

Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee
Final Report for AY 2016-17
Submitted by: C. Sabee, Chair

During the AY 2016-17, the Faculty Affairs committee discussed several topics of importance and produced policy changes and resolutions for discussion on the senate floor. Following, please find a list of the topics we discussed and the actions taken regarding those topics.

1. Conflict of Interest: It was brought to our attention that our policies concerning conflict of interest were not as detailed as they needed to be and that this resulted in some concerning and confusing situations over the previous academic year. We reviewed the “Conflict of Interest” policy, which we discovered was simply one sentence and said that a faculty member could not be a candidate for a grant or award while they were serving on the committee recommending who receives the grant or award. Agreeing that this was insufficient, we embarked on research to determine what specifics would be more helpful for our employees regarding conflict of interest decisions. After some research and discussion, we decided to tackle the specific concerns regarding UTPC membership, since that was of primary concern after the confusion of the previous academic year. Thus, we changed the RTP policy to reflect that if a person has a conflict of role or interest with any candidate up for tenure or promotion, that the person must recuse themselves for one year of service on the UTPC.
2. Department Chair Rank in RTP: While we were reviewing the RTP policy regarding the UTPC membership, we also looked into similar concerns about the ranks of department chairs and the positions that they might find themselves in if they themselves are eligible for personnel action while serving as chair. Specifically, the senate policy was not clear about whether a department chair should be allowed to write the chair’s evaluation for a candidate up for personnel action that is higher than the chair’s current rank. Because this also seemed a conflict of role/interest – to expect that the chair should write an evaluation of a person who could then potentially serve on the RTP committee that would evaluate the chair when they were up for personnel action – we changed the language of the policy to reflect that department chairs cannot write evaluations for any faculty who are up for a personnel action to a rank higher than the department chair. The Senate voted to accept these changes.
3. International Faculty H1B Visa Issue: While we did not ever bring this to the senate floor, one of our committee members brought to our attention that international faculty members were inconsistently being asked to pay for the filing fees for their H1B visa renewals. She had consulted with legal counsel who suggested that asking any of our international faculty to pay for H1B visa renewals was inconsistent with federal policy. While we felt that this was an important issue to work through, we also did not want to make the

- issue public without first seeing if we could correct the inconsistency by following the relevant administrative challenges. Thus, we consulted with Faculty Affairs, Academic Affairs, University Counsel, International Programs, and finally our University President. In the end, the University was able to correct the inconsistency and offered reimbursements to those international faculty members who were asked to pay for their renewal fees.
4. GTA Tuition Remission: During the course of the academic year, we worked with Interim Dean of Graduate Studies MiSook Kim to develop support for the provision of GTA tuition remission. We discovered that other CSUs are able to offer GTA tuition remission and also that our lack of this type of funding scholarship might be affecting our enrollments. We chose to follow a similar process to the one that San Jose State followed: first, we developed a resolution to garner support for GTA tuition remission. The Senate voted to affirm the resolution. ***We recommend continuing with San Jose State's model by working with Graduate Studies to develop a policy that outlines the ways in which GTA tuition remission should be administered at SF State.***
 5. Resolution on Teaching: We were asked by associates of our new Center for Equity and Excellence in Teaching and Learning to explore the development of a resolution that celebrated the professional development of teaching and that specifically highlighted the importance of including teaching training and workshops in personnel evaluations (as opposed to a stronger focus on the SETEs). Although we discussed this at length, we decided that a resolution in this manner might be premature since the CEETL would enter its inaugural year in 2017-18. ***We recommend revisiting this possible resolution in collaboration with the CEETL leadership.***
 6. RTP Evaluation Committees: We were asked by Interim Provost Summit to consider changing the RTP policy to include an additional level of review during the RTP process – specifically, she suggested we add a college review committee that would evaluate in between the department chair evaluation and the dean's evaluation. After discussing this suggestion, we decided that we did not support adding a level of review to the process.
 7. Sabbatical Policy: We revisited the Leave With Pay policy for two reasons. First, we worked on putting together a fair process for deciding on what to do with appeals to the sabbatical decisions. *We did come up with what we thought was a fair process, and we piloted the process in the Spring of 2017 with two appeals that came in for the sabbatical decisions.* We also revisited the Leave With Pay policy on the recommendation of Interim Provost Summit, who suggested that we think through how we might emphasize the importance of pedagogy and teaching in the criteria used to evaluate sabbatical proposals. *We also worked on language that edited the currently research-focused criteria to more celebratory of teaching and pedagogy.* ***We did not finish these changes in time to bring them to the Senate Floor, but we recommend that next year's committee build on our work.***
 8. Resolution in Support of Increasing Counseling Faculty: We discussed several issues related to the need for more counseling faculty at SFSU

including the increasing student need, the fact that SFSU does not meet the recommended ratio of counseling faculty to students, and the important services that counseling faculty provide. We also discussed the importance of employing tenure track counseling faculty rather than focusing on more contingent counseling faculty. Although, in the end, we submitted a resolution that focused on needing an increase in faculty (rather than focusing on tenure line faculty), we were pleasantly surprised to hear an amendment from the senate floor that emphasized the need for tenure line faculty. In the end, this resolution also passed in the Senate.