

## **FACULTY SENATE MINUTES**

**April 14, 2004**

The Faculty Senate of the University of North Alabama met April 15, 2004 in the Faculty/Staff Commons of the University Center at 3:30 p.m.

President Barrett called the meeting to order and recognized the following proxies: Dr. Craig Robertson for Senator Takeuchi from Sociology and Ms. Debbie Chaffin for Senator McDaniel from Information Technologies.

The following senators were present: Adams, Adler, Armstrong, Atkinson, Barrett, Blose, Bobek, Butler, Crisler, Figueroa, Ford, Himmler, Holley, Hudiburg, Jobe, Keckley, Leonard, Loew, Makowski, Martin, Menapace, Myhan, Osborne, Parris, Robinson, Rock, Roden, Turner, VanRensselaer, Webb, and Wilson.

The following senators were absent without proxy: Cai, Davidson, Foote, Gorham, Gothard, Haggerty, and Tunell.

President Barrett requested the proposed agenda be amended to add under New Business item D. Nomination of Senators for Presidential Search Committee. Senator Makowski moved the adoption of the amended agenda. Senator Hudiburg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Senator Makowski moved the approval of the March 18, 2004 minutes. Senator Webb seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

President Barrett reported from the Board of Trustees meeting. He was pleased to hear the use of the term "shared governance" several times in the remarks of Board President Billy Don Anderson. The Board of Trustees seems to be pleased with how the shared governance concept is working.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Senate Committee Reports:  
Dr. Craig Robertson presented a report from the Faculty Affairs Committee. (See Attachment A) The Committee had been charged with examining the promotion and tenure policy and how our process compared with peer institutions. Senator Makowski moved that the report be accepted and ask that the committee continue to act on the questions which were identified in the report. Senator Blose seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Shared Governance Committee Reports:
  - 1. Senator VanRensselaer reported that the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee is continuing to work on the budget.
  - 2. Senator Hudiburg reported that the Faculty/Staff Welfare Committee has recommended that the Wellness Center be continued. There will be a task committee organized to oversee the Wellness Center.
- C. Dr. Craig Robertson presented the Faculty Attitude Survey report. The report will be circulated to the faculty by email. There was a fifty-five percent response rate. Senator Blose moved to accept the report. Senator Figueroa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- D. The Search Committee for the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences reported that the new Dean of Arts and Sciences will be on campus on July 1.
- E. Senators Osborne, Wilson and Parris were elected to the Nominating Committee.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. President Barrett reminded the senators that elections for new senators must be by the last week of April and the new members will begin their service on May 1.
- B. After President Potts announced that he was taking the job of Chancellor for the North Dakota system, Board President Anderson put together a sketch of a national search at the regular Trustees meeting. A national search firm, ESS has been hired. This firm has been on campus, meeting with focus groups including the Senate Executive Board, the Shared Governance Committee, the National Alumni Association Executive Board, the Council of Deans, the Staff Council and the SGA. After reading the information provided by ESS, there was concern that their recommendations would not fit our model of shared governance. It was also shared with ESS that it was important to have a trustworthy search. The Board of Trustees will have a work session next Tuesday.
- C. Senator Makowski proposed to the senate that UNA be the first to form an Ad hoc Committee for State Political Relations Committee in order to have a strong presence with the Higher Education Partnership and to make our voice heard.
- D. Senator Blose moved to suspend the rules in order that a vote could be taken to select a slate of nominees for selection on the Presidential

Search Committee. Senator Webb seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Senators Webb, Barrett, and Makowski were nominated. Senator Adams moved to close the nominations. Senator Butler seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Senator Blose moved to approve the slate of nominees. Senator Jobe seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**ADDITIONAL ISSUES:**

The Alabama Senate revision of educational funding has approximately 26 million extra but does not contain a reversal of the requirement of the institution paying the cost of retirees' PEEHIP cost. Senator Hudiburg reported that this year the cost is approximately \$800,000 for UNA retirees.

