

Minutes
Commission on Faculty Affairs
March 5, 2021
10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Videoconference

Present: B. Hicok (presiding), M. Abbas (Faculty Senate), S. Barrett (Faculty Senate), A. Bond (CAPFA), J. Finney (Provost, ex officio), D. Givens (Dean), J. Hawdon (Faculty Senate), A. Nelson (Faculty Senate), T. Schenk (Faculty Senate), R. Sebek (Staff Senate), C. Thompson (Graduate Student Assembly), R. Weiss (Faculty Senate).

Vacancy: SGA

Not in Attendance: R. Blythe (Dean), A. Shew (Faculty Senate), D. C. Myers (Faculty Senate).

Guests: L. Byrd (OVPRI), C. Miliano, postdoc neuroscience, member of Commission on Research, L. Miner (OVPRI), D. Musick (VTCSOM), A. Myers (Governance), E. Plummer (Provost's Office), Robin Queen (Faculty Senate).

B. Hicok called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. A quorum was present (50%+1 of current membership = 8).

1. **Approval of Agenda.** Members of the commission moved and voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Members of the commission moved and voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2021 meeting.
3. **1st reading of CFA 2020-21G: Resolution to Extend Term Limit for Postdoctoral Associate Faculty Appointment.** Commission members discussed the benefits of supporting this resolution to support maximum flexibility for the recruitment and retention of postdoctoral associates.
4. **2nd reading of CFA 2020-21E: Resolution to Amend Faculty Senate Operations.** The commission unanimously passed the resolution to amend faculty senate operations.
5. **2nd reading of CFA 2020-21F: Resolution to Approve the Awarding of Tenure in the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine.** The commission unanimously passed the resolution to approve awarding tenure in the VTCSOM.
6. **Discussion on the evaluation of teaching.** Commission members discussed and raised questions about the processes for evaluating teaching. Concerns expressed include: the bias inherent in evaluations, making distinctions between an evaluation of the teacher and evaluation of the learning experience, the use of the SPOT scores specifically in annual evaluations as well as in promotion discussions; inconsistent use of SPOT scores across departments and colleges.

Commission members discussed a variety of approaches to analysis of quantitative and qualitative data expressed in teaching evaluations and SPOT scores/comments. Teaching evaluations change over time and have different implications for pre and post-tenure faculty, and faculty who are women, people of color, have disabilities, and others who don't meet the students' expectations for what a professor ought to look like. Members brainstormed additional ways in which to administer the SPOT to minimize "noise" from useful evaluative comments from students. Ideas include: anonymous evaluations, a random sample of students, Changes to current processes ought to be considered in the context of resources including administrative time and impact of the change. Three things changed quality of SPOT: taking administration away from faculty, using an app, reminders for 3 weeks that students screen out and don't read. Commission members agreed to continue to the conversation and propose possible improvements

7. Other business.

8. Adjourn. There being no further business, the commission adjourned at 11:50.

Next meeting is March , 2021 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.