

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
September 8, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Mitchell, Eriksson, Lener, Balci, Ball (for Chang), Sanders, Brewster, Hyer, Ayoub, Hagen.

Guests: Hardus Odendaal, Assistant Professor, Center for Power Electronics.

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with two agenda items: 1) Discussion and approval of "Survey of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty" and 2) Possible agenda items for the year. Introductions were made and the agenda was approved.

Survey of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

The lack of consistency in handling promotion and tenure cases across the university has created some problems, including some grievances. Last year, CFA drafted a resolution that addressed proposed several changes to procedures and committee structures that received the endorsement of the Faculty Senate, but failed University Council. Valerie Hardcastle suggested that the resolution may have run into trouble because the membership of CFA did not include faculty members from all colleges, where practices differ. The commission decided to seek broader faculty opinion on proposed changes through a survey. The commission discussed the draft survey which had been distributed in advance.

It was decided that a new survey would be drafted that clarifies principles, speaks to the composition of the P&T committees, and addresses the roles and the level of involvement of deans and department heads during the P&T process. Additionally, there will be a disclaimer statement that addresses the intent of the survey - to collect feedback that could possibly lead to policy change, ultimately resulting in a binding document that all departments would be required to follow.

The new survey will be sent to committee members for additional feedback and another discussion will take place at the next meeting.

Possible Agenda Items for the Year

- Promotion and Tenure Guidelines (in progress)
- Guidelines for Faculty Annual Review
  - Variation across departments; establishment of guidelines across the board
- Part-time Tenure Track Faculty Positions
  - More flexibility in hiring.
- Professor of the Practice Designation (pressing)
  - Designation would provide non-tenure track appointments; differs from adjunct; would engage in instruction and practice vs. research; some departments already trying to use this or would like to; attractive title for recruiting prestigious faculty.
- Promotion Ladder for Instructional Faculty

- Distinction for high performing instructors who stay with the university; designation could be based on experience, knowledge, rank.
- Changes to Student Perception of Instruction Survey
  - Will receive more information after Faculty Senate task force reports on proposed changes.
- Renewal Reviews
  - Dr. McNamee asked CFA to give guidance regarding renewal reviews. Should probationary reviews be more specifically addressed in the Faculty Handbook? If so, should the review be conducted on 3 – 5 year basis or 2 – 4 year basis? Do all reviews have to be on same schedule.
- Grievances and Appeals
  - What actions can be appealed/grieved? When can these actions be appealed/grieved? (Flow Chart)

Recorder, Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
September 22, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Mitchell, Hyer, Sorensen, Zahm, Sanders, Eriksson, Grene, Balci, Brewster, Ayoub, Hagen, Lener.

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with four agenda items: 1) Discussion of the Faculty Survey on Promotion and Tenure Procedures, 2) Discussion of Balci resolution on Student Evaluation of Teaching, 3) Initial discussion of Professors of Practice designation, and 4) New Business – Engineering Department Heads regarding Grievance and Resolution. The agenda and minutes were approved.

Survey of Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty

The new survey was approved for distribution with corrections. The subsequent actions of the committee will be determined once the data is collected.

Student Evaluation of Teaching

Dr. Balci presented the first reading of the Virginia Tech Student Evaluation of Teaching (VTSET) Resolution which calls for the university to adopt a new approach to the Student Perceptions of Instruction (SPOI) system. The current system has been in place for the last 40 years and the proposed VTSET system would employ a faculty-driven, course-specific, bottom up approach. The fundamental changes would result in ownership, continuous improvement, multidimensionality of teaching, and student accountability. The advantages to this system would include: more input from the faculty because the indicators would be course specific, standardized teaching assessment across the university, paperless process, and ongoing feedback (i.e. mid-semester evaluations).

Concerns addressed include:

Anonymity - Students may be less inclined to complete the survey if their PID can be traced. Even if this system reveals the identity of the evaluator, students will find alternative ways to express themselves (i.e. blogs).

Web-based v. Paper - Transition to a web-based system may not yield a high percentage of completed surveys. Incentives were suggested as a possible solution to encouraging student participation. Additionally, students should know the purpose of the survey and why their input is needed.

Promotion and Tenure – How will the results be used for promotion and tenure review? What are the requirements for the dossier? The summary report should be consistent across departments.

Policy change v. Tool – This resolution should be as general as possible (use “system” instead of “web-based”) and address the change in policy, not the tool itself. Upon the approval of this resolution, an implementation plan can be drafted that will deal with the many details.

Pilot – The resolution should speak to a piloting phase. What college(s) or department(s) will test the system? When will all colleges begin to utilize the system?

