

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs
October 14, 2014
11am – 12:30pm
Gerberding 26

Meeting synopsis:

1. Call to order
 2. Review of the minutes from September 30, 2014
 3. Salary policy proposal
 4. Adjourn
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1) Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Janes at 11am.

2) Review of minutes from September 30, 2014

The minutes from September 30, 2014 were approved as amended

3) Salary policy proposal

Jack Lee and Bob Stacey were in attendance to discuss the faculty salary proposal. The salary policy working group, co-chaired by Lee and Stacey, has been meeting for over two years to develop a proposal that would improve the current salary system at UW. Lee and Stacey provided background on the major issues related to the proposal: tiered advancements, collegial review, transition plan, and off ramps.

Stacey stated he is very enthusiastic of the plan which has important contributions and improvements to the current system. Specifically, the new proposal is a more honest method of incentivizing and rewarding the performance of faculty and their scholarly activities. The new system is clear about the cost of living adjustments to all meritorious faculty and maintaining the current approach to promotion while increasing the value of promotions from 7.5% to 12%. Additionally, the new system would borrow from the University of California model while incorporating important changes, such as creating a set of merit-based and merit-driven tiers at each faculty ranks that faculty progress through as long as they are performing at a meritorious level. It is expected on average 25% of faculty per year will be eligible for a tier advancement in any given year. Stacey noted the biggest change from the UC system is that UW will not have tiers tied to a specific salary number. The trouble with the current UC system is that 90% of faculty are already off step which has broken down the system. The UW proposal would break the link between specific tier and salary, and if modified correctly would likely mirror closely the graph of global challenge peer institutions.

Lee clarified that tier advancement is not promotion; if faculty continue to do well within their rank they can expect tier advancements roughly every four years. Professor 7 would be an exception as the position would represent an increased level of international leadership in one's field requiring outside letters. Lee explained that the trigger for a tier advancement would be initiated by the department chair

or individual, resulting in a recommendation for advancement which would be voted on by faculty within the department then finally approved by the dean.

A concern was raised about the administrative burden that this system would generate. The amount of paperwork would be at the discretion of the department since there is nothing specific about how the process should work. Lee clarified the new proposal would replace annual reviews with merit reviews at least every 5 years. The goal is not to increase the amount of administrative work spending on reviews. Rather, each review would be taken more seriously since the department will be assessing whether the candidate's work since their last tier advancement has been at the level that is appropriate for increasing a tier.

Members discussed how departments may respond to the new system and whether or not the process would follow the intent of the new system. Lee explained he is developing a user's guide to explain how the system is meant to be followed to help guide deans and elected faculty councils through the process.

Concern was raised that each unit would make a comparative judgment about the merit of a candidate differently based on the department's culture. While the new policy would provide flexibility in merit increases there is not mechanism to provide faculty guidance in how they are being appropriately compared to another peer within the department or their field. A comment was raised that this is ultimately up to the individual department to determine how "merit" is defined. Members discussed their personal experiences within their own departments. Concern was raised that the system may discourage faculty from being innovative and trying something outside the traditional train of thought. A comment was raised that this already occurs within the current system. A question was raised asking who would define the meaning of productivity. Discussion ensued about how departments develop their individual values and criteria to appropriately assess candidates who are subject to review.

A question was raised about how the system would be impacted as a result of a state financial emergency. Discussion ensued about the last economic emergency during the recession.

Lee discussed the timeline in which a hypothetical faculty member would move through the proposed system. Under the proposed new system, a full collegial performance review would typically be conducted approximately every four years for most faculty members. The evaluation process would occur in three stages:

- Data gathering
- Chair conference. The frequency for full professors will be changed: assistant professors will have a conference every year, associate professors at least every two years, and professors at least every four years. The conference may be scheduled sooner if requested by either the chair or the faculty member.
- Collegial performance review: After the chair conference, a collegial performance review will be initiated if requested by either the chair or the faculty member, or if it has been five years since the previous such review. The outcome of such a review may be:
 - Recommendation for tier advancement
 - Initiation of consideration for rank promotion
 - Finding of unsatisfactory performance
 - Satisfactory, but no tier advancement at the present time

If a tier advancement is recommended, it will take effect if approved by the dean or chancellor in consultation with the elected faculty council.

