

Minutes
Commission on Faculty Affairs
March 20, 2020 – Meeting held by Zoom

In attendance: Masoud Agah, Richard Blythe, Aaron Bond, Greg Daniel, Jack Finney (ex officio), James Hawdon, Bob Hicok, Margarita McGrath, Amy Nelson, Todd Schenk, Robert Sebek, Robert Weiss.

Not in attendance: Monty Abbas, Hani Awai, Zachary Mackey.

Guests: Lynn Byrd, David Musick, Ellen Plummer. **Not appointed:** SGA representative.

- 1. Approval of agenda** **B. Hicok**
Agenda was unanimously approved.
- 2. Approval of March 6, 2020 minutes** **B. Hicok**
Minutes were unanimously approved.
- 3. 2nd reading of Resolution CFA2019-20D** (Change the Terms of Service for Faculty, Students, and Staff on University Council and Commissions) **B. Hicok**
The resolution passed unanimously.
- 4. Discussion of Policies 6100 and 6105** **B. Hicok**

University Policy 6100. Commission members discussed policy 6100 (Department Head or Chair Appointments). The provost's office, in collaboration with the Office of Governance and Policy, has requested faculty input on policies 6100 and 6105. Dee Harris, director of policy development and coordination and Ellen Plummer, associate vice provost for academic administration, have worked jointly to review and update university policies. Policies 6100 and 6105 are due for review to identify needed revisions and consistency with language in the Faculty Handbook. Input is sought from faculty members, department heads, deans, and – ultimately – the provost. Once consensus is reached and revisions are approved, it is possible that subsequent expressions of this policy will reside exclusively in the faculty handbook. This decision has not yet been made.

Commission members discussed many elements of the policy and requested that a report of questions and concerns be created for sharing with all stakeholders. For example, the commission discussed the role of search committees in the assessment of candidates for department head or chair. The commission is committed to policy language that allows for department and college variability. Commission members concur that policy language should guide and support hiring and appointment practices consistent with the Principles of Community.

Bob Hicok, Ellen Plummer, and Dee Harris will take commission feedback and review policies and language in the Faculty Handbook to identify pinch points and inconsistencies.

Policy 6105. Discussion is postponed (Periodic Evaluation of Academic Deans and Vice Presidents).

5. Other business

B. Hicok

- CFA Meeting April 4. The next meeting of the commission, scheduled for April 2nd at 10:30 will be held by Zoom and be open to all faculty who have interest in sharing concerns or have questions. Bob Hicok will set up the Zoom invitation.
- Current CFA work. In consideration of current COVID19 circumstances, work on revisions to Faculty Handbook chapters 3 and 5 is postponed.
- Dr. Clarke. Provost Clarke will be meeting with members of the Faculty Senate.
- COVID19 website. Check university's website for updates and FAQs.
- Buildings. Any concerns about groups of people meeting or gathering in closed buildings should be reported to the VT police department.
- Guidance for Faculty Members.
 - Tenure clock extension. The university's policy on extending the tenure clock is outlined in the Faculty Handbook 3.4.2.1. Requests for extensions of the clock should follow usual processes and be submitted to using current department, college, and university policies and procedures. Faculty members who have received two extensions may request a third extension of their tenure clock using existing department, college, and university policies and procedures.
 - Teaching evaluations. The university is committed to gathering teaching evaluations. Department heads will note current extraordinary circumstances to annual evaluations to provide context for teaching evaluations.
 - Instruction. Helpful to keep in mind that what we are currently offering students is emergency response teaching and not online learning. The university is committed to providing guidance on providing course work electronically and thinking ahead about next steps should on-line options continue to be required. Faculty Senate is committed to working closely with Provost Clarke and President Sands on ways to engage faculty members in thinking through next steps for instruction.

7. Adjourn

B. Hicok

The commission adjourned at 11:45.