The resolution will be changed to reflect the concerns of the group. In an effort to receive more student feedback, it was suggested that Dr. Balci present the resolution to the Commission on Student Affairs.

In the interest of time, the resolution discussion and the other agenda items were tabled until the next meeting.

Recorder, Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
October 13, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Hyer, Eriksson, Lener, Balci, Sanders, Ball, Hagan, Sorenson, Mitchell, Zahm

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with three agenda items: 1) Discussion of Grievable Action Resolution, 2) Professors of Practice Designation, and 3) Discussion of the Results of the Faculty Survey on Promotion and Tenure Procedures.

Agenda and minutes of the last meeting were approved.

GRIEVABLE ACTION RESOLUTION

CFA resolution 2005-06D from last year was intended to clarify the language in section 2.13.1 of the Faculty Handbook on what is deemed a grievable issue, particularly related to promotion and tenure. The resolution was withdrawn after introduction at University Council last spring when Engineering department heads objected. Hardcastle met with the Engineering department heads in the last few weeks to learn more about their concerns, some of which involved current not new language. That discussion led to a few minor changes to the proposed language.

Ken Eriksson, who has been chairing the Faculty Senate Reconciliation Committee, spoke to the need for the changes based on the Senate's experience with several recent tenure cases. According to Eriksson, P&T committees have dealt with issues of merit and not procedure. Allowing substantive procedural violations to be pursued through the grievance process would give faculty members another appeals option and offer a checks and balances system for the process. Hyer argued the importance of leaving tenure appeals within the P&T committee structure, rather than allowing appeals through both P&T and grievance processes. If necessary, the grounds for filing an appeal could be expanded to make certain that procedural matters could be considered and dealt with.

In further discussion of the proposed list of grievable actions, the term *threat* (2.13.1 #3) was removed since commission members felt that usage of the term was too broad and could be easily misinterpreted. In addition, the proposed general language of "other matters of conflict and dispute.." was removed. General conflicts are more appropriately a matter of reconciliation and too broadly defined for a grievance.

The resolution, including the language allowing substantive violations of promotion and tenure procedures as a grievable issue, was approved with a 9-1 vote. It will be submitted to University Council for approval.

PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE DESIGNATION

The fundamental question regarding this topic is whether Virginia Tech is interested in expanding the range of non-tenure faculty appointments, not just for visitors and adjuncts, but as

an on-going full-time appointment type. A number of departments have already started using such titles even though they have not been approved, and still others have asked for more flexible options to appoint faculty members with heavy teaching and/or outreach responsibilities which would make it difficult for them to obtain tenure, or individuals with exceptional experiential credentials. The general consensus of the Commission is in support of the idea, believing that a faculty member's title should be valued and meaningful.

The following advantages and disadvantages were addressed in the discussion:

### **Advantages**

- Creating a professor of practice rank (not just adjunct or visiting) would allow greater flexibility when working with graduate students; this designation would allow faculty to participate in thesis and dissertation committees.
- Designation would give recognition to the experience and accomplishments of faculty.
- Designation would bring expertise that supports the instructional mission of the institution. This ranking would be advantageous to some departments where the title of *clinical professor* may not be as fitting (i.e. music, construction).
- Recognition that some division of labor may be beneficial and economically efficient.

### **Disadvantages**

- Increase in the number of non-tenure track positions may appear to threaten tenure.
- Overdependence on non-tenure track faculty to deliver instruction means that fewer students would be exposed to tenured or/tenure track faculty, particularly in freshman and sophomore classes.
- Creates too many distinctions. Current titles aren't clearly defined.

Commission members questioned overlap of the Professor of Practice title and the "Clinical Professor" title. Some universities (i.e. Tulane, Indiana Univ) use the clinical professor rank for the same purpose that VT would use the Professor of Practice designation. Before further action is taken regarding this matter, Hardcastle will present a comparative analysis of the existing titles.

### **RESULTS OF THE FACULTY SURVEY ON PROMOTION AND TENURE PROCEDURES**

Hardcastle distributed survey results (including comments) and gave a snapshot into the overarching themes presented:

- Professors should be included in most aspects of the P& T process while Assistant Professors should not.
- Smaller departments petitioned for flexibility.
- Respondents from Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and Agriculture and Life Sciences were overrepresented in the survey results while the College of Engineering was underrepresented.
- There is no clear mandate, either way, of concerning one vote per case.

Hardcastle will take a more in-depth look at the data. Additionally, it appears that the issues of voting and who should serve will guide the Commissions future direction.

