Faculty Welfare Committee Final Report 2016-2017

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The following is a summary of the primary tasks the Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) investigated and discussed during 2016-2017. Several of these issues will be further addressed in the future, as many of our committee members will continue during academic year 2017-2018.

1. Evaluation of Deans and Chairs

   a. FWC was asked to review the current policies regarding the process by which faculty may review deans and chairs. The FWC in 2013 was given assurances by Provost Hynd that the evaluation instruments developed in conjunction with Academic Affairs (AA) and the FWC at that time would be administered on a consistent and sustained basis. FWC received concerns that no subsequent evaluation had been administered since 2013.
      i. FWC composed a letter to AA asking for a re-evaluation of the policy.
      ii. Provost McGee assured the committee that evaluation instruments will be administered to deans in May 2017.
      iii. The evaluation of chairs is handled by the deans of each school, not by AA. Provost McGee affirmed that all chairs and deans are evaluated regularly by AA but that roster faculty are not necessarily privy to that information.

2. FWC 2015-2016 had identified an issue regarding the Grievance Process that was omitted from most recent version of the Faculty/Administration Manual (FAM).

   a. This issue was sent to the Faculty Senate at large and an ad-hoc committee is addressing the missing language.

3. Continued Advocacy for Adjuncts

   a. The current structure of adjunct pay will not be modified for AY 2016-2017.
   b. Senior Adjunct status is awarded by chairs and deans for longtime adjuncts but does not include a pay increase.
   c. Parking:
      i. The possibility of providing adjuncts with parking passes at pretax rates is unlikely due to a current state and federal policies.
ii. The Wentworth Street garage allows the discounted daily rate of $7 through midnight. Adjuncts who teach in the evenings are encouraged to use that garage since there is no one at the booth at the St. Philip St. garage after 7pm and therefore cannot accommodate the discounted daily rate.

iii. Academic Affairs has added a website for adjuncts so they know what benefits they are entitled to:


iv. Adjuncts are invited to participate in Writer’s Retreats and utilize other faculty resources such as TLT.

v. All faculty and staff encouraged to contact FWC to share any concerns or to provide any suggestions for continued advocacy for adjunct instructors.

4. Review of policies for Modified Duties

   a. FWC received many concerns regarding the current lack of clarity regarding the policies for modified duties following birth or adoption.

   b. AA’s premise is that modified duties is an alternative work assignment policy; it is not leave. Its purpose is to replace instructional duties.


   c. Policy was developed with guidance from the college's attorney and state policies.

   d. Some faculty may choose to apply the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) which provides all employees with job protections and unpaid leave. Those faculty and staff members that take this option have no work duties for up to 3 months (with no pay).

   e. Applicants must select and justify their role as Primary or Secondary caregiver. Primary caregiver can replace up to ALL instructional duties. Secondary caregiver can replace one course.

   i. Both primary and secondary caregivers can “stop the clock,” or receive an extension of time toward promotional or tenure decisions.

   f. Typically, tenured and tenure-track faculty replace two courses; instead of teaching a 3-course load, they teach 1 course.

   i. There were exceptions to this, with applicants who received a combination of research and service releases for ALL courses and had no instructional duties in their modification arrangement.

   ii. Some elect to have that 1 course applied to a different term, either by teaching an overload the previous semester or in the summer.

   iii. Some elect to teach that course through distance education/online.

   g. The modified duty arrangement can involve a combination of sick leave and modified duties. The health care provider determines the recommended time for leave (usually 8 weeks, occasionally 12 weeks). Caregivers must submit a health care provider notification form.
h. Recent changes to the policy have been made to allow first-year faculty to have modifications as well as visiting faculty.
   i. FWC is currently working on the creation a FAQ page for modified duties to clarify the policies for all faculty and staff.

5. State Health Care Plan disparities in coverage for women and female dependents

   a. FWC received concerns in regard to a decision by state lawmakers to allow PEBA not to comply with several of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements for preventative and contraceptive coverage.
   b. PEBA does not cover the office visit associated with annual cancer screening for women, resulting in out-of-pocket costs for women on an annual (or semi-annual) basis.
   c. In addition, these out-of-pocket costs for these visits do not count toward the cost of the annual deductible.
      i. According to the research FWC carried out, this lack of coverage is not typical in other states, and violates the terms of the ACA.
   d. Dependent, adult, female children cannot receive contraceptive coverage; furthermore, should pregnancy occur, maternity benefits are not extended to dependents. Since dependents are covered through age 26, this means that adult children cannot get birth control coverage.
      i. According to the research FWC carried out, this lack of coverage is not typical in other states, and violates the terms of the ACA.

The FWC is currently in contact with state legislators to modify this imbalance in preventative health care coverage for women and female dependents.

6. Possible Reforms to Tenure and Promotion Process, memo circulated January 25, 2017 by Provost McGee

   a. FWC was asked to solicit feedback and comments and to respond regarding a petition by Provost McGee with proposed changes to the Tenure and Promotion Process:
      i. Composition of Advisory Committee on Tenure, Promotion, and 3rd-year Review
      ii. Consideration of Full Professor Applications
         1. Restricting Committee Membership to faculty of equal or more senior rank (e.g. only full professors could vote on applications for promotion to that rank)
         2. Restricting or eliminating the practice of having more junior tenured faculty write colleague letters for tenured colleagues seeking promotion to more senior ranks (e.g. Associate Professors writing letters for those seeking promotion to Professor)
      iii. Mandate for External Letters
      iv. Frequency of Promotion Applications
b. FWC provided AA a synthesized list of the comments and concerns received. We continue to discuss these issues and possible modifications to the T&P processes at the college.

Respectfully submitted, May 2017