

MINUTES
January 24, 2020

Commission on Faculty Affairs
10:30 – 12:00 Noon
330 Burruss Hall

In attendance: Masoud Agah, Aaron Bond (online), Greg Daniel, Jack Finney (ex officio), James Hawdon, Bob Hicok, Zachary Mackey, Margarita McGrath, Amy Nelson, Todd Schenk, Robert Sebek, Robert Weiss.
Not in attendance: Monty Abbas, Richard Blythe.

Guests: Hannah Kuneyl, David Musick (VTC SOM, online), April Myers, Ellen Plummer.

Not appointed: SGA representative

- 1. Approval of agenda** **B. Hicok**
Agenda was unanimously approved

- 2. Approval of December 6, 2019 CFA minutes** **B. Hicok**
Minutes were unanimously approved

- 3. Discussion of CFA2019-20B (Chapter 3 revision)** **B. Hicok**
Commission members reviewed and discussed revisions to promotion and tenure sections of Chapter 3 of the Faculty Handbook. The resolution (CFA 2019-20B) and proposed revisions are scheduled for a second reading and vote in CFA in February. Of note are the following:
 - Section 3.4 includes language that makes clear that expectations for promotion and tenure are voted upon by the appropriate body of faculty in each department. Discussion included the nature of review and approval processes at the college level and review by the office of the provost. The desire of the commission is for it to be clear in the Faculty Handbook that the appropriate faculty members in each department have the authority to approve and revise promotion and tenure expectations. The commission also intends for it to be clearly stated that expectations and processes for promotion and tenure will go through all appropriate vetting and governance processes with department faculty having final approval of all changes. In addition to the substance of expectations, department faculty are to be involved, as appropriate, in approving processes such as elections and appointments to promotion committees. Specific feedback on expectations include the addition of a table of contents such that expectations documents are easy to navigate. Expectations need to be defensible by all levels of approval for promotion and tenure: department, college, university, provost, and president. Transparency, flexibility, and fairness are key components of the expectations document and guidelines.

- Section 3.4.4 outlines the general expectations for promotion and/or tenure. The intent of the language in this section is to standardize the use of the terms *teaching, scholarship, and service* that describe the three areas necessary for promotion and/or tenure. Each department faculty will state expectations for achievements in teaching, scholarship, and service that properly reflect the commitment of the university and college. The intent of the language in the Faculty Handbook is to provide colleges and departments flexibility while ensuring that the appropriate faculty members have agreed upon and voted to approve departmental expectations. Also of note is the language that states “tenure candidates will be evaluated according to the expectations and indicators in effect at the time of their appointment.” The commission discussed that when a faculty member requests to be promoted, the faculty member will confirm the expectations and indicators they use to make their case for promotion.

4. Discussion of Faculty Handbook Chapter 5 revision

B. Hicok

This agenda item is postponed to the February 7, 2020 meeting of the commission.

5. Other Business

B. Hicok

- **E-FARS.** The commission discussed the challenges faced by faculty members in using the current Electronic - Faculty Activity Reporting System (E-FARS). Many faculty members have reported to the Faculty Senate that they are having trouble with the system and find it cumbersome. The Faculty Senate is considering writing a letter to President Sands and Provost Clarke documenting the problems and requesting dedicated effort in resolving the frustrations with the current system. The over-arching concern appears to be the absence of “user-friendliness” with the system resulting in inaccurate accounting for information. Many faculty members report that they have ceased putting their activity information into the EFARS system.
- **Governance.** A request was made that the commission receive an update on the work being done by the university’s governance task force.

6. Adjourn

B. Hicok

The commission adjourned at 11:55 a.m.