Commission members are asked to read the survey comments for discussion at the next meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Faculty Senate voted unanimously on the multiple levels of instructors. The Commission will move forward on drafting language for a resolution concerning instructor appointments and promotions.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
October 27, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Hyer, Mitchell, Lener, Balci, Ayoub, Brewster, Grene, Eriksson, Ball

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with three agenda items: 1) SPOI Resolution, 2) P&T Evaluation Resolution/Discussion, and 3) Professor of the Practice Resolution/Discussion.

The agenda and minutes were approved.

### SPOI RESOLUTION

Dr. Balci presented a revised resolution and material on “VTSET” which would replace the current outmoded student evaluation of teaching forms. Concerns still remain. Some of these include:

- 1) Implementation across university or departments may be difficult and must be thought out in advance. Piloting the on-line evaluation system in one or more colleges could be very helpful to work out the bugs and develop a stronger commitment to university wide implementation.
- 2) Sections III – V should not be apart of the resolution
- 3) Unreasonable expectation to require university wide by Fall 2008; faculty have to buy into the idea; some departments would like to continue using a paper evaluation
- 4) Online version should be available but not mandatory
- 5) Are the policy issues different from implementation?

Hyer proposed that she convene a group to meet with Dr. Balci to work through some of the implementation issues so that the initiative might be more likely to be accepted. Terry Wildman, Tom Head, David Ford are several of the people who could be helpful.

### PROMOTION AND TENURE EVALUATION, CFA RESOLUTION 2006-07B

The revisions to the “Composition of Committees for Promotion and Tenure Evaluation” resolution were presented. The original resolution was withdrawn in the face of opposition at the University Council level last year. A number of issues were raised and the on-line survey this fall attempted to get broader faculty input on some of those issues, including department heads serving on committees, participants voting more than once on a case, deans serving and chairing committees, and so on. The revision focuses more narrowly on three changes and abandons the most controversial of the earlier proposals. Changes in this version include eligibility of associate professors to serve on departmental level committees, making the principle of one vote per case the general operating principle, and having a faculty member chair the college level committee. Department heads and members of departmental promotion and tenure committees may still serve on college committees; however, they may not vote on their own cases.

A clarification was included to recognize that librarians receive continued appointment at the assistant professor level and that all faculty members with continued appointment are eligible to serve on the departmental (library) committee. If only associates and fulls were permitted to serve, it would be difficult to populate the committees.



The resolution passed unanimously as amended and will be forwarded to University Council for first reading.

#### PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE

Hardcastle introduced the first draft of possible language for the Faculty Handbook defining the ranks of Assistant, Associate, and Professor of Practice. These definitions mimic those provided for the clinical faculty and are very general.

Discussion followed about the need for more language surrounding the terms and conditions of employment for non-tenure track faculty, including policies for promotion procedures, reappointment, length of contracts, dismissal for cause, and other matters that should rightfully differ from protections provided for tenured faculty members. Hyer recommended considering language that would address several types of non-tenure track appointments simultaneously – the clinical faculty, the professors of practice, and the expanded instructor ranks that will be brought forward shortly for approval. Hyer promised to work on this and bring it back later.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meeting on November 3, 2006 cancelled.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
November 17, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Hyer, Mitchell, Grene, Lener, Eriksson, Ball, Brewster

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with four agenda items: 1) CFA Resolution on Faculty Grievances, 2) CFA Resolution on P&T Procedures, 3) Reporting Diversity Contributions, and 4) Discussion of Annual Faculty Evaluations

The current agenda and minutes for the Oct. 27 meeting were approved.

CFA RESOLUTION ON FACULTY GRIEVANCES

Valerie Hardcastle reported on the discussion that took place at the University Council meeting during the first reading of the CFA Resolution on Faculty Grievances. The revised resolution seemed relatively unproblematic, other than a concern from Engineering about the grievability of promotion and tenure issues. The second reading will occur during the December meeting.

CFA RESOLUTION ON P&T PROCEDURES

At the first reading of this resolution at University Council, Susanna Rinehart raised the concern that the Faculty Senate had not seen the final version prior to its introduction to University Council. She requested that the resolution be referred to the Senate for that review before voting. Members of the Council approved the referral back to the Senate.

REPORTING DIVERSITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Pat Hyer presented a draft document prepared by a subcommittee of the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity which provides a framework for reporting Diversity Accomplishments. The categories were developed based on faculty reporting in promotion and tenure dossiers, where this requirement has been in place for two years, and from annual activity reports in the College of Agriculture, which is using an electronic reporting system.

