

University of Washington  
Faculty Council on Faculty Affairs  
Tuesday, October 12, 2010, 9:00 a.m.  
142 Gerberding Hall

**Meeting synopsis:**

1. Voting for ex officio members
  2. FCFA Issues for the year
  3. RCEP Revision
  4. Adjournment
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Council Chair Rich Christie began the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

**Voting for ex officio members**

Marcia Killien, Secretary of the Faculty, summarized the current status of policy on voting rights being extended to ex officio members. The Senate Executive Committee is currently having a discussion on the issue, and will likely make standing determinations for each individual council. On FCFA, ex officio members have not traditionally had a vote, as Christie noted, because the council votes on issues primarily pertaining to the faculty. However, all members contribute and the council attempts to conduct business on a consensus basis.

**FCFA issues for the year**

Christie presented a number of issues that the council would work on this year.

***Revision of RCEP process***

The RCEP (Reorganization, Consolidation, and Elimination Procedures) process needs revision. Among the areas of focus:

- The difference between a program and college RCEP.
- Petitioning for a full process from a limited process. The current structure would allow a large department to dominate a small department and push through a limited process.
- Transfer of a program between colleges, which involves two deans and potential confusion about responsibility.
- The clarity of the RCEP process (“it’s too confusing, that’s why we’re not doing it!”)
- Reducing cumbersomeness and improving quickness with which RCEP can be deployed.

A drafting task force has created a revision for review in this meeting and going forward.

***Issues related to openness and use of collegiality in the promotion and tenure process***

FCFA will hear from the current and former Secretaries of the Faculty about this process. Issues have come up over the last several years that have led the Secretaries to suggest process changes that could head off problems.

***Cleanup from Senate restructuring.***

The restructuring legislation had a few holes in it. There was a suggestion that senators have alternate delegates to ensure quorum and participation, but it is not resolved how those delegates would be selected. A big complaint from the SEC nominating committee was that it was difficult to nominate the senators for the Senate Executive Committee due to a lack of familiarity with each senator, however, the new method was still a big improvement from the previous process. The new legislation also designates

that there will be three Faculty Council chairs on the SEC, but doesn't provide for the election of those chairs.

### ***Issues related to lecturers and instructors***

There are a number of issues related to lecturers and instructors that FCFA may look into:

- Instructors are required to have collegial teaching evaluation annually, but not lecturers
- Lecturers (including senior and principal) are required to meet annually with the department chair, but not instructors
- In one case of voting for promotion, listed people eligible for promotion were for senior lecturer, but not principal lecturer

The council was presented with a proposal that senior and principal lecturers should only have an evaluation every three years, by senior and tenure-track faculty; discussed whether the promotion of lecturers implies an expectation of contractual continuation; and discussed whether the promotion of someone with a short-term appointment implies tenure. Cameron said that lecturer positions are all term appointments with no expectation of tenure, and that promotion eligibility is based on whether a lecturer was appointed as the result of a national search. She also clarified that the term "instructor" is only used for acting instructors in the School of Medicine.

Killien said that there have been an increased number of questions coming into her office regarding lecturer issues, especially about the variability of roles and expectations of lecturers across campus. The Faculty Code is probably consistent with HR, but one is more explicit than the other. She posed the question of whether the Code needs to be updated in any way.

The council reached the conclusion that the distinction between temporary appointments and nationally searched lecturers is not a Code issue. These issues may be ones of clarity and guidance to both faculty and departments, not necessarily requiring changes to the Code. Christie said he would go through the Code looking for any inconsistencies with the terms "lecturer" and "instructor" and bring a proposal back to the council in the future that does not get into issues of national searches.

### ***Diversity in Faculty Councils***

The council will ask Sheila Lange, Vice Provost for Diversity, to come for a discussion on this topic. It was pointed out that the presidential advisory committee on diversity has been working on a Diversity Blueprint for the university, and could perhaps be present as well.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from May 11 and May 25 meetings were not approved due to a lack of quorum. However, some suggestions were made for clarifications on the minutes, to be voted on at the next meeting.

### **RCEP Revision**

Killien noted that all the RCEPs that happened last year went through the old process, and the new revision hasn't actually been used yet. There is a lot of activity around campus thinking about RCEPs, partially due to budgetary issues. The goal is to make the RCEP code as useful as possible; while honoring the intent of the process, it should have the potential to be an expeditious process when there is broad agreement on a proposed change. It may need to be explained that it can be a more expeditious process than it is currently perceived to be.

