Inter-Office Correspondence

TO: Rodney Bennett  
President

FROM: Steven Moser  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Faculty Handbook Recommendations

DATE: August 3rd, 2020

Below you will find recommendations from the Office of the Provost regarding changes to the Faculty Handbook as submitted by the Faculty Handbook Committee. Upon receipt of these documents, I engaged General Counsel in a review to assess for conflicts or potential risk factors. Ms. Coopers’ advice is reflected in my recommendations.

Item #1 (1.72): APPROVE. School Administration.

Item #2 (1.10.2): APPROVE. Vision 2020 cleanup in the Faculty Handbook.

Item #3 (4.5.2) APPROVE. Date change.
David Holt proposes changes to Faculty Handbook Committee Changes Concerning 1.7.2 school director requirements on February 10, 2020, tabled to March meeting to April, April vote remanded back to first vote after changes on April 13, 2020.

Original First Vote Date: February 10, 2020

Second Round

First Vote Date: April 13, 2020

First Vote Results: Full Support

Majority Opinion: 

Minority Opinion: 

Length of Review and Potential Second Vote Date: 1 Month, May 11

University Counsel Opinion: 

Employee Handbook Opinion: 

Faculty Senate Opinion: Majority of Senate want Tenure-track as SDs

Council of Directors Opinion: Unanimous support for new version

Deans Opinion: 

Vice President of Research Opinion: 

Provost Opinion: 

Second Vote Results: Passed 7-1-0-0

Majority Opinion: Gives deans leeway on choice but the “should” means they would need to justify

Minority Opinion: Should be tenure or tenure-stream

Presidential Approval or Rejection with date: 

The original language from the handbook

I move that the following section:

4.5.2 Faculty Evaluation Meetings

1.7.2 School Administration

School directors are the chief administrative officers of schools and report to the dean. They are responsible for the general direction and supervision of the school, including administrative and personnel responsibilities. Directors manage school budgets and oversee academic program delivery in consultation with school faculty. They assign service responsibilities and promote research and creative
activity. Directors evaluate academic personnel and staff and make recommendations regarding salaries, promotions, tenure, and retention of school employees.

Have its language changed to (recommended changes in blue)

1.7.2 School Administration
School directors are the chief administrative officers of schools and report to the dean. School directors must be members of the corps of instruction and should be tenure-stream and either an associate professor or professor. They are responsible for the general direction and supervision of the school, including administrative and personnel responsibilities. Directors manage school budgets and oversee academic program delivery in consultation with school faculty. They assign service responsibilities and promote research and creative activity. Directors evaluate academic personnel and staff and make recommendations regarding salaries, promotions, tenure, and retention of school employees.

Rationale:
We should not have staff or low-ranking school directors. Because of their role, they need to be of a sufficient rank to evaluate their faculty members. Added “should” to the sentence to allow for flexibility of appointment.
David Holt proposes changes to Faculty Handbook Committee Changes Concerning 1.10.2 removing penalty for those who get a “does not meet expectations” on October 25, 2019, updated 12/9/19, updated 1/13/20, tabled in February and March, remanded to first vote with changes on April 13, 2020.

Original First Vote Date: 1/13/20
Second Round
First Vote Date: 4/13/20
First Vote Results: Passed

Majority Opinion: Full support
Minority Opinion: 

Length of Review and Potential Second Vote Date: ____ 1 month – May 11 ________

University Counsel Opinion: 
Employee Handbook Opinion: 
Faculty Senate Opinion: 
Council of Directors Opinion: Unanimous support for new version
Deans Opinion: ___ 
Vice President of Research Opinion: 
Provost Opinion: 

Second Vote Results ___ Passed 8-0-0-0

Majority Opinion: 
Minority Opinion: 

Presidential Approval or Rejection with date: 

The original language from the handbook

I move that the following section:

1.10.2 Faculty Evaluation Committee

Each academic year, the school will choose one of three governance options for faculty evaluations. Governance options are chosen and Faculty Evaluation Committees (FEC) are elected by secret ballot. Those eligible to vote include all the school’s full-time members of the corps of instruction with a minimum 50% appointment within the school (when the school director is untenured, only option 3 is available). Depending on the governance option chosen, an FEC may be formed. The main function of the FEC is to conduct annual evaluations of faculty in the school. FECs may also advise school directors on other personnel matters, aside from promotion and tenure.
Those tenure-track faculty members eligible to serve on an FEC include only tenured faculty with at least three years' service at the University, a minimum 50% appointment in the school, and rank of professor or associate professor. School directors, however, are eligible to participate in the evaluation process upon initiation of their appointment. Generally, eligible members should include only those who have workload responsibilities in all three ratings categories and received a rating of at least “meets expectation” in all three categories in the prior year's annual evaluation.