The discussion centered around the following concerns/suggestions:

- The example concerning “learning another language” might be made more general and possibly reference American Sign Language
- The “Mentoring/Advising Colleagues or Other University Employees” section is somewhat problematic. Just talking to a minority faculty member should not constitute a diversity activity. Everyone should take an active role in mentoring junior faculty. The “Mentoring/Advising Colleagues or Other University Employees” section might be combined with “Exceptional individual efforts” instead to underline that what should be reported here goes beyond the usual expectation for mentoring colleagues.
- As of now, it is hard to see a direct connection between salary raises and participation in diversity activities; a point system is not in place. The purpose is to show the level of faculty engagement in these types of initiatives and to encourage greater involvement. Accountability may come with time.

It was suggested that the Deans distribute the document along with the Faculty Activity Report. The document will also be available on the Provost website.

## DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL FACULTY EVALUATIONS

Recent grievances and reconciliation cases reveal deficiencies with the current approach to faculty evaluations. In some cases, the evaluations are not being conducted at all; in others, not enough feedback is being given.

Commission members commented:

- Evaluation information needs to be distributed to the faculty member being evaluated.
- Written documentation is critical; the grievance and reconciliation process needs a paper trail.
- Issues with timing: evaluations are conducted late in the school year; when the evaluation takes place should be added to the policy.

Ken Eriksson made visits to William and Mary and to UVa last year to learn more about some of their faculty processes. He explained that William and Mary allows departments to develop individual and different procedures for evaluation, but they have an oversight committee that is responsible for approving those departmental procedures. Faculty evaluation at UVa is also very decentralized, but individual schools/units publish their own policies and procedures, and how they will be meaningfully implemented.

Issues with Pre-Tenure Evaluations

- The evaluation of pre-tenured faculty is not synchronized with the annual evaluation process; there are questions on whether it should be
- A good annual review does not always mean that there will be a positive review for reappointment or for tenure.
- Pre-tenured faculty should meet with department heads. A mandatory evaluation should be included in the policy
- Flexibility should be considered – evaluations should be given during the second and fourth or third and fifth years.
- Questions on whether pre-tenured faculty should have mentors: There is hesitation writing mentoring into the policy due to how this could be interpreted and the various mentoring models that exist.
- Peer Evaluation: Unsure of whether all departments are conducting peer evaluations of teaching for untenured faculty members. It is a university requirement.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
December 8, 2006

Members present: Hardcastle, Hyer, Lener, Easterling, Brewster, Eriksson, Hagen, Sanders, and Ball

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with four agenda items: 1) Update on CFA Resolution on Faculty Grievances, 2) Update on SPOI Initiatives, 3) Schedule for Spring Semester, and 4) Discussion of Annual Evaluations for Faculty.

The minutes were approved with one correction (“members” misspelled in the last line). The agenda was approved with one addition (Update on Professors of Practice Resolution).

UPDATE ON CFA RESOLUTION ON FACULTY GRIEVANCES

University Council approved the Resolution on Faculty Grievances with little discussion. The resolution will be sent to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

UPDATE ON SPOI INITIATIVES

A meeting was held with the major stakeholders to discuss how to move forward with Balci’s resolution. The provost will be asked to establish a task force. With the assistance from members of the Faculty Senate and Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, this task force will be charged with identifying how the SPOI is currently being used, what messages are being conveyed by what is currently being measured compared to what we want to foster in good pedagogy at Virginia Tech. The task force will then work on implementation of a new system with faculty and administrative input.

SCHEDULE FOR SPRING SEMESTER

The calendar for next spring will be emailed shortly after the meeting. The meeting time will remain the same, 1:00pm on Fridays. The following dates were confirmed: January 26, 2007, February 2, 2007, February 16, 2007, and February 23, 2007.

DISCUSSION OF ANNUAL AND PROBATIONARY EVALUATIONS FOR FACULTY

Hardcastle presented draft revised language for the Annual Evaluation and Salary Adjustment section of the Handbook. A number of suggestions were made. Hyer was charged with capturing the changes and providing a new version at the next meeting of CFA in spring term.

In regards to probationary faculty evaluations, the following feedback was provided:

- Evaluations should be conducted at either years 2 & 4 or 3 & 5

- Evaluations should be conducted by a committee; departments are encouraged to provide as much feedback as possible; feedback should be ongoing and continuous
- Peer evaluation of teaching must occur, as well as student appraisal of teaching
- Recommend using the P&T format to track activities
- Due to the possibility of legal issues, there is hesitation with departmentally mandated mentoring; however, some form of mentoring is encouraged.
- Consideration was given to providing workshops (possibly with faculty senate) on how to perform an effective peer review
- The 4<sup>th</sup> year review should be substantive and thorough
- Written feedback is critical and the faculty member being evaluated should receive recommendations
- The pre-tenure process is one of mutual responsibility. The faculty member should also be responsible for seeking feedback and mentoring opportunities.
- Minimum and consistent written standards should be maintained by the P&T committee through whatever mechanism the college identifies.