Christie presented his primer on RCEP changes, explaining that the goal is to make the language clearer while maintaining the existing process.

For a program, it's clear that the dean would need to decide to initiate the process, and there is a decision process that dean would need to follow to decide whether to do a full or limited RCEP process. Currently, there are situations where you could make massive changes without an RCEP and claim it's legal, or make minor changes that unnecessarily evoke an RCEP.

The current RCEP guidelines list motivations and effects for initiation of the full and limited process. A question is if these motivations are the only motivations that can trigger an RCEP. If certain listed effects, like the elimination of faculty or changing a program, occurred without an RCEP because none of the listed motivations were met, it would be a major concern. Therefore, the basic conclusion is that the effects of a change are more important than the motivations.

Christie proposed the removal of motivations and a focus on effects. Two discrete effects listed in the full process (termination of a program; removal of tenured faculty or untenured faculty before completion of a contract) should be kept, and the other three effects are subjective. The overall process has a way of appealing those effects from a limited RCEP.

He proposed changing the RCEP structure to include three levels: Major effects (similar to the Full process), Significant effects (similar to the Limited process), and Minor effects (no RCEP required). This would be a change in wording, but not in practice.

The council discussed whether the elimination of a faculty line would constitute a significant change in terms of employment and/or curriculum. The example was given of a very small department or concentration with two professors. If one were to retire without replacement, it would be a major change in educational emphasis – not only would curricula change, the faculty member's working conditions (being in a group) would change. On the other hand, individual employment structure and tenure have been contractually stated, and would not change. Christie said that ultimately it is the dean or provost's opinion, and there is a place in the process for appealing for a limited or full RCEP that checks or validates that opinion.

Killien brought up a number of questions and scenarios that have come her way recently:

- A program was paused years ago and now an RCEP is desired to eliminate it. This brings up questions about the difference between pausing and terminating.
- A program is looking at moving to reporting to two different colleges. Does that involve RCEP?
- What happens if faculty members wish to terminate a program that the Dean doesn't?
- Is a decision to change a degree (for example, physical therapy ceasing to award a Masters degree and now offering a PhD/terminal degree instead) an elimination of a degree?

Killien clarified that the goal is not to increase the number of RCEPs, instead, they want clarity on significant, major things. The faculty must have an opportunity to review and support changes. Since UW is in a process of change, RCEP must be sufficiently nimble so it is not a barrier to making changes; right now it seems subjective and open to multiple interpretations.

The council discussed a range of options: change the language in the Code, requiring Class A legislation; keeping the Code the same and issuing clarifying guidelines; or making editorial changes in the code that would not require Class A legislation. An example of an editorial change may be adding "for example" before listing motivations that would trigger an RCEP, since not every possible motivation is listed. Christie raised the question of whether there is a class of motivations that would have the same effects as the listed motivations but would not require an RCEP because of the motivation type.

To illustrate this point, the council returned to the physical therapy example. The degree change happened because of a change in national accreditation standards. Even though it was an externally imposed requirement, it did eliminate a Masters program. The council debated the distinction between changing a degree and removing one.

At the end of the discussion, a question was posed for the council to consider: Should initiation requirements be changed? Are the current initiation requirements adequate, or should they be clarified?

Summing up the proceedings, Killien said that what needs to be done is to make the RCEP process more useful. They need to figure out what level of change is needed; there are problems with perception, enactment, and knowing what fits in to the process. The council must determine what can be fixed with

extra supplemental, explanatory materials and what, if anything, needs to be resolved by changing the RCEP. Class A legislation would take the year to do, but RCEPs will be happening and the council needs to provide guidance.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

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*Note of Proceedings by Craig Bosman, Faculty Council Support Analyst. <cbosman@uw.edu>*

**Present:**

|                       |                                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Faculty:              | Christie (Chair), Phillips, Ricker |
| President's Designee: | Cameron                            |
| Ex Officio:           | Fauchald, Anderson                 |
| Guests:               | Marcia Killien                     |

**Absent:**

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| Faculty: | Bryant-Bertail, Kirtley, O'Brien, Wilcock |
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