Senator Roden moved the meeting be adjourned. Senator Adler seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

## ATTACHMENT A



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*Department of Sociology*

### Memorandum

To: Doug Barrett, Ph.D.  
Faculty Senate President

From: Craig Robertson, Chair, Faculty Affairs Committee

Date: January 15, 2009

Re: Committee Report – Promotion and Tenure Policy Review

#### Introduction and Method

The Faculty Affairs Committee was charged with examination promotion and tenure procedures with the goal of identifying to what extent UNA's current procedures complemented those of our peer institutions. To reach our goal, each committee member was charged with examining the promotion and tenure procedures of UNA's Southeastern peer-institutions through examination of printed or on-line faculty handbooks or through direct conversations with personnel at the sampled institutions. The committee created a questionnaire to structure their inquiry (see Appendix A) of 19 randomly sampled institutions (see Table 1) drawn from a listing of 64 institutions provided by UNA's Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.

**Table 1. Sampled Institutions**

Auburn University-Montgomery	Troy State University-Dothan and Troy (2)	University of North Florida	Augusta State University	Columbus State University	Georgia Southern University
State University of West Georgia	Eastern Kentucky University	Northeast Louisiana University	Delta State University	North Carolina Central University	University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Austin Peay	Sul Ross	Indiana	Louisiana	Appalachian	Francis

State University	State University	University-South Bend	State University-Shreveport	State University	Marion University
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## Findings

Observations from reviews of the 19 sampled schools are presented below for each question.

### **Question 1. "Is salary linked to promotion?"**

Ten of the 19 schools linked a salary increase to promotion. Of the remaining schools, three attached caveats to their policy making clear classification difficult (e.g., at Austin-Peay, state budgetary problems may negate increases, or, as was the case with LSU-Shreveport, promotion was defined as "advancement to a higher rank, with or without a salary increase") or clearly stated that salary increases were attached to other measures of academic performance. Three schools did not attach salary increases to promotion and we were unable to determine the policy or practice at the remaining two schools.

Clearly, UNA's practice of attaching a salary increase to promotion is consistent with our peer institutions. However, we should examine whether our current system...

- 1) should be the primary determinant of salary increases or should the potentials of a merit-based system be examined.
- 2) produces a distribution of faculty salaries by rank that is comparable to the distributions of other peer regional institutions.
- 3) is anomalous given the monetary sums attached to promotion.

### **Question 2. "Is the process committee driven or does individual decision-making predominate?"**

A committee-based model drove the promotion and tenure process in 17 of the 19 schools.

Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?

### **Question 3. "If the process is committee driven, check the level/s where you found such committees."**

Dept. Committees = 17 of 17  
 College Committees = 7 of 17  
 University Committees = 8 of 17

Toward the bottom of the administrative organizational structure, department committees predominate. Since our data suggest that the committee model is

clearly less likely once a candidate's promotion or tenure portfolio leaves the academic department level, UNA's model is consistent with our peer institutions. However, we should examine whether our current system...

- 1) requires more accountability at the college and university levels where individual decision-making more likely predominates.
- 2) encourages use of more informal processes (e.g., personal relationships, private meetings) to influence decisions at the college and university levels.
- 3) **Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

**Question 4. "Does the applicant receive feedback at each stage of the promotion process?"**

Seventeen of the 19 schools had policies requiring that the applicant receive stage-by-stage feedback regarding their promotion/tenure status but two of these schools had language stressing that applicants "should" receive such feedback.

UNA's promotion and tenure policies clearly appear at odds with its peer institutions. Such disjunction reinforces the need to address the aforementioned questions attached to **Question 3**. In addition, we should examine...

- 1) how a system might be constructed at each level of the process to inform those candidates who were unsuccessful in the promotion and tenure process and explain why they were unsuccessful.
- 2) whether fear of legal repercussions has negatively impacted the desire to provide candidates with necessary feedback.

