

Report of the Faculty Personnel Committee 2010-2011

Meetings and case load

The FPC read, considered, and issued reports to the Provost on 51 cases this year

- 30 for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure
- 16 for promotion to Professor from Associate Professor
- 4 for tenure only (new appointments at the Professor rank)
- 1 for tenure only (new appointment at Associate Professor)

Membership

This year, the committee consisted of nine faculty members; five continuing and four new. Serving the second year of their terms were Cynthia Vakareliyska (Linguistics), Gordon Sayre (English), Daniel Rosenberg (Honors College/History), Jenny Young (AAA - Architecture), and Richard Hildreth (Law). Serving the first year of a two-year term were David Conley (Education – EMPL), David Crumb (Music and Dance), Eric Torrence (Physics), and Victor Ostriak (Mathematics) who served in 2009-2010 as a replacement and then was elected for a two-year term. Hence the committee was short-handed this year. Moreover, Dan Rosenberg was on family leave in the Fall term and did not join our meetings until January.

In February a student member, Heath Hutto, was appointed to the committee. The FPC charge provides for two student members, although students have rarely served in the 11 years since the charge was written and the committee constituted in its present form (see list below). Most faculty and administrators would be surprised to learn that students can serve on a committee that evaluates faculty for the purposes of tenure and promotion. Happily, Heath became an active and distinguished member of the committee. Heath is a post-baccalaureate student who had in fact served on the FPC before, in the 1990s. His maturity and experience was valuable, but committee members agreed that many students would not be well qualified for this assignment.

The fact that the committee was short-handed this year, together with the anomalous role of student member(s), motivated a proposal to revise the charge of the FPC. A draft of the new committee charge, and an explanation of the proposed changes, is included in this annual report.

Recommendations

FPC year-end reports have commonly included complaints or suggestions about the process of compiling and reviewing cases and how to improve it. Some issues have been raised many times and I recommend that the Provost and Vice Provost consult past reports, including my own from 2009-10, and keep those issues in mind. That said, I am happy to report no major problems for 2010-11. The files were consistent and comprehensive and were forward to our committee in a timely manner. Progress was made toward addressing problems we have observed in past years. The goal of transforming the P & T process into a paperless

system, which would eliminate the need for FPC members to come to Johnson Hall to read files, is still not achieved but is getting closer.

We were grateful for the hard work and genial assistance of Ken Doxsee, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and Pam Palanuk, Administrative Assistant in the office of Academic Affairs.

Proposal to revise the charge to the Faculty Personnel Committee

The Faculty Personnel Committee is responsible for advising the Provost on tenure and promotion cases. It is the final step in the series of committees and reviews in the P & T process, and all cases in the University are reviewed by the committee. Its members are elected by the faculty for two year terms.

The problem: A big job, a shortage of faculty to do it.

Committee members and administrators agree that the FPC is the most demanding of any of the University Standing Committees. The bulk of the work comes in Winter term, although a few meetings are typically also held in Fall term and in Spring term. In year-end reports, committee chairs have estimated that each committee member devotes 2-4 hours per week reading the files, 2 hours for the meeting itself, and an additional 3-4 hours drafting a report if he or she is assigned to do so for a particular case. We concur with this estimate, and wish to point out that since 2008, when the Provost and Vice-Provost implemented a new policy of issuing decisions on all P & T cases by May 1st, the workload has become more intense than ever because the committee is required to complete its work by April 15th.

In recent years there has been a shortage of nominees standing for election to the committee. As FPC chair Robert Ribe wrote in the 2007-08 report:

there was a deficit of candidates from professional schools this year, entailing appointments by the senate early next academic year. We also note that elections in recent years have often been non-competitive with only as many (or fewer) candidates as positions. This means the FPC is not genuinely an elected body, but one of volunteers and appointees, and with a shortage of available replacements when a member is unable to serve—as occurred this year.

The same thing happened in 2010 and in 2011. Moreover, it often occurs that a seat has no nominees until the final days before the deadline for drawing up the committee election ballot in April. As the deadline approaches, the FPC chair, the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, the Senate President and the Deans of the various colleges and schools all look for volunteers to complete the committee. There is no protocol for this recruiting process, and these individuals are uncertain about who is responsible for recruitment, or indeed if it is appropriate for each to do so. Even after elections are complete the recruiting process continues, in the event that no candidates stood for a seat or when an elected member resigns due to sabbatical, to take another job, or an administrative appointment. The charge states:

5) Resignations: A member of the FPC who does not serve out his or her full term shall be replaced by the normal election process if possible, and if not, the person who received the next highest vote in most recent election for the position shall be appointed to serve out that term.

