



University Governance – Did you know?

We're writing today because it has been our perception for some time that most faculty members do not know what goes on in the Faculty Senate, which is charged with representing their interests, or the University Senate, which deals with issues affecting the institution generally. To remedy this state of affairs, it is our intention to provide a brief occasional newsletter, each issue of which will attempt to summarize the most important issues facing the Senate.

The following are our perceptions and interpretations only, not those of the Senates at large or their Executive Committees. We welcome addenda and corrections, which we will include in the next edition. We also welcome suggestions for improvement of content, length, or presentation.

For more information, including copies of the documents mentioned below, visit the [University Governance website](#), or write govern@ku.edu.

Respectfully,
Joe Harrington, University Senate President
Pam Keller, Faculty Senate President

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## **WE HAVE a NEW CODE!**

If you know what is meant by the “Code of Faculty Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct” (a.k.a., the “Faculty Code,” or sometimes simply “The Code”), then you probably know that this issue took up most of the time of the Faculty Senate last year – and has been an ongoing struggle since at least 2009. That struggle has now come to a successful conclusion.

The Faculty Code broadly governs many aspects of faculty members' conditions of employment, including:

- Definition of the duties of faculty;
- Under what circumstances, if any, a faculty member (tenured or not) may obtain a hearing or appeal, if threatened with dismissal or sanction;
- The extent to which faculty can participate in the crafting of University policies;
- The role of Governance in determining these issues

The old Code had been in effect since 1971, and a task force was empaneled in 2009 to update

it. This process has been, on occasion, a difficult and acrimonious one, both within the Senate and between the faculty and the Administration.

However, due to much heavy-lifting on the part of faculty – and through concessions from both sides – the Faculty Senate unanimously passed a new Faculty Code in May of this year, the third version in four years (the first two versions were rejected by the Administration). After some modest technical changes, approved by the Faculty Senate, the new Code was sent to the Chancellor, and she approved it as well.

The new Code has many advantages over the old one. For one thing, it is easier to read and better organized. Both rights and responsibilities are outlined in greater detail and more precisely.

Moreover, faculty also gain certain advantages with the 2016 Faculty Code that were not afforded by the 1971 Code. For instance:

- The new Code explicitly states that faculty have the **right to a hearing** before the Faculty Rights Board or Judicial Board, before a significant sanction may be imposed upon them.
- “Administrative Leave without Pay” – that is, the imposition of leave without pay as a sanction imposed by the administration – has been replaced by KBOR’s **Leave without Pay** policy, which **is voluntary** and initiated by the faculty member.
- Faculty have the **right to be informed** about personnel files that contain information about them.
- The Preamble explicitly states that changes to the Code must be approved by *both* the Provost’s Office *and* the Faculty Senate.

The new Faculty Code has been posted in the Policy Library – [you may find it here](#).

Much effort by many people got us to this point: our predecessors (particularly Faculty Senate Presidents Tom Beisecker and Jim Carothers); Jan Sheldon, Kirk McClure, and the other members of the Faculty Rights, Privileges, and Responsibilities Committee (FRPR); Vice Provost Mary Lee Hummert; and special thanks to our new Provost, Neeli Bendapudi, without whom the final stages of this process would not have happened – certainly not as quickly and smoothly as they did. And of course, thanks to Chancellor Gray-Little, whose signature will bestow the ultimate authority to the new Code.

## Chancellor Search

As you may know, the Kansas Board of Regents has announced that the search for a new KU Chancellor will be a secret process. There will be no opportunity (as of this writing) for the KU

community to interact with their new Chancellor before a candidate is hired. Moreover, the make-up of the screening committee has yet to be announced. We have sent a letter to Zoe Newton, Chair of KBOR, asking that representatives of the Staff, Student, and Faculty Senates be included on the committee. In 2009, the first two groups were represented on the committee, but the third was not.

If you wish to contact the Regents to express your views on this matter, [you may do so here](#).

## 2015-2016 Committee Report Roundup: Some Major Issues

University and Faculty Senate Committees engage in oversight, policy development, information gathering, and other tasks. (Not all members are senators, and not all senators are committee members.) Here are some interesting highlights from last year's committees' reports. [The full text of all FY 2016 committee reports – as well as the charges and personnel for FY 2017 committees – can be found at: <https://governance.ku.edu/all-committees>]

- **Faculty Rights:** The Faculty Rights Board recommended “that faculty be better informed about their rights to challenge an adverse action taken against them.” They also “discussed the issue of KU personnel who are hired using private funds,” and “members expressed concern about faculty appointments without using the typical faculty search process and without requiring these personnel to have the same faculty review that is required of traditional faculty.”

- **The Core:** FRPR conducted a survey of faculty regarding the Core curriculum. Based on the results, they recommended that the course selection process, as well as assessment of adopted Core courses, be simplified, clarified, and streamlined. The report is very well done and worth a look!

- **The Great Cable Cut:** In March, the University lost its entire internet connectivity, due to the accidental severing of a single cable; service was not restored for days, in some parts of campus. A similar incident occurred 3 years previously. This episode points up the urgent need for redundancy – i.e., for more than one cable to connect us to the internet. Such was the conclusion of the Academic Computing and Electronic Communications Committee (ACEC): “This simply cannot happen again,” they wrote.

