying and getting the OIRA data for the departments.
- **Academic Analytics Data:**
  - Academic departments are encouraged to use Academic Analytics data, when they are appropriately available, in benchmarking its research profile and productivity among its peers.
- **Academic Program Reviews and academic department annual reviews**
  - Strategic action plans developed during academic program review are expected to be reviewed annually as part of the department annual review. A third year follow up will be completed to assess the progress of the strategic action plans of the department.

## **General Education Reform**

General Education Reform appeared to be in limbo for the 2021-2022 academic year. The Academic Affairs Committee discussed concerns about the Administration's commitment to education reform and has requested that the process move forward, with the Faculty being allowed to vote for a model in Fall 2022.

## **Committee Focus Areas for 2022-2023**

**Faculty Handbook Changes** - In particular, revisions will be made to:

- Chapter 2 – Faculty Personnel Policies
- Appendix B – Mediation and Grievance System

## **General Education Reform**