But if the election for that position was uncontested, then in practice the replacement member must be recruited, as described above.

The list below, compiled from the year end reports since 2000, posted at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/uosenate/SenateArchive.html> indicates how the problem of shorthanded committees has combined with a rising caseload to make FPC service more demanding.

2000-01 eleven members, no students
2001-02 ten members, no students, 54 cases
2002-03 ten members plus one student, who was a "non-voting participant", 36 cases
2003-04 ten members, no students, 37 cases
2004-05 nine members, no students, 38 cases
2005-06 ten members, no students, 51 cases
2006-07 ten members, no students, 46 cases
2007-08 nine members (in winter and spring terms) no students, 48 cases
2008-09 nine members, no students, 53 cases
2009-10 ten members, no students, 48 cases
2010-11 nine members, one student from February to April, 51 cases

The integrity of the FPC

It is of paramount concern that the entire University community have confidence in the integrity of the tenure and promotion process. Nearly every faculty member has a role to play: whether by serving on a departmental committee, or by attending meetings and voting on colleagues' cases. However, the top level promotion and tenure committee has a particularly important role. If it becomes widely known that many FPC members are recruited by Deans, Provosts, or Department heads, rather than being elected by faculty colleagues, the independence of the committee may be in doubt, even if the motives of the recruiters are sincere, or even if the faculty member who finally agrees to serve is found only after asking many others.

A crisis in service at the UO

The academic trinity of research, teaching and service is the focus of the FPC's examination of tenure and promotion cases. Faculty share the popular wisdom that service is the least important of the three, and understand that Assistant Professors should be counselled to emphasize research and teaching, and not perform too much service. However, the Provost has recently said that he believes leadership in service is important in promotion to Full Professor. The FPC, consisting

mostly of Full Professors, is acutely conscious of the need for service, yet must balance this with the promotion and tenure criteria of the departments and colleges. Moreover, it is not sufficiently appreciated, in our view, that some forms of service, such as department head, are accompanied by financial rewards, whereas FPC service and most other committee work is among the truly volunteer forms of service.

In several year-end reports the FPC chair has requested that committee members be compensated for their service, whether in the form of a stipend for salary or for research support, or a release of one course in teaching load (preferably in winter term). These requests began in the 2005-06 academic years, which saw a marked increase in the number of cases. Larry Singell, chair of the FPC for that year, wrote that "a typical year requires a 5 to 6 hour commitment per week for 12 weeks. This time requirement is similar to teaching an additional course over the year" and requested "a course release program or some other time release program for future FPC members during Winter term." As part of a revised charge and composition of the FPC, we propose a course release for FPC members during the second year of service, as outlined below.

A Proposal: reform in membership of the FPC

The committee proposes a change in the charge and the composition of the FPC which will enhance the degree to which the committee represents the entire faculty, ease the severity of the workload, and emphasize the necessity for FPC service. Draft language for the revised charge is at the end of this report.

The composition of the committee as outlined in the current charge, enacted by the Senate in 2001, is for:

5 members from the College of Arts and Sciences
5 members from the Professional Schools and Colleges
2 student members

Specifically, the charge states that "Two University students, nominated by the appropriate procedures within the ASUO and appointed by the President, shall serve as voting participants in the deliberations of the committee." In practice, only two student members have served on the committee since 2001, and one student served in a non-voting capacity even though the charge does not so stipulate. It is imperative that the committee's charge reflect actual practice, because challenges to the promotion and tenure process might attempt to exploit the fact that the committee has not been following its official by-laws. The 2005-06 report also recommended that students be removed from the FPC. Current committee members believe that it would be inappropriate for students to serve on a committee that deliberates promotion and tenure decisions, quite apart from the difficulty of securing a long-term commitment to the necessary work from a student, who has no professional motivation for such service. The successful participation of a student member for part of this year does not alter these principles.

We recommend that the composition of the committee be changed, and that the change be

brought before the University Senate for approval.

We propose that the committee have twelve members,
1 from each of the 6 professional schools and colleges,
2 from each of the three divisions of CAS: Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences.

Faculty in the Robert Clark Honors College would be eligible to serve under the rubric of the department with which they are affiliated in CAS or another college.

