

Faculty Senate Minutes 27 September 2013

Senators Present: Alex, Ambrose, Anwar, Atchison, Blanton, Clark, Crandall, De'Armond, Diego-Medrano, Drumheller, Fiaud, Jacobsen, Jafar, Johnson, Kelly, Kuennen, Loftin, Pendleton, Rausch, Takacs, and Ward

Senator Absent: Landram

Call to Order: President Ambrose called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. in the Eternal Flame Room of the JBK.

Approval of Minutes: Fiaud made a motion seconded by Jacobsen to approve as amended by Jafar the minutes of the 13 September 2013 meeting of Faculty Senate. The motion passed unanimously by the Faculty Senators present.

Discussion with Provost Shaffer: Rausch said he hopes WT will develop a clear, formal policy on incomplete grades. He has had students not do anything all semester, but the last week claim they were sick and want incompletes. Dr. Shaffer said he prefers each faculty member use his own reasons and be in control of grades assigned in his courses. If a policy is in place, all faculty would be bound by it. The only WT policies now are that an "I" becomes "F" if a course is not completed within 365 days, and pregnant students are exempt by Title 9 and might need more than a year to complete a course. Atchison suggested having the Department or College discuss and determine a policy and not print a policy in the Faculty Handbook. Anwar suggested students should drop a course and not receive incomplete when they do not complete a course by the end of a term. Atchison said all students in a class might receive incomplete grades if there is not enough time to complete a practicum. Atchison said some students might have been passing but gotten behind because of an emergency, and whether faculty assign an incomplete might depend on how much the student already completed. Shaffer said Dr. Eddleman is willing to provide notes for legitimate reasons such as accidents, military service, or family emergencies. Crandall is concerned about students who disappear before the final drop date. Takacs said there is no excuse for lack of communication except if the student is in a coma or prison. Drumheller said online students off-campus can contact the Dean's Office. She said a faculty member can write his policy in the syllabus. Shaffer suggested handling each student on an individual basis considering the percentage of time already completed in the class. He said faculty do not have a legal obligation to give an incomplete grade to any student except if the student is pregnant. Diego-Medrano suggested new faculty should be given some guidance in writing as to what to do.

Diego-Medrano asked if there are clear guidelines as to what to do for tenure. She said there might be differences of interpretation when multiple people review a portfolio. She asked which articles count as publications. Anwar said faculty know which are the top journals in their fields. Shaffer suggested asking peers in the department what the peers consider quality work. He said a candidate should discuss with the Department Head what to include before submitting a portfolio. Shaffer said each Department and

College should have standards for what should be considered, and the advocate should speak about the value of what was included in the portfolio. Jafar said if he receives “Outstanding” every year, shouldn’t he be granted tenure without applying. Shaffer said others outside one’s department also should evaluate a candidate.

Jafar said the steps in the tenure and promotion process need clarification. Shaffer said seeming contradictory statements in the Faculty Handbook need to be clarified. He said some departments consider the opinions of all tenured faculty on each tenure-track faculty member each year, but some do not hear from all tenured faculty. Anwar said some departments have a formal interview with the candidate while some do not, and suggested the process should be standardized. Shaffer said last year, some portfolios were missing key parts, such as an expanded professional summary by the Department Head. Shaffer said former Provost Chapman made each Department Heads write the expanded summary, but candidates used to write their own, although some summaries were long. Rausch asked if the Department Head should let the candidate review the expanded summary. Shaffer said whether or not a candidate should see the expanded summary by the Department Head before the portfolio is submitted should be formalized. Clark asked about inaccuracies in the expanded summary by a Department Head. Shaffer said a candidate can respond in writing only when the candidate receives negative comments. Anwar said Annual Professional Summary procedures are not consistent at WT. In some departments, the APS is shown before faculty meet with the Department Head, but in some departments, these are not shown. A consistent and standardized system is needed where Department Heads’ ratings and comments are made available to WT faculty before they meet with their supervisors. Atchison asked if the Provost’s Office should provide more training for Department Heads.

