

## Special Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2021

**Senators Present:** 27

**Senators Absent:** 11

This meeting of the Faculty Senate was held through Zoom due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements. It was decided that this meeting not be recorded so that candid discussion could take place regarding the proposed changes to the Promotion and Tenure policy.

### I. Call to Order and Quorum Call.

At 3:30 p.m. President Chen asked the secretary, Christine Radcliff, if enough members were present for a quorum. Senator Radcliff replied in the affirmative.

### II. New Business

#### a. Tenure and Promotion Change Proposal voting *(see attached)*

Senator Houf moved to limit discussion to one minute, but can be extended by the Senate President. Senator Miller seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Proposed Change #14:** *That committee and alternate pool members are appointed by May 31 each year for the following academic year by the Faculty Senate President and Faculty Executive Committee, with the approval of the Faculty Senate. Overall membership should be roughly proportional to the number of faculty members in each college. Members serve one (1) year, but can be reappointed.*

Senator Kowalsky moved to approve and Senator Glick seconded.

Discussion began with the discussion between the two wording options available for this motion from the previous senate. It was pointed out that the proposed wording changes appointment from the Provost's office to the Senate. It was also mentioned that the Faculty Senate as a whole should do this not just the President and the Executive Committee. A comment was made that a one-year commitment could keep people from being overworked over a three-year period. The reminder was given that if appointment to the pool stays at three years, then people could not vote at their college and committee levels for those three years.

Senator Houf moved to amend the term of service to one (1) year. Senator Camacho seconded. Additionally Senator Miller moved to amend that the final pool be approved by the Faculty Senate as a whole. The changes were adopted.

Senator Peel called the vote and Senator Huskin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Proposed Change #15:** *That the same Advisory Committee and Hearing committee (as described above) will consider all appeals, except for individuals replaced due to a conflict of interest.*

Senator Huskin moved to approve and Senator Miller seconded.

During discussion it was asked how much time these committees take and how many usually happen each year? One senator responded that last year there was one preliminary and four actual appeals, and each meeting was about four hours each.

Senator Miller called the vote and Senator Hall seconded. The motion passed with a vote count of 17 yes, 2 no, and 2 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #16:**

*That Advisory Committee: 1 challenge allowed by each party, the appeals and the university.*

*Hearing Committee: 2 challenges allowed by each party, the appeals and the university.*

Senator Glick moved to approve and Senator Kowalsky seconded.

During discussion it was asked why the number of challenges is being lowered. The response is because the committees will now have less members. It was also asked what challenges are. An example of a challenge would be a faculty member saying they don't want a particular person to be on the committee. It was also commented that that just because the committee is smaller does not mean a faculty member doesn't want to remove people.

Senator Peel called the vote and Senator Houf seconded. The motion passed with a vote count of 15 yes, 5 no, and 0 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #17:**

*That Advisory and Hearing committees elect their Chairs (no change). That the chairs of both the Advisory Committee and Hearing Committees vote.*

Senator Radcliff moved to approve and Senator Miller seconded.

During discussion it was asked if the Chair needs to vote because of the number of people on the committee? It was also commented that by having the Chair vote now makes it possible for a dead 50/50 tie. Another comment mentioned that with the committee now made up of an odd number the Chair needs to vote. It was also asked if committee members can abstain from voting, and the answer was yes.

Senator Miller called the vote and Senator Houf seconded. The motion failed with a vote count of 7 yes, 14 no and 1 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #18:**

*That the committee report is sent to the president.*

Senator Houf moved to approve and Senator Radcliff seconded.

During discussion it was mentioned that the Provost already has an official vote in the process, so he does not need to see the committee report.

Senator Peel called the vote and Senator Huskin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Proposed Change #19:**

*That Tenure and Promotion appeals are submitted as one appeal, heard by the Advisory Committee and if recommended, the Hearing Committee. (Appeals concerning promotion to Full Professor are submitted to University Appeals Committee, as done now, but renamed the Promotion Appeals Committee.)*

Senator Glick moved to approve and Senator Huskin seconded.