- **Money:** The Planning and Resources Committee was treated to an ongoing tale of budgetary woes. But they also report that “faculty and staff would like [to know] the financial as well as the educational motivations behind all major initiatives.” P & R pointed to Shorelight's work on campus as a means to “increase enrollments and address revenue shortfalls,” whatever its educational value may be. They reported that “rumors are rife” as to whether or not climate research may be conducted in the new Earth, Energy and Environment Building, which is primarily being funded by two major donors.

- **New Grad Grades:** The Academic Policies & Procedures Committee (AP&P) recommended, and the University Senate approved, new grades for dissertation and thesis hours: SP (Satisfactory Progress), LP (Limited Progress), and NP (No Progress). This schema gives more flexibility than the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory either-or options we've had. (Graduate Studies has this action under review, as of this writing).
- **Retirees:** The Retiree Rights & Benefits Committee recommended greater consistency in "the treatment of retirees across the University" and that "HR should provide more and continuous information about the process of retiring."
- **Student Athletes:** The Athletics Committee produced a detailed and data-rich compendium of information about majors, grades, academic progress, mentoring, and compliance, in regards to student athletes. Recommended reading!
- **Compensation:** The Faculty Compensation Committee produced an in-depth and informative report on faculty compensation (including for on-line courses), complete with graphs.

We'd like to thank all the members of the committees mentioned above, as well as those who served on the bodies listed below – all of whom worked mighty hard, sometimes at the tedious and necessary details that allow the University to continue to run: the Committees on Academic Policies and Procedures (AP&P); Calendar; International Affairs; Libraries; Organization and Administration (O&A); Research; Restricted Research; Standards and Procedures for Promotion and Tenure (SPPT); Post-Tenure Review (ad hoc); as well as those on the Judicial Board; Parking Commission; Univ. Cmte. On Promotion and Tenure (UCPT); Univ. Cmte. on Sabbatical Leaves (UCSL); Univ. Cmte. On Distinguished Professorships; and the Univ. Academic Assessment Cmte. (UAAC).

And you, too, can join in the fun! We need you. Please consider volunteering for one of these bodies in the 2017-18 academic year.

## **The Year Ahead: Some (More) Issues to Watch**

In addition to their standing (i.e., recurring) charges, this year's Senate committees have been charged with some of the following tasks:

- **KU Athletics, Inc.:** The Athletics and Planning & Resources Committees are charged to work together "to produce a report detailing the University's financial relationships with KAI," including "how much income the University is receiving for licensing of its name, logo, colors, font, etc." and "how much income the University is receiving for use of its facilities. The Committee also is to "report on measures being taken regarding [preventing] sexual assault,

and sexual and other harassment.”

- **Shorelight:** The International Affairs Committee is (once again) “to monitor and report on the Academic Accelerator Program and its partnership with Shorelight” and to make recommendations on improving the experience of international students.

- **Consultants** more generally: P & R is charged with monitoring and examining “partnerships between KU and outside contractors and consultants. Work with the University Senate President and Provost to develop a cost-benefit analysis of partnerships between KU and outside contractors and consultants.”

- **Freedom of Speech; Gender Equity:** The University Senate Executive Committee (SenEx) empaneled two ad-hoc committees for this year. One will develop a statement, for possible adoption by the University Senate, regarding the University’s commitment to freedom of speech and expression (as well as possible pressures or constraints thereon). The other will “investigate equality of treatment based on gender” on the Lawrence campus.

- **Untenured Faculty:** The FRB will consider changes to its procedures that may have the effect of providing more protection for untenured faculty who are facing dismissal.

- **The Core, Redux:** FRPR is charged with assessing “the relationship of UCCC [[University Core Curriculum Committee](#)], which oversees course approvals and changes to the Core] to Faculty Governance” [The Committee currently reports to the Provost]. Consider the appropriateness or efficacy of Governance review of – or involvement in – UCCC decision-making.”

- **Academic Analytics:** The Research Committee should “[i]nvestigate and report on the extent to which the University is using Academic Analytics to gather data or evaluate departments, programs, or faculty” and how that data is used.

- **Faculty Mentoring & DEI training:** SPPT is charged with looking at departmental and school mentoring plans, to see “if they provide sufficiently specific details to be effective in ensuring all faculty have access to strong mentoring and guidance as they make progress toward tenure review.” The Committee is also asked to “examine the extent to which faculty development includes access to training and guidance on handling issues of diversity and inclusion.”

There are, of course, many other issues, some of which are not directly addressed by the committee charges, such as:

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Group (DEI):** The Provost’s DEI Committee, with some personnel changes, will continue its work to develop policy proposals. In the meantime, there are plans afoot to address these issues in upcoming senate sessions.

- **Guns:** We eagerly await (as of this writing) the implementation policies, which Strong Hall is set to unveil shortly, for the so-called “campus carry” law. There is considerable interest in obtaining waivers for areas that present disproportionate threats to public safety – e.g., labs with flammable contents under pressure, crowded sporting venues, etc. Between now and the July 1, 2017 end of KU’s exemption from open carry, there is a general election for the Legislature, a session of the Legislature, and several high-profile court cases may be decided, as well. More anon.

If you have concerns, corrections, or suggestions, please contact us at [jharrington@ku.edu](mailto:jharrington@ku.edu) or [pkeller@ku.edu](mailto:pkeller@ku.edu). Thanks for reading!