Ambrose asked about the Faculty Senate resolution about Deans refusing tenure to faculty at the last minute. Atchison said Department Heads have four years to evaluate a person, so why change at the end? Shaffer said his intention is for the Faculty Handbook Committee to remove and replace with language “to be eligible for tenure, a candidate must meet all requirements in 1.2” of the Faculty Handbook.” Collegiality and professionalism are included in Section 1.2. Shaffer said for promotion to full professor, faculty must meet requirements only for being a full professor. He will check that the line about Deans having final discretion was removed before the document was sent to the Faculty Handbook Committee. Jafar suggested the third-year review should be more rigorous. Shaffer said the third-year portfolio should be a carefully prepared full portfolio.

Ambrose asked how the faculty evaluations of administrators will be used. Shaffer said he is working on the best way to do that, whether information is put onto a public website or on the G drive for only faculty to see. Drumheller suggested having a link on wtaccess. Shaffer asked if faculty want evaluations of all administrators or just some to be published. He asked if faculty want aggregate or individual scores. Ambrose and Anwar said they prefer aggregate, not individual, scores. Atchison and Anwar would like Department Heads, Deans, the Provost, and President to be included. Shaffer suggested having a password for accessing a site to view a table of administrators with

aggregate scores and include numbers of faculty who responded, etc.

Ambrose asked about software to help determine if syllabi are ADA compliant. Shaffer said Andersen searched and found no software. Rausch said Microsoft Tool is available. Shaffer had Andersen build a template for a syllabus that is ADA compliant. If faculty do not use the template, they must document whether their syllabi are ADA compliant. Shaffer suggested using the template developed by Andersen or using Microsoft Tool. Shaffer said syllabus structure, not content, is mandated. Shaffer said Andersen said if faculty are teaching courses with hearing-impaired students, videos and lectures must have subtitles. Campus resources can create subtitles for videos. Fiaud said some students do not know if they need extra assistance. Rausch said some students do not want to claim their disabilities. Shaffer said Student Services or Andersen might tell faculty what are the rights, obligations, and changes. Shaffer wants to improve communication and discussion of issues on campus. He suggested WT might have a monthly forum or faculty newsletter to get information to faculty.

Ambrose asked about supplementing the CIEQ. Shaffer said an ad hoc committee, Faculty Senate, Deans Council, and the Department Heads Council revised the document. Shaffer compiled all the versions and sent a document to the Faculty Handbook Committee. The Faculty Handbook Committee was convened by the President and is meeting this year. The process is for the Faculty Handbook Committee to review first, then send suggested changes to Faculty Senate and President O'Brien. Faculty Senate can disagree with the suggestions received. Shaffer would prefer the Deans Council, Department Heads, and Faculty Senate, instead of the Faculty Handbook Committee, to be in charge of changes. Jafar asked about composition of the Faculty Handbook Committee. Shaffer said the Faculty Handbook Committee changed the composition of the Committee with the approval of President O'Brien.

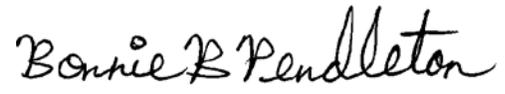
Ambrose said in past years Dr. O'Brien asked Faculty Senate to review faculty teaching loads. Takacs reviewed teaching loads last year, and Ambrose chaired the committee the year before. Shaffer said perhaps Dr. O'Brien thinks faculty loads are not keeping up with what is being done and how things have changed at WT. Shaffer suggested if Faculty Senate thinks the teaching load policy does not fit any more, Faculty Senate might recommend specific changes such as adjusting the load or the way loads are measured.

Jacobsen asked about revision of core curriculum, specifically the number of communications courses. Shaffer said the proposal was overridden and Dr. O'Brien did not forward the recommendation on communication courses to the Board of Regents. The policy of the Higher Education Coordinating Board was that faculty at each university can determine what it does. Shaffer suggested looking at the SACS statement on what to do.

Takacs asked when new appointment letters might be coming out. Shaffer said the new salary will begin with 1 November pay checks.

The Faculty Senate meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie B. Pendleton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small circle above the letter 'i' in "Bonnie".

Bonnie B. Pendleton, Secretary

These minutes as amended were approved at Faculty Senate on 11 October.