During discussion the point was made that because we have previously voted to tie tenure and promotion together there would now be a single appeal for tenure and promotion.

Senator Houf called the vote and Senator Lucas seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Senator Houf moved to bring proposed changes 9 through 12 back to the table. Senator Huskin seconded.

**Proposed Change #9:**

*That using a standard template letter, the dean will request external letters of review of the candidates for tenure and promotion. The external reviewers will be provided the candidate's C.V. and the criteria for tenure and promotion.*

Senator Hall moved to approve and Senator Camacho seconded.

During discussion it was asked why do we want this? The response was that Provost Reinisch wants to use these to compare us to other institutions. One senator also responded that Provost Reinisch came from an institution that had external letters of review. A comment was made that if this is approved then there need to be

guidelines on what is being requested. Another comment was made that if this is not approved we look afraid of outside review, but that if there were guidelines then it could be useful. It was also mentioned that Provost Reinisch is willing to work with us, so there is an opportunity to make it better if we vote it down now. It was also mentioned that only three other schools in the A&M System have external reviews, College Station, Corpus Christi and ??.

Senator Velez-Hernandez called the vote and Senator Radcliff seconded. The motion failed with a vote count of 4 yes, 18 no and 1 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #10:**

*That at least three external letters should be in the portfolio. The dean's office will redact each letter so the author and institution are unknown.*

Senator Machado moved to approve and Senator Radcliff seconded.

Senator Kowalsky called the vote and Senator Huskin seconded. The motion failed with a vote count of 1 yes, 16 no and 1 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #11:**

*That the candidate should provide the names and contact information for four (4) possible external reviewers. The dean, in consultation with the chair of the department tenure and promotion committee, will pick two of the four and ask for letters of review. The dean should follow up with reminder letters.*

Senator Velez-Hernandez moved to approve and Senator Huskin seconded.

Senator Hall called the vote and Senator Huskin seconded. The motion failed with a vote count of 4 yes, 17 no and 1 abstaining.

**Proposed Change #12:**

*That the dean, in consultation with the chair, will pick three external reviewers. The candidate will have the right to eliminate one name. The dean will ask for reviews from two of the remaining two or three names. The dean should follow up with reminder letters. If three responses are not received, the dean will use either one or two of the remaining reviewers provided by the candidate. After all six requests are made (4 from the candidate's list and 2 from the dean's list), no additional requests need be made. The blinded review letters will be placed in the candidate's portfolio.*

Senator Miller moved to approve and Senator Lucas seconded.

During discussion it was pointed out that this is about external reviews not external letters of support. A concern was expressed that this will have us compared to institutions that have smaller teaching loads and the same or higher scholarship

requirement. The comment was also made that this could hurt the faculty member and has the potential to be manipulated. Confusion was expressed over the number of letters in this proposed change and proposed change number eleven. It was also mentioned that due to the diversity of programs in some cases it does not allow deans to have enough experience to choose good reviewers.

Senator Houf called the vote and Senator Kowalsky seconded. The motion failed unanimously.

### **III. Announcements**

- a. No announcements were made.

### **IV. Adjournment**

At 5:07pm a motion to adjourn was made by Senator Houf, the motion was seconded by Senator Kowalsky, motion was passed.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

Christine Radcliff  
Faculty Senate Secretary, 2021-2022

## **Proposed change #8**

### **Originally proposed wording**

That if the tenure and/or promotion committee at the department level does not have enough members, the dean can consider appointing appropriate member(s) from other similar departments both inside and outside of the college. The appointing of additional member(s) will be made by the dean in consultation with department chair and the candidate. The chairs of the department and college committees should have the rank of a full professor.

### **Amended wording option from 2020-2021 faculty senate**

That if the tenure **and** promotion committee at the department level does not have at **least three voting** members, the **chair of the tenure and promotion committee** can consider appointing appropriate members from other similar departments both inside and outside of the college. The appointing of additional members will be made by **the chair of the tenure and promotion committee** in consultation with the department chair and the candidate. The **tenure and promotion committee** chairs at the department and college levels should have at **least the rank to which the candidate is applying**.