Hardcastle will work on a revision concerning probationary reviews for junior faculty.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
January 26, 2007

Members present: Easterling, Mitchell, Ayoub, Ball, Lener, Brewster, Eriksson, Hyer, Hagen

Guest(s): Carolyn Rude, Professor and Chair (English)

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with five agenda items: 1) Update on P & T resolution, 2) Revision of the scholarly misconduct policy, 3) Discussion of annual evaluation resolution, 4) Discussion of instructor ranks resolution, and 5) Discussion of professors of practice resolution. The agenda and minutes were approved.

UPDATE ON P&T RESOLUTION

The Faculty Senate is still in the process of reviewing the proposed resolution, which had been introduced for first reading at University Council. The most problematic area may be the change allowing associate professors to serve on P&T committees reviewing promotions to full professor. This would be advantageous to smaller departments, allowing more faculty members to be eligible to serve if elected.

REVISION OF THE SCHOLARLY MISCONDUCT POLICY

A committee has been formed to review Virginia Tech's policy on scholarly misconduct and to make revisions so that it is in compliance with the new federal regulations. The new guidelines are not drastically different; however, the changes may affect our graduate and undergraduate honor systems. All institutions that receive federal funding must observe these regulations. The goal is to make the necessary changes by the end of the semester so the revised guidelines would be in place by next fall.

RESOLUTION CONCERNING ANNUAL EVALUATIONS

Suggestions for the revision of the Annual Evaluation resolution were minor as far as content. Comments were as follows:

- Departments are cautious about including written guidelines concerning standards for tenure, although procedures for the tenure review process should be in writing.
- The term "pre-tenured faculty" will be used to refer to the person (rather than "probationary faculty member"); "probationary" will refer to the period.

Committee members voted unanimously in support of the resolution with the noted revisions.

Hardcastle will distribute the resolution via email for additional comments/feedback. It will then be voted on in Faculty Senate.

## INSTRUCTOR CAREER LADDER RESOLUTION

Pat Hyer and Carolyn Rude facilitated the discussion on the proposed instructor ranking system. A meeting in late summer with department heads provided encouragement to proceed, and a meeting in October with instructors provided feedback on a conceptual proposal. There was support for a three instructor ranks: instructor, advanced instructor, and senior instructor, which would provide more appropriate recognition and reward for outstanding performance over a career.

Concerns addressed:

- The statement “commensurate salary adjustment” needs to be clarified – refer to this as “promotion adjustment” instead.
- One-year initial appointments vs. Multi-year: may be important to allow multi-year initial appointments since these now occur in special negotiations. The language should be changed to “normally” or “generally.”
- Since P&T committees will facilitate the process, there are concerns of whether the instructors will be held to the same standards as junior faculty. There was assurance that the process would represent the departments and instructors point of view.
- Instructors must go through the process unsuccessfully twice before they can appeal. Unlike tenure-track faculty, instructors will not be terminated if there promotion is not supported. There is no appeals committee. The provost makes the final decision.
- Hardcastle expressed concerns with the possibility of instructors being terminated within the contract period.
- Written feedback should be given to candidates who are not promoted. This clause should be added into the policy.

## PROFESSORS OF PRACTICE

The Professors of Practice rank would allow departments to hire individuals with a professional expertise. It is at the department’s discretion as to whether they would use this rank or not. Hyer explained that the difference between this rank and an adjunct professor is that the latter is employed less than 50%, or for a very short term. “Visiting professor” is also a temporary rank with a six year limit. Professors of Practice would be a non-tenured position; they would be eligible to serve as a principle investigator. The Graduate School would decide on whether these individuals are allowed to work with master and doctoral students.

The committee will forward the resolution, along with the policies on non-tenured faculty, to the Faculty Senate.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The next meeting will be held on February 2<sup>nd</sup> with the AdvanceVT Policy Work Group.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
February 23, 2007

Members present: B. Sanders, E. Lener, R. Sorenson, S. Ball, K. Eriksson, S. Easterling, S. Anderson for S. Hagen, P. Hyer, and V. Hardcastle

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with five agenda items: 1) Update on annual evaluation resolution, 2) Re-approval of P&T resolution 3) Discussion of part-time tenure track faculty, 4) Discussion of professors of practice resolution, and 5) Discussion of instructor ladder resolution. The agenda and minutes (correction: Sanders did not attend the last meeting) were approved.