Eligibility criteria differ slightly for teaching-track faculty members. All teaching-track faculty within the school with a minimum of three years of service with the University, a minimum 50% appointment within the school, and who hold the rank of associate teaching professor or higher are eligible for committee membership. Teaching-track faculty with the rank of instructor, lecturer, senior lecturer, or assistant teaching professor are ineligible for committee membership. Teaching-track faculty members serving on FECs may evaluate only other teaching-track members.

Have its language changed to: **(recommended changes in green and deletions in red)**

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Those tenure-track faculty members eligible to serve on an FEC include only tenured faculty with at least three years' service at the University, a minimum 50% appointment in the school, and rank of professor or associate professor. School directors, however, are eligible to participate in the evaluation process upon initiation of their appointment. Generally, eligible members should include only those who have workload responsibilities in all three ratings evaluation categories and received a rating of at least "meets expectation" in all three categories in the prior year's annual evaluation with an overall satisfactory evaluation.

Eligibility criteria differ slightly for teaching-track faculty members. All teaching-track faculty within the school with a minimum of three years of service with the University, a minimum 50% appointment within the school, and who hold the rank of associate teaching professor or higher are eligible for committee membership. Teaching-track faculty with the rank of instructor, lecturer, senior lecturer, or assistant teaching professor are ineligible for committee membership. Teaching-track faculty members serving on FECs may evaluate only other teaching-track members.

Rationale:

Round 2. Dean's suggestion over striking the whole sentence.
Comments: how can we know who has satisfactory evals and still have privacy?

Comments from Round 1

The confidentiality issue about having a below expectation is not a real issue. Instead of striking the sentence, as with the first version, the language has been modified.

CoD Comments:

Comments of those “for”

I think, given the fact that faculty generally elect these people, such issues would take care of themselves. Also would give directors more flexibility in recruiting these members, if need be.

Comments of those “against”

Faculty whose evaluation does not meet expectations should work on meeting expectations before all else. Why add more service for someone who does not meet expectations in teaching or research? The only argument that could be made would be for someone who does not meet expectations in the service category. Even in that case, starting with service that carries less responsibility than faculty evaluation would be advisable.

Deans Comments:

1.10.2

There was consensus from all seven deans that faculty falling below performance expectations should be not be reviewing other faculty. However, the group proposed the following change to the wording, “Generally, eligible members should include only those who have workload responsibilities in all three evaluation categories with an overall satisfactory evaluation.” The amended wording provides some flexibility in eligibility criteria. The deans do recognize the need for privacy and suggest additional collaborative work be done between FHC, FS, COD, and the Academic Deans to develop work around strategies.
The Faculty Senate proposes changes to Faculty Handbook Committee Concerning 4.5.2, Faculty Evaluation Meetings, on March 9, 2020.

First Vote Date: March 9, 2020

First Vote Results: Passes

   Majority Opinion: 
   Minority Opinion: 

Length of Review and Potential Second Vote Date: 1 Month, April 13

   University Counsel Opinion: 
   Employee Handbook Opinion: 
   Faculty Senate Opinion: 
   Council of Directors Opinion: No Concerns
   Deans Opinion: 
   Vice President of Research Opinion: 
   Provost Opinion: 

Second Vote Results: Passes

   Majority Opinion: 
   Minority Opinion: 

   Presidential Approval or Rejection with date: 

The Faculty Senate moves that the following section:

4.5.2 Faculty Evaluation Meetings

The annual evaluation process offers an opportunity to review activities from the previous year, for faculty to discuss professional objectives and goals for the year ahead, and to request necessary resources with their directors.

Evaluation meetings should be scheduled annually between June 1st and August 31st. Two distinct meetings are generally necessary to complete the annual evaluation process for each faculty member: (1) review and discussion of the previous year's activities and (2) establishment of professional objectives and workload allocation for the year ahead.

Have its language changed to: **(Changes in Yellow)**

4.5.2 Faculty Evaluation Meetings
The annual evaluation process offers an opportunity to review activities from the previous year, for faculty to discuss professional objectives and goals for the year ahead, and to request necessary resources with their directors.

Evaluation meetings should be scheduled annually between June 1st and August 31st September 30th. Two distinct meetings are generally necessary to complete the annual evaluation process for each faculty member: (1) review and discussion of the previous year’s activities and (2) establishment of professional objectives and workload allocation for the year ahead.

Rationale:

The deadline is extended one month to allow faculty to perform annual evaluations during the contract period. The August 31st deadline serves no logistical purpose since all workloads have been assigned and classes have already begun by that date.