Discussion ensued about annual planning conferences, annual activity reports, and their role in merit evaluations. Concern was raised that it is possible a faculty member may experience positive responses from their annual activity reports but still be barred from a tier advancement. A comment was raised that this would be based on a vote of the faculty who would have the right to determine the evaluation. A comment was raised emphasizing the Faculty Code cannot fix a cultural problem if there is a lack in trust within a department. Discussion ensued about how the annual activity report may be used for determining tiered advancements.

Members discussed the transition plan. Lee stated that the transition year will not likely occur until either the 2016-17 or 2017-18 academic year. Lee explained that each faculty member would be assigned two numbers; their initial tier when the system kicks in and the first year in which they are up for a mandatory collegial performance review. Lee explained that merit reviews will be staggered from the beginning in order to properly distribute reviews evenly across the whole faculty body. There has been anxiety about this practice with worries surrounding inequities and assignment of initial tiers. The aim is to make the staggered reviews and initial tiers as automatic as possible with any discretion of initial placing within the hands of faculty themselves. Lee explained the initial tiers will incorporate current seniority and salary which should be reflective of past merit judgments. When calculating the numbers a table will be created about what each salary should have corresponded to if the tiers had been in place for the last 30 years. If the salary-based tier is lower than the seniority-based tier, the individual can choose where they should fall within the difference.

Members discussed how the transition year will be determined and if the transition plan would be included in the proposal with a sunset clause or through an executive order. Lee explained that the council should make the decision. Discussion ensued. A comment was raised supporting a sunset clause as this is consistent with previous code revisions.

A question was raised asking if there has been discussion about retirement buyouts. Lee explained the issue has not been addressed at this point.

Lee discussed the assignment of initial tiers and the assignment of the next review and transition raise. Each faculty member will be assigned a year of next mandatory collegial review, determined by the year of their last hire or promotion. Based on that assignment, there will be a transition raise awarded during the transition year. If an individual's next mandatory review date is:

- 1 year after the transition year, the transition raise is 2%.
- 2 years after the transition year, the transition raise is 4%.
- 3 years after the transition year, the transition raise is 6%.
- 4 years after the transition year, the transition raise is 8%.

Discussion ensued about faculty receiving tier increases as a result of outside offers. Lee explained a faculty member's productivity will be calculated based on their last promotion and their advancement. Lee stressed that the system is not meant to penalize faculty receiving outside offers.

Janes noted that the salary policy proposal will be discussed at the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting in order to educate senators and encourage them to communicate the proposal to their constituents.

Lee discussed how off ramps would be incorporated into the new system in order to create a transparent process in the unlikely event a future decision is made to cancel part of the salary policy. Lee explained that because variable adjustments will generally be initiated and funded by colleges, schools, or campuses no special action needs to be taken to reduce or eliminate variable adjustments in a given year. Market adjustments may be reduced or eliminated across the university, provided the provost certifies, after consultation with SCPB, that the default market adjustment would impose extraordinary hardship on the university. Tier advancement raises may be delayed and actual tier advancements recommended by departments would go ahead as usual, but the provost could declare, after consultation with SCPB, that the raises will be delayed. When the financial situation improves those faculty who received a tier advancement during the crisis will receive their raises, but not retroactively. Rank promotion raises can be delayed, subject to the same considerations as described for tier advancements above. The provost may place limits on retention raises. Each process of consultation with SCPB should include an opportunity for SCPB to vote on the proposed change, and an opportunity for feedback from the faculty as a whole.

A question was raised asking if faculty on paid leave or sabbatical would be eligible for tier advancements. Lee stated the issue has not yet been discussed. Members discussed variable and market adjustment and who would be covered.

Janes explained that FCFA has 8-9 meetings left before the council reaches the deadline to have legislation sent to the Senate Executive Committee, which should be no later than March 10th (hopefully February 10th). At the upcoming meeting FCFA will begin to discuss code language surrounding tiers and collegial review.

A suggestion was made to have another 4-hour meeting during finals week.

4) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Janes at 12:30pm.

Minutes by Grayson Court, council support analyst, gcourt@uw.edu

Present: **Faculty:** Janes (chair), Ackerman, Adam, Buck, Goldstein, Johnson, Landis, Reddy, Vaughn

President's designee: Cameron

Ex officio representatives: Henchy, Harris

Guests: Jack Lee (chair of the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting), Bob Stacey (Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences)

Absent: **Faculty:** Watts (sabbatical), Coutu

Ex officio representatives: Rees, Taricani