UPDATE ON ANNUAL EVALUATION RESOLUTION

Faculty Senate passed the annual evaluation resolution with no corrections.

RE-APPROVAL OF P&T RESOLUTION

Recent conversations resulted in the following substantive changes to the promotion and tenure evaluation resolution:

- P&T committees will consist of four to seven members. The subsequent clause that speaks to letters of recommendation was extracted at the suggestion of the Committee on Faculty Ethics; the policy should not advocate negative recommendations.
- Multiple votes: Easterling explained that although individuals may serve on both the college and university P&T committees, they should only cast one vote. Hardcastle suggested that participation on these committees are different in function and may be necessary for smaller departments with one to three tenured faculty (i.e. geography). Easterling maintained that the policy should not be made to accommodate smaller departments. Hyer explained that the purpose of the change in policy was to resolve the issue of multiple votes; if the resolution is approved as written, the original intent would be lost. According to Hardcastle, although the one-vote clause has been removed, the changes diminish the influence of department heads, reduce the authority of deans, and require departments to publish P&T procedures. After reconsideration, it was agreed that the one-vote clause would be added back into the resolution.

Changes will be made to the document and then resent to CFA members. The resolution will then be forwarded to University Council.

DISCUSSION OF PROFESSORS OF PRACTICE RESOLUTION

The Professors of Practice Resolution was not received well by members of the Faculty Senate. Hardcastle explained that no one was in favor of the resolution and suggested more education and discussion as to why this policy is necessary. Many questioned whether the creation of a Professors of Practice rank is the direction the university should



move towards. Although it is at the discretion of the department/college to use the rank, some faculty members fear that establishing this new rank will change the culture of the institution, cause the elimination of tenure-track positions, and possibly create second class citizenship. Easterling asked if it was necessary to have a multiple tier system versus that of a single rank. Hyer explained that other universities (i.e. Duke) use the multiple ranking system and various departments have requested to use this status. Sorenson suggested that since departments would employ the status on an exceptional basis, using the terms assistant, associate, and full would be appropriate for non-tenured appointments.

Since Faculty Senate did not vote on the proposed resolution at the last meeting, another attempt will be made. Committee members will solicit support from Ed Nelson and ask Rachel Holloway to attend the next meeting.

#### INSTRUCTOR LADDER RESOLUTION

The “Policies Related to Non-Tenure Track Instructional Appointments” document received no comments or objections during Faculty Senate. The Instructor Ladder Resolution was generally supported. Substantive conversations were as follows:

- A common university format will be used for dossiers. This includes an area for scholarship and publications. Hyer reported that although these elements are included, instructors will not be mandated to fulfill a scholarship or publication requirement. But for those who have contributions in this area, this is an opportunity for them to report.
- Clarification to the non-reappointments section of the policy was made. Before termination, employees must be notified, via writing, during the specified period as indicated in the document.
- The question of whether three ranks are necessary was raised due to the ambiguity of “advanced” and “senior.” Is there a distinction between time and service? Senior instructor and principal instructor were suggested.
- Concerns regarding contractual obligations in times of financial constraints were addressed. However, the policy already explains that in the case of insufficient funds, termination may occur.
- It is at the department/college’s discretion as to whether they choose to use the long term assignments. Restricted appointments can still be used. But only in situations that require temporary positions. Ultimately, the Dean approves all appointments.

The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the resolution. It will be forwarded to Faculty Senate and then to University Council.

#### DISCUSSION OF P-T TENURE TRACK FACULTY

Although abuse of the policy presented potential concerns for members of CFA, others viewed the position as an additional “tool in the arsenal.” Departments do not have to use the policy and positions would continue to be advertised as full-time. Hardcastle and Ball reiterated the possibility of second class citizenship for spouses who are hired on a part-time basis. Ball maintained that the college or department would have to be transparent from the beginning and explain to prospective employees that their position is a “term appointment” and does not guarantee full-time employment. She also added that the couples should know that there is potential for termination after the second year.

Hyer would make revisions to the policy, making the spousal option of part-time tenure track a temporary appointment. It will be circulated to CFA and then sent to Faculty Senate for a vote. If approved, it will be sent to University Council.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
March 22, 2007

Members present: Hardcastle, Lener, Mitchell, Brewster, Grene, Ball, Eriksson, Hyer (teleconference)

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal, Bethany Flora, Linda Woodard

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with four agenda items: 1) New Staff Policies, 2) CFA Representatives for other university/committees or commissions, 3) Part-time tenure track resolution, and 4) Scholarly misconduct policy.

The minutes were approved and agenda were approved.