The new structure would spread the work of writing reports across a larger number of committee members, allow for better-attended meetings amidst the travel and other commitments of busy faculty members, and assure a better balance of faculty expertise that would assist in evaluating cases where the research is quite technical or esoteric, (as in some science and Mathematics cases) or where the standards of peer review are unusual (as with some Music, Art and Architecture cases). Moreover, it should be clear under the new system that each college and division must contribute service from its faculty. Under the current composition of the FPC, whereby one of the six professional schools and colleges need not provide a member, no faculty members from the Lundquist College of Business have served since 2005

Quorum for voting

We also propose adding language to the FPC charge stipulating a quorum for votes. There is no such language in the current charge and no consensus among members or Academic Affairs staff about what the quorum should be. As chair for the past two years I observed a requirement of two-thirds of the membership, not counting those who recuse themselves from a case. Hence the quorum was seven when ten members were eligible, or six of nine members such as we had this year. We believe that a quorum of 50% + 1, which could entail forwarding a case with a vote of only five or even four members, is inappropriate. If the new plan for twelve members is instituted, the quorum would be eight.

Compensation for FPC service

We further propose that faculty serving on the FPC receive one course release during winter term of their second year of service. A course reduction is, we feel, more appropriate than a monetary stipend or research support, and can be targeted to the time frame in which faculty are putting in hours of work reviewing and reporting on promotion files.

Respectfully Submitted,
2010-11 FPC membership, and chair, Gordon Sayre

Appendix: Draft revision for FPC charge

Faculty Personnel Committee

Charge and Responsibilities:

The Faculty Personnel Committee shall be responsible for advising the Provost on all tenure and promotion cases.

Membership:

1) FPC Membership. Membership of the Faculty Personnel Committee is fixed and shall consist of ~~ten (10)~~ *twelve (12)* members who are elected to staggered two-year terms. No person may serve two consecutive terms. ~~Five (5)~~ *Six (6)* members shall hold appointments in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). *Two members shall be drawn from each of the three divisions in CAS, Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences.* ~~Five (5)~~ *Six (6)* of the members shall hold appointments *in each of the six* Professional Schools and Colleges. Only regular tenured Officers of Instruction with academic departmental, school, or college appointments of 0.5 FTE or greater are eligible to serve on the FPC. The word 'regular' excludes adjunct, visiting, and courtesy appointments. The President, Vice-Presidents, Provost, Vice-Provost, Associate or Assistant Provosts, Dean or Associate Deans are ineligible to serve on the FPC. Department heads in the CAS are ineligible to serve on the FPC. No individual may serve on the FPC during a year when his or her promotion case will come before the FPC and must resign from the FPC if this happens. No more than one person from the same department in any School or College with departments shall serve at the same time on the FPC; no more than one person from any School or College without Departments may serve at the same time on the FPC. No person shall serve simultaneously on the Faculty Advisory Council and the Faculty Personnel Committee.

2) Election of FPC members. Only members of the voting faculty who are Officers of Instruction with tenure or in tenure track positions shall be eligible to vote for elections to the FPC. The Senate Executive Coordinator, with the help of the University Senate, shall ensure that the number of candidates nominated shall be at least one more than the number of open positions in both the College of Arts and Sciences and in the Professional Schools and Colleges. Candidates for the FPC may be nominated by any person who is eligible to vote in the election for that position. Except in instances of self-nomination, the nomination must be accompanied by evidence that the person nominated is willing to serve in the position. Separate ballots shall be prepared for the candidates from CAS and the

Professional Schools and Colleges. Both ballots shall be circulated to all eligible voting Officers of Instruction. All members shall be elected for two-year terms, except for those filling vacancies in unexpired terms. Elections for the FPC shall be held in the spring quarter.

~~3) Student participation: Two University students, nominated by the appropriate procedures within the ASUC and appointed by the President, shall serve as voting participants in the deliberations of the committee. The student participants are to abide by the usual regulations adopted by the committee for its members.~~

4) 3) Selection of the Chair: The FPC shall meet in the spring quarter subsequent to the election of the new members. The continuing members and the new members shall elect a chair for the following year.

5) 4) Resignations: A member of the FPC who does not serve out his or her full term shall be replaced by the normal election process if possible, and if not, the person who received the next highest vote in most recent election for the position shall be appointed to serve out that term.

5) Quorum: The quorum for votes of the FPC shall be two-thirds of the eligible membership. Those who have recused themselves from a case shall not be counted in computing the quorum.