## **Proposed change #9**

That using a standard template letter, the dean will request external letters of review of the candidates for tenure and promotion. The external reviewers will be provided the candidate's C.V. and the criteria for tenure and promotion.

## **Proposed change #10**

That at least three external letters should be in the portfolio. The dean's office will redact each letter so the author and institution are unknown.

## **Proposed change #11**

### **Originally proposed wording**

That the candidate should provide the names and contact information for four (4) possible external reviewers. The dean, in consultation with the chair, will pick two of the four and ask for letters of review. The dean should follow up with reminder letters.

### **Amended wording option from 2020-2021 faculty senate**

That the candidate should provide the names and contact information for four (4) possible external reviewers. The dean, in consultation with the chair **of the department tenure and promotion committee**, will pick two of the four and ask for letters of review. The dean should follow up with reminder letters.

## **Proposed change #12**

That the dean, in consultation with the chair, will pick three external reviewers. The candidate will have the right to eliminate one name. The dean will ask for reviews from two of the remaining two or three names. The dean should follow up with reminder letters. If three responses are not received, the dean will use either one or two of the remaining reviewers provided by the candidate. After all six requests are made (4 from the candidate's list and 2 from the dean's list), no additional requests need be made. The blinded review letters will be placed in the candidate's portfolio.

### **Proposed change #13**

That an Advisory Committee comprising one faculty member from each college (5).

That a Hearing Committee of 7 members comprising at least one faculty member from each college.

That an alternate pool of 8 members comprising at least one faculty member from each college.

That any committee member stepping off the Advisory or Hearing committee due to a conflict of interest or challenge becomes a member of the alternate pool. That any committee member who voted on the tenure or promotion being appealed at the department or college levels has a conflict of interest.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

Advisory: 5 members plus 4 alternates

Hearing: 8 members plus 6 alternates

Separate committees formed for individual grievances

### **Proposed change #14**

#### **Originally proposed wording**

That committee and alternate pool members are appointed by May 31 each year for the following academic year by the Faculty Senate. Overall membership should be roughly proportional to the number of faculty members in each college. Members serve only 1-year, but can be reappointed.

#### **Amended wording option from 2020-2021 faculty senate**

That committee and alternate pool members are appointed by May 31 each year for the following academic year by the Faculty Senate **President and Faculty Executive Committee**. Overall membership should be roughly proportional to the number of faculty members in each college. Members serve **3-year**, but can be reappointed.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

In the fall, Faculty Senate submits to the Provost's Office a list of 24 faculty from the different Colleges to form the pool from which the committees are formed. The term for which these faculty remain in the pool is three years.



### **Proposed change #15**

That the same Advisory Committee and Hearing committee (as described above) will consider all appeals, except for individuals replaced due to a conflict of interest.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

Distinct Advisory and Hearing Committees are named for individual appeals

### **Proposed change #16**

That Advisory Committee: 1 challenge allowed by each party, the appeals and the university.

Hearing Committee: 2 challenges allowed by each party, the appeals and the university.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

In the Advisory Committee each party is allowed two challenges

In the Hearing Committee, each side is allowed 3 challenges.

### **Proposed change #17**

That Advisory and Hearing committees elect their Chairs (no change). That the chairs of both the Advisory Committee and Hearing Committees vote.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

Committee elects its Chair. Chair votes only in case of a tie.

### **Proposed change #18**

That the committee report is sent to the president.

#### **Current Faculty Handbook**

Sent to the Provost

## **Proposed change #19**

That Tenure and Promotion appeals are submitted as one appeal, heard by the Advisory Committee and if recommended, the Hearing Committee. (Appeals concerning promotion to Full Professor are submitted to University Appeals Committee, as done now, but renamed the Promotion Appeals Committee)

### **Current Faculty Handbook**

Currently there are separate processes and committees for promotion appeals and tenure appeals (University Appeals Committee and Faculty Grievance Committee respectively).