NEW STAFF POLICIES

Linda Woodard, Assistant Vice President for Personnel, reported on the Higher Education Restructuring Act and the impact that this legislation will have on Virginia Tech, William and Mary, and the University of Virginia. Prior to the adoption of this policy, non-faculty personnel were categorized as “classified staff” and governed under state policies. As of July 1, 2006, this status will no longer be used; instead, the term “university staff” will apply to all new employees. With the exception of retirement, health insurance, staff grievance procedures, and workers compensation, the Board of Visitors will develop HR policies for university staff. Staff hired before July 1, 2006, are still part of the state classified system; however they will have an option to convert to university staff.

Essentially, the only difference between university and classified staff, at this point, is when they were hired. Woodard acknowledged the complexity of this issue and explained that ultimately, a commitment needs to be made to making the most improvement to benefit everyone. In June, the Board of Visitors reestablished a severance policy for individuals who are dismissed due to position elimination. Other than this change in policy, the Board has adopted a “mirror-image model.” All university and classified staff will be governed under the same policies until information is gathered and recommendations are made. Focus groups of 300 randomly selected staff and 50 supervisors were created to generate data for a survey to be distributed to all staff next month. In addition, committees were created to inform design teams for policy development. A steering committee consisting of administrators and office representatives and the Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) was also formed to assist in this endeavor. Chairs of the Commission for Faculty Affairs, Commission for Staff Policy Affairs, and Commission for Administrative and Professional Faculty serve on this committee.

Woodard intends to share the results of the survey at a later date and asked for members to contact her if any questions or concerns materialize.

## DISCUSSION OF CFA REPRESENTATIVES FOR OTHER UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES OR COMMISSIONS

Hardcastle asked members for nominations for representatives for several university committees or commissions. Representatives are as follows: Ruth Grene (Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity) and Ed Lener (Employee Benefits). Hardcastle will ask Susan Hagan to serve as the CFA liaison to the Virginia Tech Employees, Spouses, and Scholarship Committee.

## DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON PART-TIME TENURE TRACK RESOLUTION

On March 13, the Faculty Senate approved the part-time tenure track resolution with five dissenting votes and no abstentions. Concerns still remain regarding the possible exploitation of junior faculty. Grene stated that permanent part-time status should not be allowed until after tenure. She also expressed concerns with regard to start-up packages and stated that in the sciences, shared lab space is not a work environment conducive for any employee - a subordinate relationship could be established and feeling of second class citizenship may occur.

Grene made a motion to amend the resolution so that probationary faculty are only allowed “term” appointments, instead of permanent. The motion passed with one opposing vote.

The resolution as amended was then approved unanimously.

## DISCUSSION ON SCHOLARLY MISCONDUCT POLICY REVISIONS

A task force working through the Commission on Research has been working to revise the university’s policies with regard to reporting scholarly misconduct so that they are aligned with new federal guidelines. The Commission on Research is now soliciting input from CFA. They would like for the new procedures to be in place by the fall, which would require the Board of Visitor’s approval at the June meeting.

According to Hyer, scholarly misconduct violations are handled within the colleges with no consistent practice. Federal regulations require a streamlined process in which violations of academic misconduct are reported to one individual – typically a Research Integrity Officer (RIO). A new office of Research Integrity has been approved and until this position is filled in the fall, Bob Walters will be responsible for carrying out these duties.

Hardcastle explained the draft of the flow chart (Procedures for Responding to Allegations for Misconduct in Research) developed by the Health and Human Services. The following questions or concerns were raised:

- Should the RIO determine the credibility of a complaint or should this matter be handled by the Inquiry Committee?
- The standing members of the Inquiry Committee should be clearly stated in the document.
- Should the sponsoring agency be notified when an allegation is initially made or after each phase of the investigation? Notifying too soon may jeopardize future relationships if the complaint isn't substantiated.
- Appeals should not be addressed to the provost since the provost is part of the decision making chain. Hyer suggested that the President serve in this capacity and that it would be up to his discretion as to who he consults.
- If confidentiality is breached, the Faculty Ethics Committee would deal with the complaint. Members questioned whether it was necessary (as suggested) to have everyone involved sign a confidentiality agreement.
- Other than the research being sequestered, what else happens to the faculty member during the investigation?
- Clarification should be made as to who receives written notification regarding the conclusion of the investigation.

Hardcastle asked that members review the document carefully and send comments via email. Faculty Senate will need to vote on this resolution on April 10<sup>th</sup> so that it can be included with the other resolutions to be voted on during the April 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of University Council.

