

**FACULTY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

11 December 2023

IN ATTENDANCE:

OFFICERS: Robert Sprague, Chair; Ray Fertig, Chair Elect; Renee Laegreid, Past Chair, Treva Sprout Ahrenholtz, Secretary, Gregg Cawley, Rob Godby, and Tiger Robison, Members-at-Large. Member-at-Large Alvarado was excused.

Guests: Kevin Carman, Provost, Tami Benham-Deal, Senior Vice-Provost, Dr. Martha McCaughey, Chair, Freedom of Expression Committee. Casey Frome, Chair, Faculty Academic Standards, Rights & Responsibilities Committee

Chair Robert Sprague called the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSE) meeting to order at 12:04 pm.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the agenda; motion made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of December 4; motion made, seconded, and carried.

The Chair reported that he had distributed notice to the FSE Committee that the Graduate Council had turned down the proposal to decrease the Ph.D. program hours requirements, and that he was anticipating two resolutions at the January 22 meeting of the Faculty Senate, one supporting the Biodiversity Institute reorganization and the other supporting the new B.S. in Software Development degree.

The Chair yielded the floor to Provost Kevin Carman and Senior Vice-Provost Tami Benham-Deal to discuss potential revisions of the course load requirements for faculty. Provost Carman noted that Senior Vice-Provost Benham-Deal had provided information comparing UW's current standard to other peer institutions, noting that he was surprised that typical faculty workload was around 50% teaching, and expressed that he hoped that the University would adopt a more flexible and less formulaic faculty workload standard before asking the Committee their feelings on the issue. The Committee asked how changing this standard would affect tenure and promotion going forward after getting rid of those metrics. Senior Vice-Provost Deal responded that department-level faculty would be responsible for setting their own standards for this, noting that the traditional requirements had been changed. Senior Vice-Provost Deal noted that a previous strategic plan for 2004-2009 had created the metrics that are currently in place, and would later be adopted, expressing that the current metrics were inflexible.

The Committee noted that changes to the workload requirements would be better reflective of the University's position as an R1 but expressed concern that implementing a new policy piece meal would not be effective, and that a change would also serve as a good opportunity to review the requirements for Tenure and Promotion. Senior Vice-Provost Deal agreed, noting that department heads had previously reviewed these requirements, noted that the current Tenure and Promotion regulations were focused on creating metrics based on the faculty members' job description. Provost Carman noted that research was almost never more than 50% of a faculty member's job duty, while at his prior institutions most were half research and half teaching, with no service component. The Committee expressed concern that eliminating a service requirement would punish faculty members for pursuing service considering that they may still be evaluated on service. Provost Carman responded that he was not in favor of eliminating the requirement but was noting the tendencies of other institutions.

Senior Vice-Provost Deal noted that a three-credit hour course for one faculty member often required more effort than a three-credit hour course for another faculty member, based on a myriad of factors. The Committee expressed support for this view. The Chair asked if they were still looking at retaining the current measurements, of percentage, or if there was another option. The Provost responded that there was, but that they would need to look at those options but that he did not wish to entirely eliminate the current metrics and start all over again. The Committee noted that the Haub school had implemented excellent metrics regarding Tenure and Promotion while keeping their standards interdisciplinary, and that they felt that changes to Tenure and Promotion review standards would be fundamental to workload changes and discussed department level experiences.

The Provost noted that the restructuring of several colleges had dramatically affected the current requirements and that he felt lengthy discussions were necessary regarding these effects. The Committee noted that there was a need for discipline specific standards and recommended that there needed to be a mechanism to counter potential power structures within departments to protect junior faculty members from becoming overloaded and having individual departments look into their current workload so that there were metrics at that level. The Provost expressed support for that idea and noted that many departments had highly specific needs. The Chair noted that many faculty members would ask what the main purpose of these changes would be. The provost responded that his objectives were more philosophical rather than practical, namely that teaching should be valued equally to research, but that changes would also allow for better tracking of research spending. Senior Vice-Provost Deal asked the Chair for his feelings. The Chair responded that he disliked the current standards and that he felt that the standards were easily subverted within his department and already had many exemptions for certain fields. The Chair expressed hope that the motives for these changes were not purely driven by the hope to meet R1 Institution standards.

The Committee noted that there had been a very elaborate system of points to measure for Tenure and Promotion and required a minimum of 24 points a year for all faculty members but had been "hellishly complicated." The Committee expressed concern that improper changes could cause morale problems by disincentivizing faculty from teaching a larger number of

classes than the requirement. Senior Vice-Provost Deal noted that there had been previous work on Equitable workload distribution, and that Vice President Hall of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Department had been tasked to review that and that there may be working groups going forward to recommend changes. The Committee noted that one problem was that in research intensive programs that only way to get course exemptions was through service work, which also interfered with their research abilities, and that smaller departments did not necessarily have unilateral authority to provide them with course exemptions. The Chair asked the Provost what the next steps would be regarding this issue. The provost responded that he did not have any concrete ideas of what to do next. The Committee discussed.

The FSE Committee Chair yielded the floor to Dr. Martha McCaughey to discuss the implementation of the President's Freedom of Expression principles. The Committee asked how the principles would protect UW from situations like at the University of Pennsylvania and several others regarding the Israel-Hamas war. Chair Frome responded that the principles kept the University independent of taking a side on the issue, and that UW would be a platform and nothing more. Chair McCaughey expressed agreement. The Committee noted that free speech can be weaponized and expressed concern that this would prevent the university from taking action against harassment, and advised both Chairs that this would need to be considered during the implementation process. Chair McCaughey agreed and noted that hate speech was protected under the First Amendment and that there needed to be further communication at all levels regarding the law around free speech and that there would be monthly educational meetings regarding that at the ECTL. Chair Frome noted that the policy was meant to outline the legal limits of speech. The Committee noted that the issue was multi-dimensional and that it encompassed several separate issues and that it would be important to consider the roles of faculty and administrators when discussing these issues and asked what the next steps would be.

Chair McCaughey stated that the President was considering which recommendations to prioritize for implementation and considering who would be involved and that she had distributed information regarding this previously during their meetings. Chair Frome noted that the policy did not necessarily apply to a classroom setting but was more oriented towards public forums. The Committee expressed concern that many of the issues were not internal to the University, but from outside political factors coming to campus and expressed that the issue was not so much free expression, but political issues coming the campus. The Committee advised that a bottom-up approach may be appropriate, meaning that they should start with the students and determine their sentiments and go forward from there. The Committee noted that going forward it would be advisable to create, as suggested by Dr. McCaughey, a new syllabus statement regarding this and providing information would be helpful and asked how soon that could be implemented. Chair McCaughey asked the committee the intent of their amendment to the resolution. The Chair responded that the purpose was to encourage faculty to be able to speak freely and openly with administration while performing their duties and express concern with policy without fear of retaliation. The Committee noted that the administration had tended to side with the students rather than performing due diligence regarding the issue and expressed concern with the Dean of Students office.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting, seconded, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:39 pm.