**DATE: April 15, 2024**

**TO: Faculty Senate Executive Committee** (Robert Sprague, Chair)

**FROM: Committee on Committees** (David Bagley, Chair)

**RE: Recommendation to Change the Composition and Term of University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee**

**1. Charge**

On August 7, 2023, Faculty Senate Chair Robert Sprague charged the Committee on Committees to examine a proposal from Senior Vice Provost (SVP) Tami Benham Deal to change the composition and term of the University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (URTP) Committee. This recommendation arises from that examination.

**2. Existing Language**

The following language is currently provided in the document "Establishment of Faculty Senate Committees" (9/12/22).

**Section X(d) Composition**

"The Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee shall consist of at least 16 members excluding the vice presidents, the deans, the associate and assistant deans, the directors, and the department or division heads/chairs. Two tenured faculty members shall be elected from each of the following six colleges: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Business, Education, Engineering and Applied Science, Health Sciences; and Arts and Sciences; one from the College of Law, one extended-term faculty member elected from the Libraries; one extended-term faculty member elected from the American Heritage Center; and one faculty member from the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. The University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee has the authority to appoint one or more academic professional(s) to its committee. The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be an *ex officio* member. Members who have served a three-year term cannot succeed themselves. Replacements (temporary or permanent) shall be determined in the same manner as the original appointments."

**3. Requested Changes for Consideration**

The changes proposed by SVP Benham Deal (and included in the August 7, 2023, charge) are shown below. The term "academic professionals" is highlighted because this term is no longer defined by UW Regulation 2-1. Instead, the term "non-tenure track faculty" is used.

**Section X(d) Composition**

"The Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee shall consist of at least 16 members excluding the vice presidents, the deans, the associate and assistant deans, the directors, and the department or division heads/chairs. Two tenured faculty members shall be elected from each of the following six colleges: Agriculture, Life Sciences, and Natural Resources; Arts and Sciences; Business; Education; Engineering and ~~Applied~~ Physical Sciences; and Health Sciences; ~~and Arts and Sciences~~; one from the College of Law, one non-tenure track faculty member on extended-term or fixed-term rolling contract ~~faculty member~~ elected from the Libraries; one non-tenure track faculty member on extended-term ~~faculty member~~ or fixed-term rolling contract elected from the American Heritage Center; and one faculty member from the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources. The University Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Committee has the authority to appoint one or more academic professional(s) to its committee. The Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be an ex officio member. Members who have served a ~~three~~-four-year term cannot succeed themselves. Replacements (temporary or permanent) shall be determined in the same manner as the original appointments."

**4. Discussion of Requested Changes**

The Committee on Committees (ConC) examined the proposed changes. The changes in college names and the designations to non-tenure track faculty, as opposed to academic professionals, required little discussion - the ConC readily agreed that these changes should be implemented.

The change from a three-year term to a four-year term required further discussion. A four-year term on a Faculty Senate committee is not unprecedented. The Budget Planning Committee has four-year terms. The ConC noted, however, that unlike the Budget Planning Committee, the URTP Committee very directly interacts with the faculty members who come before it, on the critical issues of their reappointment, tenure, fixed-term contracts, and even post-tenure reviews. Therefore, a four-year term means that a committee member could in theory participate in a tenure-track faculty member's 3rd-year reappointment review as well as their subsequent tenure review. This cannot happen with three-year terms. The ConC agreed that this possibility should have a low probability of occurring.

Additionally, the ConC identified that even with the three-year term, this double review of a faculty member has occurred in the past for specific cases. For example, faculty members hired without tenure but at the rank of Associate Professor have come before the URTP Committee for reappointment reviews in one year and then come before the URTP Committee again in either the next year, or the year after that, for their tenure reviews. In those cases, some URTP Committee members on three-year terms have reviewed the same candidates twice. The ConC discussed whether this was beneficial or not for the candidates and determined that no general conclusion can be drawn due to the uniqueness of each case that comes before the URTP Committee.

The ConC also discussed the issue of finding members for Faculty Senate committees. While the ConC does not identify members for the URTP Committee, that is done by the Colleges, the ConC has observed difficulty in finding enough members for other Faculty Senate committees in recent years. Extending the terms for the URTP Committee members will decrease the burden on colleges to identify appropriate candidates.

The August 7, 2023, charge included another reason for increasing the term of URTP Committee members from three to four years: To provide committee members more time to learn the duties of the committee. This would then allow the URTP Committee to implement a chair-elect/chair model, as is used by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the Graduate Council.

The ConC considered this reason and agreed that providing committee members more time to learn the duties of the committee was beneficial. The ConC did not find the specific reason of allowing for a chair-elect/chair model compelling. That model can be used with three-year terms, with a committee member elected to serve as chair-elect at the end of their first year on the committee, and then serving their next two years as chair-elect and then chair. The ConC concluded, however, that the internal functioning of the URTP Committee was a matter for the URTP Committee to determine.

**5. Recommendations of the Committee on Committees**

The ConC revised the proposed changes (shown below) and recommends the following:

1. Accept the changes, except the term limit change, as necessary for keeping the language consistent with the organizational changes that have occurred at the University of Wyoming and the language of UW Regulation 2-1.

2. Accept the term limit change after further discussion by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

**Section X(d) Composition**

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**6. Approval**

The recommendations identified in Section 5 above were approved by Committee on Committees on April 8, 2024.