Hyer will revise the part-time resolution to reflect the intent of the amendment.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost

Commission on Faculty Affairs  
Minutes  
April 27, 2007

Members present: S. Ball, C. Brewster, K. Eriksson, R. Grene, S. Hagen, P. Hyer, and V. Hardcastle

Guest(s): Hardus Odendaal

Hardcastle called the meeting to order with two agenda items: 1) Discussion of Agenda Items for Next Year and (2) Discussion of P&T Resolution Changes. The agenda was approved.

DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT YEAR

**Professors of Practice**

A decision has not been reached on how to proceed with the Professors of Practice resolution. There are departments who deem the status beneficial in attracting quality candidates. However, the ranking is also viewed as a threat to tenure in fields that do not engage in traditional research (i.e. arts, architecture). For example, it is believed that there are no tenured or tenure-track positions in the performing arts department at Duke University; faculty members are classified as Professors of Practice. A possible solution to eliminate this concern is to develop a strategy where a proportion or percentage of departmental positions would be designated as Professors of Practice.

As a result of previous conversations, Faculty Senate representatives have suggested that a formal presentation be conducted during an upcoming meeting. This will allow those who are in support of the ranking to educate the general body on why this ranking is necessary.

**Faculty Ethics**

An approach on how promotion and tenure committees should handle a situation when an ethical issue is raised with respect to a candidate's dossier will be addressed next year. Should the P&T process be delayed or postponed? How and who should investigate such a concern?

**Procedures for Approval and Receiving Input on Proposed Resolutions**

Questions regarding how CFA manages feedback on proposed resolutions have been addressed. Should a formal process be in place?

**Minimum Contracts for Post-Docs**

Eriksson explained that two research faculty members from the same college, but different departments, were released from their positions prior to the contract end date. According to Hyer, restricted employees can be released from their contracts if there is a shortage of money or if there is a breach of contract (i.e. poor job performance). Eriksson contended that the issues relative to one case is that the employee was only given a

week's notice. This presents a quandary for individuals who may be in the United States on restricted visas or those who have signed year-to-year leases. To ensure financial security, Eriksson recommended that departments guarantee at least six months, if not an entire year, of support to post-docs. Conversely, Hyer maintained that this concern is more of a departmental management issue rather than a policy matter.

Hardcastle suggested that at a minimum, offer letters should be concise and address the potential for termination within the contract period. She also proposed that members of CFA meet with representatives from the research division to develop future policies.

### **Dismissal of PIs from Grants**

If a principal investigator misappropriates or misspends funding, there are currently no written procedures in place to define the process for removing that person from a grant. Eriksson suggested that CFA work with the research division and the Commission on Research to draft a possible procedure for such difficult circumstances.

### **Other Discussion Items**

Hyer asked about continued revision of the P&T section of the Faculty Handbook. The resolutions recently passed do not address all of the recommendations that CFA had discussed earlier, such as clarifying the appeal process at each level. Hardcastle suggested that CFA wait and monitor how the changes to the P&T Committee Composition resolution is received and then decide on how to proceed with further revisions of those procedures.

### **DISCUSSION OF P&T AND EVALUATION RESOLUTION**

Hyer presented the most recent version of the P&T Committee Composition Resolution. There were questions raised regarding whether a reference to a "faculty vote" would require a full college faculty vote. Hardcastle responded that her interpretation of a "faculty vote" would allow for a representative body, like a faculty association to propose and approve changes to college P&T procedures if they were so charged in college governance documents. At present, the College of Business is the only area without a faculty association. In this case, a vote from all members of the college may be necessary. After deliberation, members decided against revising the statements. Instead it can be presumed that a "faculty vote" would allow a representative body to be charged with this responsibility and that a vote of all faculty members in the college would not be required.

Hyer also addressed a minor language change with regard to the Annual and Pre-Tenure Faculty Evaluation Resolutions. At the advice of legal counsel, instead of "strongly encouraging" verbal feedback, it will be mandated in the case of pre-tenure reviews. However, the language was struck from the section on annual evaluations to avoid possible grievances. Annual evaluations must be in writing.

In regards to mentorship, Ball discussed concerns with mentors serving on the P&T Committees. If the mentor is responsible for evaluating the mentee, this may compromise the relationship. While it is at the college or departments discretion as to who is selected, she suggested that mentors not be eligible to serve on the review committee.

The first readings of the P&T and Scholarly Misconduct Resolutions will occur on April 30<sup>th</sup>; the second reading on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

Hyer and Hardcastle expressed appreciation to commission members for an exceptionally busy and productive year. Many important issues were discussed and solid work done to develop new policies, such as the part-time tenure track, and to improve existing policies.

Recorder: Tracey Cameron, Office of the Provost