

Minutes
FRPR meeting, March 19, 2020, 3:00 p.m.
via Zoom

Members attending: Joe Harrington (Chair), Dale Urie, Larry Davidow, Patricia Gaston, Emma Scioli, Nils Gore, Chris Crandall

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes of the December 12, 2019 meeting, which were therefore approved.

1.) Core Goals Evaluation. Harrington provided an update on the Ad Hoc Core Goals Evaluation Committee. The Chair, Mike Williams, has had a very difficult time arranging times when members could meet. In addition, it appears a rift has developed between the Chair, who wants to address the charge as written and develop an evaluation plan for the Core goals this AY, and the Committee members, most of whom want to survey the various departments and units about the Core goals first. As of the 15th, there was some opposition to continuing the Committee's work, in light of the coronavirus outbreak. Taken together, it seems that this project is done for the year.

2.) Instructor Privacy in Online Student Evaluations. Davidow provided an update on the issue of ensuring instructor privacy in online student evaluations. At the moment, there are no campus-wide guidelines as to how to distribute them, and different departments take different approaches. The big question is: Who owns that data? There does not seem to be an answer, at present. The computer system being used has an optional dashboard (which KU did not purchase) that allows faculty to generate and inspect their own reports; this function would allow them to respond to the evaluations and then submit them to the appropriate department officials. Question as to price. The privacy issue has been folded into the general project of developing and deploying online student evaluations. Doug Ward of CTE is revising the evaluation forms and developing guidelines as to how they will be used in P&T. Harrington agreed to contact VP Chris Brown to inquire about the status of the privacy issue.

Crandall: Couldn't we just ask that in the case of a course with only one instructor, that assessment of the course (rather than the instructor) will *not* include student evals? That was the original problem.

Davidow: Evaluation data would then need to be collected in some other way. The evaluations themselves are being produced currently. As it stands, the data is available to some administrators not directly involved in curriculum assessment.

3.) FSRR on Appeals from Dismissal of Tenured Faculty. Harrington explained that FacEx had tasked FRPR with determining the desirability and possible wording for an FSRR dealing with appeals from dismissal of tenured faculty members; that type of appeal currently is not addressed in the FSRRs, though the FRB has detailed procedures for same. FacEx specifically asked that FRPR consider an amendment passed by the Faculty Senate in 2012 that would have

replicated, in the FSRR, the paragraph in the Faculty Handbook regarding tenure and due process rights (this amendment was rejected by the Provost). Harrington framed the question as whether to recommend a very concise and general amendment (a la the 2012 version) or a more detailed description, outlining the nature of tenure, grounds for dismissal, and hearing procedures (or something in between). He explained that other types of appeals are described in the FSRR, which charge the FRB with developing procedures to implement them. For dismissal of tenured faculty, there is no FSRR; just FRB procedures. Introducing the former would remedy this inconsistency.

Harrington presented the Committee with both the 2012 version and a draft of a more detailed proposal that would incorporate most of the FRB procedures into the FSRR. The proposal describes what tenure is, what the grounds for dismissal are, and provides for the sanctioned faculty member to be notified of their rights and the appeals procedure at the time of notification of dismissal (a kind of “Miranda rights”).

Gaston: In a legal proceeding, wouldn't that information need to be requested?

Harrington: Yes, if the person knows to request it and knows what to request. Many faculty are woefully uninformed as to their rights and the procedures for due process.

A discussion ensued as to how to enumerate the grounds for dismissal and what language should be used for doing so. The general consensus favored more detail than the 2012 amendment provided and more detail than currently exists in the FRB procedures (viz., a passing reference to “incompetence and moral turpitude”). Members had various opinions as to how to break out specifics from those two very general categories and how to phrase each. Harrington agreed to revise the document in a manner that would take those opinions into account and circulate it electronically for members' approval. This plan was agreed to by acclamation.

4.) Unfinished Business. Scioli raised the issue of the “Professional Standards of Conduct” guidelines recently formulated and circulated by the University Ombuds. Harrington had called this development to the attention of the Committee in February. Is it still on our radar? Harrington suggested that it should be, given the potential bearing on faculty rights, and asked whether SenEx had received answers from the Ombuds Office regarding its questions about the guidelines. Scioli, who currently serves in the Faculty Senate, said she did not think so; that it seemed like the issue was on hold.

There was no new business.

The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Joe Harrington, 4 May 2020.

