

Unit Criteria Committee - End of Year Report
2016
Submitted by M. Bacsujlaky, Chair

AY 15-16 Unit Criteria members: Mara Bacsujlaky (chair), David Maxwell, Bob Bolton, Sunny Rice, Sarah Hardy, Carie Green, Jennifer Tilbury, Mark Hermann, Chris Hartman

The committee met monthly from September through April. We cancelled our April meeting because we had no new/old business to complete.

The following criteria were presented, reviewed, approved and moved on to full Faculty Senate approval during the AY15-16 academic year:

Cross-Cultural Studies (new unit criteria); Geophysical Institute (new unit criteria);
Institute of Northern Engineering (new unit criteria); College of Natural Sciences and
Mathematics (updated unit criteria according to unit criteria review schedule).

Other business:

Joint Appointments: The committee inherited an outstanding issue regarding primacy in joint appointments. Broadly, the issue appeared to be twofold - 1) under current Blue Book policy, primacy for faculty evaluation for promotion/tenure rests in the academic unit in a joint appointment - should the research unit have more involvement/standing in the promotion/tenure process? and 2) funding - since tenure rests in the academic unit, if a joint-appointed faculty has a reduction or elimination of research grant funding, academic units have been picking up the shortfall (at least in the case of CNSM). The charge to Faculty Senate/unit criteria committee was to investigate this issue and make recommendations to the body for changes to the Blue Book to address these issues. Deans Layer and Goering attended the October meeting. Both realize the benefits of offering tenure in attracting quality faculty, and both favor joint appointments where 50% of appointment is tenure track (4.5 months covered by the academic unit and 4.5 months by external grant funding) - but these appointments are less attractive. Both agree that the joint appointment needs to have clear, defined structure, with source of funds clearly defined and identified, and workloads that are established at time of hire. Ideal language for 50/50 appointments should include language about funding, including expectations for successful grants and contracts. This should also be built into the unit criteria under which joint appointed faculty are evaluated for promotion and tenure. This committee also agreed that it would be a good idea to gather information from directors of the research institutes, but failed to complete this step during this academic year. Therefore no recommendations were prepared or moved on to either the Ad Com or full Faculty Senate. The committee is willing to continue working on this issue next fall when we reconvene.

Blue Book Revisions & Promotion/due process for Non-tenure track faculty: Faculty Senate president Misra requested that the unit subcommittee pick up the ongoing revision process for

the UAF FS Blue Book - particularly with a focus on the components of promotion and due process for non-tenure track faculty. I convened a subcommittee consisting of Bob Bolton, Jessica Cherry, Jeff Benowitz, Valerie Gifford and Anna Liljedahl. Chris Fallen was also involved at a FYI level through email correspondence. During spring semester we met three times for working meetings, and drafted an updated revision that included new definitions specific to non-tenure track faculty positions, and began delineating promotion processes, and criteria for the composition of a university-wide promotion committee for non-tenure track faculty. We also discussed and drafted revised non-retention notification schedules that align with those for tenure-track faculty. While overall the proposed revisions to the Blue Book did not reach the point where they were ready to be reviewed by the entire unit criteria committee, Ad Com or Faculty Senate, proposed changes to the faculty position definitions, which include reclassification as regular academic rank, were developed and presented to both the Ad Com and Faculty Senate for information purposes and for feedback. Copies were also sent to the Provost, and to the UNAC contract manager. I also met with the BOR chair, Jo Heckman and presented the broad framework and rationale for redefining non-tenure track faculty positions. Feedback received from the Provost, BOR chair, Faculty Senate president, other members of faculty senate, faculty senate counterparts at UAS and UAA and the UNAC contract manager produced a new version of non-tenure track faculty definitions. Work on these and other components of the Blue Book revision will continue past the end of the spring semester, with an improved draft expected to be completed during the summer. Outreach and solicitation of feedback and input continues.

A current draft of the proposed approach to definitions for non-tenure track faculty is attached to this report. Overall Blue Book revisions are too preliminary at the time of this report to include. Work will resume on an updated, clean version next fall.

At our last meeting, a poll of current committee members present indicated that everyone present at the meeting plan to return to the unit criteria committee for AY 16-17.