**Question 5. "If the applicant received feedback, is the representative at that stage of the process responsible for explaining the reason for the decision to the applicant?"**

Thirteen of the 19 schools provide feedback and explanations to promotion and tenure candidates though there was variation regarding who was responsible for providing feedback. At some of these schools, the Chancellor or VP for academics is responsible for notifying candidates whereas in other schools that responsibility rests with the candidate's immediate supervisor. At the remaining schools, the practice appeared very private or shielded from scrutiny.

UNA's policy directs the VPAA to inform college deans, candidates and department chairs of the candidate's success or failure. The current policy emphasizes that the peer promotion committee and the department chair will provide candidates with written commentary regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their portfolios. We should examine whether our current system...

- 1) should require deans to provide candidate with written feedback.
- 2) should require that candidates receive feedback immediately after the first negative appraisal of their portfolio.
- 3) should require individuals, who go against the dept/committee or anyone else in the chain, to provide candidates a written explanation explaining why a dissenting opinion was given.

**Question 6. "Are applicants instructed to limit the overall size of their promotion application and/or supportive materials?"**

Sixteen of the 19 schools placed no limit upon size of promotion application materials. Application materials were generally described in terms of two separate units where one unit was the portfolio (limited at UNA to 10 pages) and the other was supporting documentation (which at UNA is placed in an area specified by the Dean for review by all parties involved in the promotion process). Our committee was unable to determine if limits on portfolios were imposed at the remaining schools.

UNA stands out among our peer institutions by restricting the length of both promotion and tenure portfolios to 10 pages. We should examine whether this system...

- 1) places applicants on more equal footing by imposing upon them a more standardized method of documenting their accomplishments or whether such standardization detracts from the applicant's ability to more freely express their case for promotion or tenure.
- 2) **Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

**Question 7. "Are applicants instructed to include supportive materials since their last promotion or for a specified number of years prior to their latest promotion, or are not limits applied?"**

Since last promotion: 4 of 19

Specified number of years prior to latest promotion: 4 of 19

No limits applied: 9 of 19 (2 of these schools "suggested" limits)

Other: 1 of 19

Could not determine: 1 of 19

UNA places no restrictions on promotion and tenure applicants related to the dated reporting of accomplishments and other supportive materials. Our data suggest that this policy is not widespread among our peer institutions since eight (possibly 9) schools place time-based limits on what can be reported in the current portfolio. We should examine...

- 1) whether, given the overall lack of promotions at UNA, a change in policy would adversely affect faculty at the various stages of their professional careers.
- 2) if restrictions emphasizing inclusion of accomplishments within a given time frame might encourage greater productivity among faculty.
- 3) **Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

**Question 8. "Is a system of weights clearly identified in the promotion instructional materials?"**

A system of weights was clearly identified in 12 of the 19 schools studied. Five schools had no such system and no determination could be made in two schools. Weighting systems in two schools were variable in the sense that they could be determined by the academic departments or individual faculty member.

Consistent with our peer institutions, a system of weights is in place at UNA. UNA affords promotion applicants the "flexibility to use his or her own discretion as to how best to demonstrate effectiveness in" teaching/library effectiveness, scholarly or creative performance, university/community service, and other relevant information. Applicants essentially designate their own weighting system in their cover letter while recognizing that they cannot be totally deficient in any one area. We should examine...

- 1) whether it is possible for committees or individual decision-makers to fairly evaluate portfolios grounded in disparate applicant-imposed weighting systems.
- 2) **Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

**Question 9. "If a system of weights is identified, is there specificity regarding how weights are to be calculated by reviewers?"**

Six of the 12 schools with a weighting system specifically stipulated how they were defined and one of the six schools had a system in place that only weighted teaching effectiveness. Five of those 12 schools did not specify their system of weights.

Since UNA affords applicants discretion in specifying weights, we are not substantively different from our other peer institutions.

**Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

**Question 10. "Does the university provide applicants with forms to standardize the process?"**

Nine of the 19 schools provided applicants with forms to standardize the promotion and tenure processes. Eight schools did not provide forms though one of the eight did provide a checklist describing the process. It was not possible to make a determination with the remaining two schools.

The only standardized form that assists promotion applicants is found in the Faculty Handbook - Appendix 3C.

Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?

**Question 11. "Does the university provide evaluators with forms to standardize the process?"**

Five of the 19 schools provided evaluators with forms to standardize the process while nine schools provided no such forms. It was not possible to make a determination with the remaining five schools. Where forms were provided, one school provided them at the departmental chair, departmental committee and college levels and another school provided a form only for the applicant's immediate supervisor.

UNA appears much like its peer institutions in that standardized forms are not employed to guide decision-making for individuals or groups that evaluate promotion materials. We should examine...

- 1) whether such forms are practical given a system of differential weighting.
- 2) whether such forms might be created to better rank applicants on more standardized measures of performance (e.g., teaching evaluations).
- 3) Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?

**Question 12. "Does the university provide training for applicants?"**

Thirteen of the 19 schools provided no training for applicants. In the five schools where training was provided one school provided such training in a center devoted to faculty teaching and electronic learning and two schools provided workshops for faculty.

Does anyone know if UNA has or has ever sponsored workshops to assist faculty with faculty with development of promotion and tenure portfolios or to otherwise educate faculty as to the process and expectations?

**Question 13. "Does the university provide training for evaluators?"**

Fourteen of the 19 schools provided no training for evaluators. Workshops were used in two of the four cases where schools had evaluator training. It was not possible to make a determination for the remaining school.

UNA would appear to be no different from our peer institutions in this regard.

Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?

**Question 14. "Does the university consider academic advisement responsibilities as an element of faculty excellence?"**

Thirteen of the 19 school considered academic advisement responsibilities as an element in defining faculty excellence. The six remaining schools did not consider this factor as part of the promotion and tenure process.

**Are there any issues or questions that should be asked here?**

In closing, the Faculty Senate should explore whether any new policy regarding promotion and tenure would affect university employees currently in the probationary tenure period.

APPENDIX A

Page 1	SCHOOL 1 (Write in the name of the school you review)	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3	SCHOOL 4
Is salary linked to promotion?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Is the process committee driven or does individual decision-making predominate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
If the process is committee driven, check the level/s where you found such committees.	Dept. Committee College Committee Univ. Committee			
Does the applicant receive feedback at each stage of the promotion process?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
If the applicant received feedback, is the representative at that stage of the process responsible for explaining the reason for the decision to the applicant?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

Are applicants instructed to limit the overall size of their promotion application and/or supportive materials?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	No	No	No	No

Page 2	SCHOOL 1 (Write in the name of the school you review)	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3	SCHOOL 4
Are applicants instructed to include supportive materials since their last promotion or for a specified number of years prior to latest promotion application, or are no limits applied?	Since last promotion Specified number of years prior to latest promotion No limits applied Other (attach brief explanation)	Since last promotion Specified number of years prior to latest promotion No limits applied Other (attach brief explanation)	Since last promotion Specified number of years prior to latest promotion No limits applied Other (attach brief explanation)	Since last promotion Specified number of years prior to latest promotion No limits applied Other (attach brief explanation)
Is a system of weights clearly identified in the promotion instructional materials?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
If a system of weights is identified, is there specificity regarding how weights are to be calculated by reviewers?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Does the university provide applicants with forms to standardize the process?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

Does the university provide evaluators with forms to standardize the process?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	No	No	No	No

Page 3	SCHOOL 1 (Write in the name of the school you review)	SCHOOL 2	SCHOOL 3	SCHOOL 4
Does the university provide training for applicants?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Does the university provide training for evaluators?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Does the university consider academic advisement responsibilities as an element of faculty excellence?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No